

Gloucester Rugby

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Gloucester Rugby
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Stephen Jones

Writes exclusively about the changing world of the Guinness Premiership

Robert Todd

Fighting the biggest opponent of his life – EXCLUSIVE interview

Tom Voyce

Was he the greatest Gloucester player ever?

Ryan's Review

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Captain's Corner

“For me, to play in front of such a big crowd against one of the best teams in Europe was a great experience and why I chose to join **Gloucester** and the **Guinness Premiership**.”



I DOES not seem like it was three weeks ago I wrote my first matchday captain's column ahead of our opening game against Bath, but since that fantastic Kingsholm afternoon we are still unbeaten in the Guinness Premiership.

Our victory against Bath was an emotional experience for all of us. We all appreciated the magnitude of the occasion, of the history and of its significance on the opening day of the season.

To be asked to be matchday captain was a humbling but

very honourable experience and I have been very fortunate to lead the side in our other matches against Harlequins and Leicester.

The Harlequins match was significant because it was their first home game at The Stoop since their promotion and they were highly motivated and highly charged to win the game.

We have acknowledged we played poorly collectively but I have to praise the attitude, will to win and determination to turn around a very bad half-time situation. That is one

of the aspects that has really impressed me so far and it was the backbone of our draw last Saturday.

For me, to play in front of such a big crowd against one of the best teams in Europe was a great experience and why I chose to join Gloucester and the Guinness Premiership. I thought we did superbly to get a draw but maybe we could have won – it was a learning experience for all of us.

I am still new to English rugby but to me, every match has great history and tradition

and today's game against Northampton is very similar. We are two very big clubs close to the top of the Premiership and I guarantee a passionate affair this afternoon.

Northampton are an outstanding side, full of world class individuals and I think it shows the strength of the Premiership. We have plenty of respect for them as a club and know it will be a hard game today.

But please, get behind the team as much as you can – your voices can make the difference – and get us to another victory.



in association with

dair*

James Simpson-Daniel -
adds serious spark to the
Guinness Premiership



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How things have change

The personalities may have changed but as Stephen Jones of The Sunday Times reports today's Guinness Premiership knocks spots off all comers - just don't tell John Fidler

FOR SEVERAL years I have been dying to tell John Fidler what a big soft touch he always was on the field and how easily I could have taken him out if he had dared played against me - Gloucester had no fixtures against Risca at the time so he escaped.

Anyway, I've never told him how soft he was because sadly, my sprint training never worked properly and not being able to guarantee my escape or being alive for very long after making the comment, I decided to lay off.

Indeed, I am now working on a major book project book with Fidler which we hope will be published in the near future... The working title ("Fid's Finest - my best 100 Gloucester punch-ups - Volume One") is already set and there will be 12 more volumes appearing annually in this series in the near future - this will take Fidler's memoirs up until the end of his first season with Gloucester.

He was once a little scathing about one game on which I reported which I said had been very hard. Fidler disagreed. "That wasn't harrd" he said. "What about playing against Mike Fry of Bristol for Gloucester. He took my eye out and gave it back to me after the game. That was harrd."

He has a point. When Fidler played there was one poor ref out there who had to police the whole game on his own. The starting point as that he was probably useless anyway; he was backed up by

touch-judges with no authority to rule on anything, who were members of the two clubs and big cheats into the bargain; there was no citing official, and no 24-strong camera barrage such as that which Sky bring along these days.

It was so easy to be undetected, even if you were a 20-stone glowering leviathan festooned in 40-yards of white bandages, like Fidler. I used to come over to watch Newport games at Kingsholm, bravely stand in The Shed with my black and amber scarf and wonder why they bothered to bring a ball on. Mind you, there was also the most hilarious penalty of all time, in these years when lifting was illegal. Gloucester were penalised for lifting Fidler in a line-out - presumably, 14 Gloucester players were involved in the lift.

These days, players are spared the harshness of the game as it once was. But it is now hard in a different way, and spectacularly so. The season in the old days was not remotely so focused, so vital, and so week-in, week-out fierce as it is now.

However many hard games Gloucester might play then, however many harsh battles, there were always easier games, midweek strolls, non-events, walk-overs. You name me one walk over in the Guinness Premiership this season? There isn't one. When the top-placed team goes away to the bottom place team, they will have to scrap for their lives.



John Fidler -
a very scary man

"These days, if you lose two games on the trot it is as if the world is ending and your head coach will start to sweat. Gloucester had it tough in the old days but at least they knew that they would all be back in the same fixtures the year after."

Furthermore, the commercial imperatives were not so powerful then. These days, if you lose two home games on the trot it is as if the world is ending and your head coach will start to sweat. Gloucester players had it tough in the old days but at least they knew that they would all be back in the same fixtures the year after.

There are also the subjects of fitness, and replacements. You could guarantee in the old days that the action would become softer and vast spaces would appear, as the game went past the hour mark. People would get tired, plain and simple, because their fitness standards were low compared to today. These days, too, the intensity remains because (unfairly, in my opinion) teams are allowed to maintain their intensity and resistance by bringing on nearly half a new team of replacements.

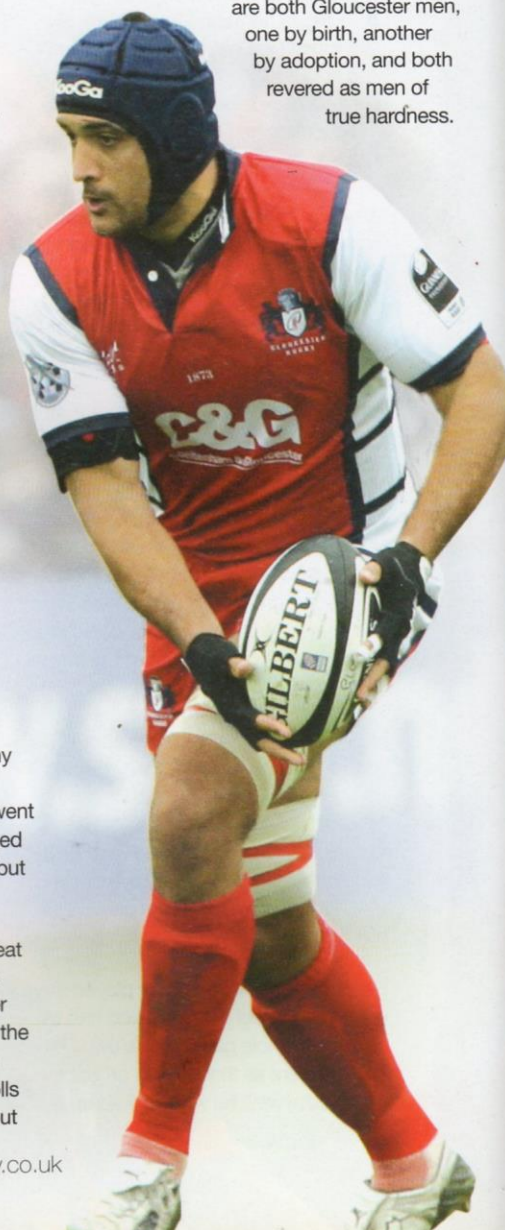
So sorry Fids, but for intensity throughout the season, for lung-bursting effort and hard hitting and high standards, the game today knocks spots off the game in the old days. The Premiership is by such a distance the most intense and compelling league in the world, any country and any code, that comparisons are preposterous. The Super-14 hardly registers on the scale.

But perhaps we can, in one sense, find Gloucester unchanged. The great thing about Gloucester fans (and those at many other clubs) is that they easily made the transition in perception when the game went professional and rapidly, the team changed – it was no longer honest local yeomen, but often, imported stars.

The leap that Kingsholm made was to treat them all as if they were their own, just as long as they bought into what Gloucester stood for and fought as if they'd been in the area all their lives. And there was always an Andy Deacon or maybe a Mike Nicholls or Alan Brinn or Peter Ford, hanging about

looking vaguely menacing, just to remind them of the traditions they were following.

So yes, the game has changed. It is not as rough, perhaps, but it is hard in different way. The true giants of every era are still to be respected, Marco Bortolami is the latest of the line of great Gloucester locks. He may not look like John Fidler. He may play in a different style. He may be possibly a smidgen cleaner. But they are both Gloucester men, one by birth, another by adoption, and both revered as men of true hardness.



Ryan's Review

The **Guinness Premiership** is already three games old and **Gloucester's Head Coach Dean Ryan** rounds-up all the action.



Three weeks ago, our season started against Bath at Kingsholm. since then we have taken 10 points from three matches, how pleased can you be with that start?

DR: What has pleased me is that our demanding pre-season schedule has been vindicated in our start to the

Premiership. We ensured that in our back-to-back games against Llanelli, we got attuned to the rigours of the next nine months.

At various stages we cited a lack of intensity that needed to be addressed before we got into a contest of the magnitude of Bath and I was delighted with the way we approached and dealt with an extremely physical threat on the opening day of the season in front of our own supporters.

The same can be said last weekend at Welford Road. I perhaps wouldn't describe it as a litmus test but there are certain areas that demand huge intensity levels in that environment and we produced it.

To have 10 points at this stage of the season, from back-to-back away games, has given us a start we must build on. The Harlequins performance was not to the standards we set ourselves collectively and you cannot rely

on pieces of individual skill to win matches in this league.

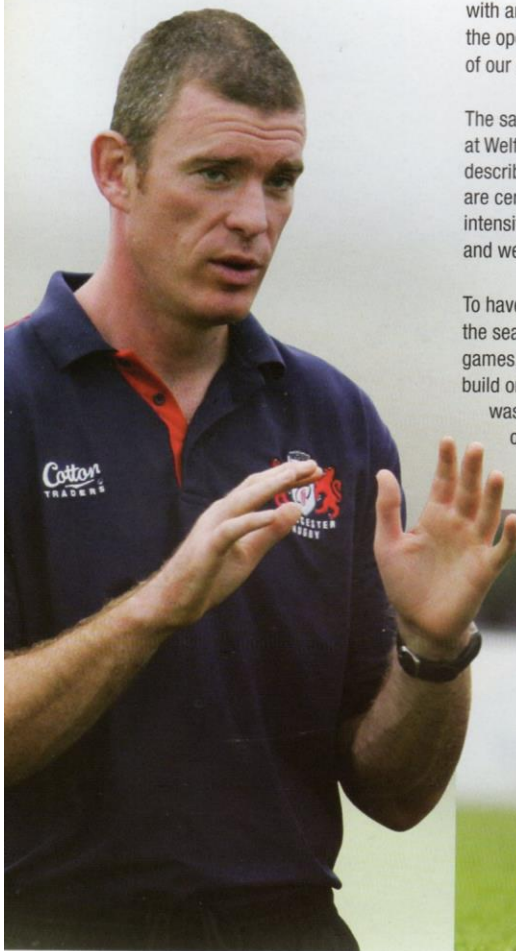
It proves we have much to work on, although I am delighted with the way the squad is responding and developing as a unit. Last week, Brad Davies came off the bench and in a pressurised situation, kicked a penalty that secured a draw. I am positive that every member of the squad will have a part to play at some stage this season



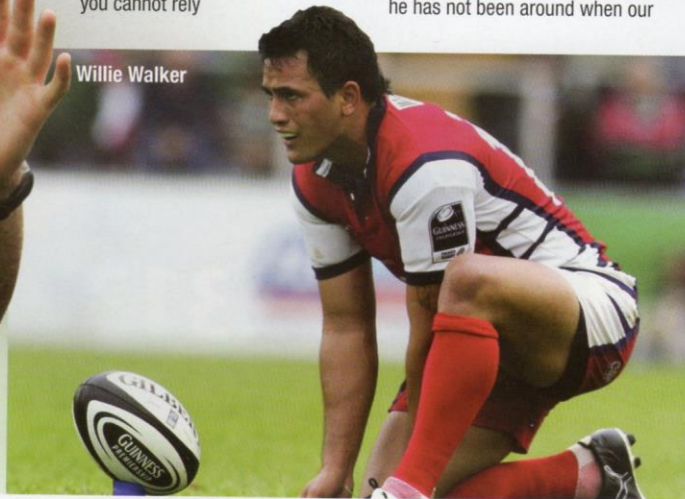
Since the start of the season, you have lost a number of key individuals, with Alex Brown's broken arm the latest set-back, how have you managed to cope?

DR: We have a very strong squad – one that gets stronger and more accomplished all the time because it is gathering experience.

If we had lost Alex at this stage last season, we may have suffered because there have been times when he has not been around when our



Willie Walker





“We have a **very strong squad** - one that gets stronger and more accomplished all the time because it is gathering experience.”

line-out has collapsed. But we have tremendous depth with guys like Adam Eustace, Jonathan Pendlebury and Will James, who has done outstandingly well despite very little exposure at this level.

Across the entire squad we have recruited well and that is showing through. Willie Walker has been an outstanding addition, is a wonderfully accomplished footballer and has fitted in brilliantly. We deal with a massive amount of expectation each week and these youngsters and the new players have handled with it very, very well.

I like to think we keep everything very much in perspective and we will need to this season.



Is it possible to give an update on more of the injured players?

DR: We have already had our fair share which is why the start we have made is even more pleasing. In the next few weeks we should be in a

position to know more about guys like Ryan Lamb and Carlos Nieto and potential return dates.

Both are making good progress – Carlos is running and is upping his gym work, while Ryan has recovered pretty quickly to this stage. Mike Tindall and Iain Balshaw do not have serious injuries but I am conscious we need to managed them properly. Both are key individuals for us and there could be a temptation to rush them back into a game environment before they are ready. But we have not done that because we trust the depth in the squad and want to be 100% certain they are both right before returning to action, particularly with some very big games on the horizon for us.



Finally, northampton have some wonderfully gifted individuals, it should be a great match-up today?

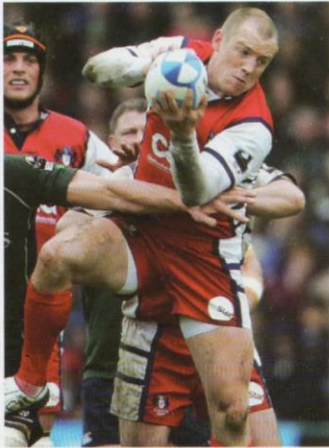
R: I think Northampton are a fantastic side with a huge number of high-

class individuals. They obviously won very convincingly against Bath last weekend and will relish the opportunity of coming to Kingsholm.

Last season, they were struggling very slightly ahead of the corresponding fixture but hit us with two very good tries early on and I think they have improved as a unit since then.

I have a great amount of respect for Paul Grayson and what he is trying to achieve and anyone who can call on the collective talents of Carlos Spencer, Bruce Reihana and Sean Lamont to name only three in their backline, has the potential to burn anyone, anywhere.

We have come along way in a short period of time and we have to make sure we maximise this start by finishing this section of four games as well as we can. It is a big game in many, many aspects but we are at home and obviously want to make the most of it.



Gloucester RUGBY



Northampton SAINTS

	Olly MORGAN	15	Full Back	15	Robbie KYDD	
	James BAILEY	14	Right Wing	14	Sean LAMONT	
	Rudi KEIL	13	Centre	13	Bruce REIHANA ©	
	Anthony ALLEN	12	Centre	12	David QUINLAN	
	Mark FOSTER	11	Left Wing	11	Ben COHEN	
	Ludovic MERCIER	10	Fly Half	10	Carlos SPENCER	
	Rory LAWSON	9	Scrum Half	9	Mark ROBINSON	
	Nick WOOD	1	Prop	1	Tom SMITH	
	Olivier AZAM	2	Hooker	2	Steve THOMPSON	
	Christian CALIFANO	3	Prop	3	Pat BARNARD	
	Adam EUSTACE	4	Lock	4	Matt LORD	
	Marco BORTOLAMI ©	5	Lock	5	Christian SHORT	
	Peter BUXTON	6	Flanker	6	PAUL TUPAI	
	Andy HAZELL	7	Flanker	7	Darren FOX	
	James FORRESTER	8	No 8	8	Daniel BROWNE	

Replacements

	Mefin DAVIES	16	Substitute 1	16	Dan RICHMOND	
	Jack FORSTER	17	Substitute 2	17	Chris BUDGEN	
	Patrice COLLAZO	18	Substitute 3	18	Damien BROWNE	
	Will JAMES	19	Substitute 4	19	Mark EASTER	
	Jake BOER	20	Substitute 5	20	Ian VASS	
	Peter RICHARDS	21	Substitute 6	21	Luke MYRING	
	Brad DAVIES	22	Substitute 7	22	Rob LAIRD	



Man of Steel

He made his name as an ultra-physical centre at London Irish, Gloucester and Sale. But ROBERT TODD is now fighting his biggest opponent – skin cancer. Naturally, he is tackling the issue in the same way as he played the game – head on – as he tells the matchday programme.

FOR A MAN who made his name as a rumbustious centre at the ultra-sharp end of life, Robert Todd knows what it means to meet a challenge head on.

The former Gloucester man needs all his fighting qualities as he takes on the biggest opponent of his life.

Todd is the victim of a freakish set of circumstances as he fights skin cancer, diagnosed as squamous cell carcinoma – an indolent cancer which means it grows slowly. A malignant growth on his arm developed after he split open an old wound playing for Sale more than two years ago.

Although the growth has been removed, he lost a great deal of muscle tissue and use of his arm. In addition, specialists identified nodules in his lymph glands and lungs and although his latest results have come back clear, his cancer has not categorically disappeared 100%.

It is a shocking state of affairs. Todd was a man who nailed his colours to the mast at Kingsholm as a hard-running, teak tough partner alongside Terry Fanolua and naturally he is still getting to grips with the situation.

"When I found out, it explained a lot," he said. "My arm got scarred when I was 17 or 18 and then I was rucked on

the same place and it opened up the scar tissue that never healed.

"It would get better over three or four weeks and then open up again, it was constantly sore. I was going home from training and feeling very tired. I was fatiguing far quicker than I was used to. I put it down to my age.

"I like to think I have a fairly high pain threshold but I explained to the doctors that I was in considerable pain just putting on a shirt and that's when he investigated further."

A dermatologist confirmed his worst fears and Todd revealed the severity of the situation to his then teammates on the eve of Sale's Heineken Cup quarter-final.

"I said to Philippe [Saint-Andre] that I would love to play but he was naturally very concerned and he said my health was paramount," Todd said. "In the end it was the right decision and I now have to see the specialist every three months.

"If there is a 1% chance of it coming back, it might affect as many as 10 million cells, so we obviously have to be very careful.

"You cannot imagine the shock initially – it hits you with such a force it is difficult to comprehend. You think of

your family and how they will react but I like to think I have met this thing head on and fought it all the way."

That's Todd's style. In four seasons at Kingsholm he made 61 appearances and scored eight tries, knocked over more opponents than anyone would care to mention and was one of the most consistent players anywhere in the Premiership.

Naturally, his condition has thrown his plans into confusion. He has retired as a professional rugby player and was ready to take up a potentially lucrative deal in America at chiropractic college that would also combine rugby.

"They said they would pay for my tuition fees, which would have been in the region of \$100,000 US dollars, and it would have been a great experience.

"But the doctors have told me to

coming to terms with the condition but looks fit and in good spirits.

"Once you have been knocked off your feet you have to get back up and fight it," he said. "Your health is the most important thing and something that should not be taken for granted. You put yourself through turmoil waiting for results because it is scary.

"You go through all the emotions. I have a wife and kids and I worry about the future. It's hard and I wouldn't wish it on anyone – it's not something people should go through."

Through all the obvious distress, the heartache and the battle he is fighting so brilliantly, Todd has been fortified by the number of supporters throughout the game wishing him well.

It has been that community spirit that makes rugby so special. "All I

"Everyone has been so positive – players, supporters and the rugby community in general. I have literally been bombarded by the level of support."

avoid any type of rugby for the next two years and have no contact for 12 to 18 months which meant I had to turn the opportunity down.

"I am now looking to continue my career outside rugby training to be a chiropractor in Bournemouth."

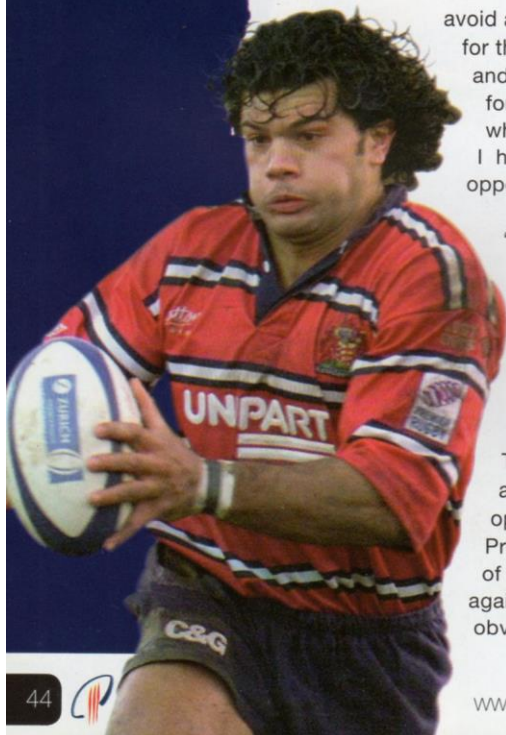
Todd, who was at Gloucester's opening Guinness Premiership match of the season against Bath, is obviously still

have ever wanted to do is play this game and my time at Gloucester was fantastic.

"Everyone has been so positive – players, supporters and the rugby community in general. I have literally been bombarded by the level of support.

"I would like to think now I am heading in the right direction but the thoughts are still in the back of your head that it has the capacity to come back. I am grateful to all the support I have had – particularly from Gloucester – it is something that keeps me going."

Todd is fighting on – as anyone who watched him in Gloucester colours can testify. If there is one person who can win this particular battle, it's Robert Todd.





Match Action

Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



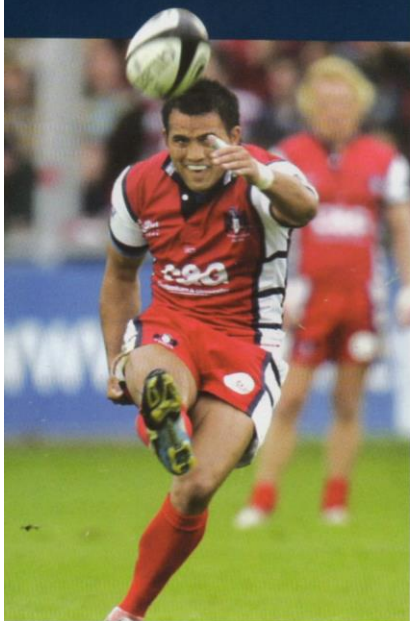
"It was a great way to start the season for us. It was everything you expect from a derby and there were plenty of nerves around. But our intensity levels were right where we needed them to be and I am delighted for everyone involved."

Man of the Match...

Peter Buxton



Peter Buxton. He led the line brilliantly from the blindside, had the edge in terms of work-rate over his rivals and always kept Gloucester on the front foot.



Gloucester Rugby 24
Bath Rugby 19

Jack's solo try sets up opening victory

Ref: Sean Davey Att: 12,500

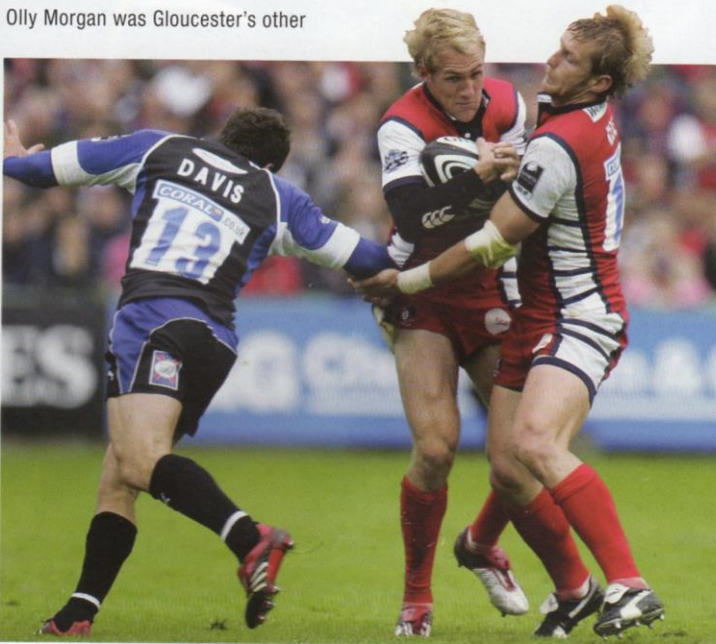
JACK ADAMS came off the bench as a replacement for Iain Balshaw and scored a sensational individual try to set Gloucester on their way to a crucial opening day victory over fierce rivals Bath.

Adams pounced in the 43rd minute of an enthralling encounter to establish a 19-6 Gloucester lead that was always likely to prove too much for Bath. Picking up the ball on the right touchline, he slalomed inside a number of defenders before making the line to complete a wonderful piece of individual skill.

try scorer when he finished off a move instigated by a brilliant break from Andy Hazell and good work from Peter Buxton and Marco Bortolami to send Kingsholm delirious.

Despite two tries from Danny Grewcock and nine points from the boot of Olly Barkley, Gloucester edged the contest in the key areas. Buxton was outstanding on the blindside flank, Bortolami led the team with utter conviction on his Premiership debut, while Hazell, Willie Walker and Peter Richards all played their parts in a great start to the season in front of capacity crowd.

Olly Morgan was Gloucester's other



NEC Harlequins 21
Gloucester Rugby 31

Pete picks moment to nudge selectors

Ref: Roy Maybank Att: 9,479

PETER RICHARDS produced a sublime moment of attacking instinct to knock Harlequins off the rails and maintain Gloucester's winning start to the season a fortnight ago.

The scrum-half picked up James Forrester's pass from the back of a scrum and launched a devastating counter-attack, shrugging through would-be tackles from Andrew Mehtens and Gavin Duffy to race 60 metres to score the try which turned the game.

Gloucester had been 16-6 down at half-time thanks to Ceri Jones's try, but they turned the match on its head during 15 second half minutes to take the points. After Richards'

one-man showing, Gloucester scored again through Olivier Azam, who bundled his way up the touchline from a ruck to dive over. And when James Forrester darted over from a set-scrum, Gloucester had turned a potential defeat into almost certain victory.

The only downside of the second half performance, in which Hazell, Richards and Marco Bortolami were the major figures, was the broken arm suffered by Alex Brown.

Willie Walker kicked four penalties and converted two of the tries and although Quins hit back with a late score through Simon Keogh, Gloucester secured another four points.



Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



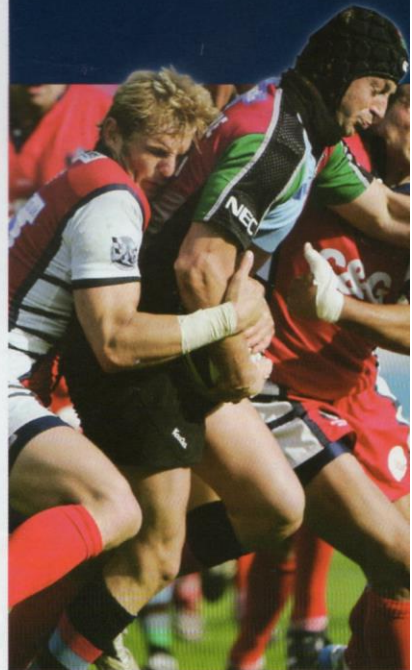
"There were stages when we made life very difficult for ourselves and we will get punished in future. But we have some fantastic individuals who can break a match open and that is exactly what happened.

Man of the Match...

Peter Richards



...Who set Gloucester in motion with a brilliant individual try.



Match Action

Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



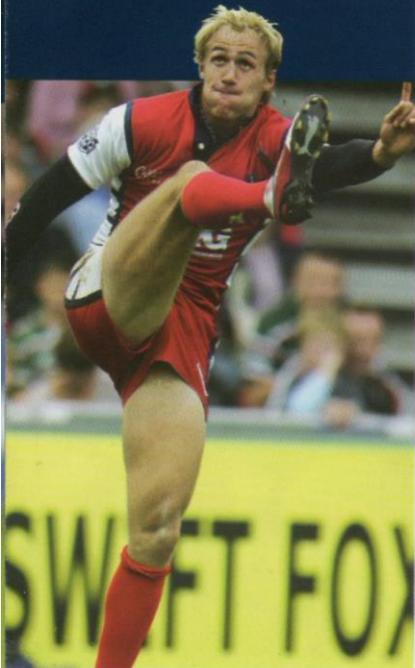
"I have mixed emotions. I am sure there will be teams who struggle here but in the second half I felt we could have won. I believe that at some stage everyone in the squad will have their part to play and that is exactly what Brad did."

Man of the Match...

James Forrester



The number eight produced a performance that had 'England' stamped all over it.



Leicester Tigers 27
Gloucester Rugby 27

Brad seals Gloucester's draw

Ref: Tony Spreadbury Att: 16,815

BRAD DAVIES kicked a 76th minute drop-goal to secure Gloucester a deserved draw against Leicester – but it was James Forrester's all-round expertise that caught the eye.

The number eight was in unforgiving form on the back of the Kingsholm scrummage to not only score the try that dragged his side back into the game but also produced a quality display in the tight, turning over possession, winning line-outs and generally having a major impact on proceedings.

Gloucester were at one stage 10

points behind following Leicester tries from Dan Hipkiss and Seru Rabeni but through Forrester and a score from Anthony Allen, Gloucester got exactly what they deserved.

There was plenty to recommend itself in the defensive work of Hazell, Bortolami and Peter Buxton, the scrummaging effort of the all-French front row and the line-out qualities of Mefin Davies.

Gloucester were the last side to win at Leicester in 2004 in the Premiership and came as close as you can to achieving the same result.





Peter Arnold

Three weeks have passed since Gloucester's last home game in the Guinness Premiership but **Peter Arnold** is back today with all the latest Kingsholm goings-on.

FRIGHTENING THE TIGERS

YOU CAN analyse the heck out of last Saturday's game, but however way you cut it, to come away from Welford Road with a share of the spoils is a considerable achievement. All right – so we didn't win a match which we might just have done, but Leicester haven't lost a home Premiership encounter in two years, and probably won't go down too often this season either.

We frightened the Tigers to death with a side lacking several first-choice players. Leicester haven't got a settled team either, so far, so honours were fairly even in that respect.

I see that Pat Howard, while acknowledging

that "Gloucester are a very good side" put the blame for the near defeat on the fact that, in his estimation, his players didn't perform very well. That's easy to say but isn't exactly a generous comment. Gloucester could have played better too, but it would be true to say that Leicester played as well as they were allowed to.

It's also interesting to note that the Tigers got comprehensively beaten down at the Rec the week before, but then Bath got walloped at Franklin's Gardens last week, a circumstance which makes today's visitors even more welcome.

Of course, you do get some peculiar results at this time of year while teams are still

finding their feet and remembering what the Premiership is all about, so we mustn't read too much into anything yet awhile.

But last Saturday was encouraging.

CHEAP AT HALF THE PRYCE

AT THE time of writing, the reported acquisition of Karl Pryce from Bradford Bulls isn't much more than informed speculation. Admittedly, the rugby league club is apparently resigned to the move, but we've learned, over the years, not to get carried away too early in such matters.

Assuming that Mr Pryce does arrive at Kingsholm, it will mean that a lot more beef on the hoof will be grazing on the sacred turf come the end of the league season. At 6' 6" and 18st 7lbs he would represent a sizeable investment in every sense of the word. I don't think we've seen a winger of those dimensions since Jonah Lomu. Of course size isn't everything, as they say. It's what you do with it that matters, but we have the infrastructure, these days, to turn raw potential into a genuine asset.

We do have to admit that the history of league stars crossing to union reveals a mixed picture. The obvious success story is that of Jason Robinson, but we suffered, in the end, over the Henry Paul affair, and the jury is still out over the case of Saracens' Andy Farrell.

There is a difference in the Pryce case however. He isn't a shining star of the league scene who has been around for years. He's a young man of undoubted promise who hasn't had time to get league habits ingrained into his make-up. In sport there are few things more difficult than to un-learn bad habits,





Alex Brown

“They say what goes around comes around, and this certainly seems to be the case for Alex.”

and that should not be too big a problem for our coaches.

Says he, hopefully. Time will certainly tell.

TAKING IT LITERALLY

WE ALWAYS knew that Alex Brown would give his right arm for the squad, but there really wasn't any need for him to take it quite so literally. His broken radius, acquired late in the Quins game is a stroke of monumental bad luck for the guy many people regard as the best line-out jumper in the Premiership.

They say that what goes around comes around, and this certainly seems to be the case for Alex. Around this time last year, Andy

Robinson was saying that our Mr Brown was his first choice lock for the autumn England squad. He then suffered a neck injury which put the kybosh on that. He was then treated rather unfairly during the Australian tour, and must have been setting his sights on getting the pieces of his international career back together again. Now this happens. It's a bit of ill fortune of an all too familiar type as far as Gloucester is concerned.

The intensity of Premiership rugby, these days, makes it virtually certain that all the clubs are going to suffer injury problems at some stage during the season, but have you noticed that the blight always seems to strike those players we would least want to see hors de combat? Alex, of course, James Simpson-Daniel, Ryan Lamb... not a trio one wishes to see out of action for any length of

time. We'd obviously miss the services of any one of those three, but to lose the whole trio is decidedly OTT.

This is not to denigrate the value of other players who have suffered. Iain Balshaw, Mike Tindall, Carlos Nieto, for example, are going to have a very large part to play over the next eight months or so. I suppose it does give other squad members the chance to strut their stuff, and it has happened very early in the season, which is better than crunch time next Spring when play-offs and finals are in everyone's mind.

I keep telling myself.

LATE STORY

JUST ONE snippet from the close season which I didn't have space for last time round.

When the arrival of Christian Califano at Kingsholm was announced, one ardent fan of my acquaintance sent a text to his friend in Cheltenham which consisted of just one word:

“Califano!”

He received an almost equally laconic reply:

“Bless you!”



Christian Califano

Hall of Fame with Dave King



Rolls Voyage

Who is the greatest player in Gloucester's history? It is a question almost impossible to answer, but Tom Voyage is regarded as one of the finest talents the Kingsholm club has ever produced as **Dave King** discovers

IT IS A question almost impossible to answer – who is the greatest Gloucester player ever?

From the glorious number eight talents of 'Iron' Mike Teague, the legendary contribution of Mike Burton, to the giant figure of Digger Morris to Bumps Carpenter, Gloucester's glorious past is littered with star names and wonderful players.

But perhaps Tom Voyage, one of the finest flankers the game has ever known, could sit at top of the list. He was capped 27-times by England and made a total of 218 appearances for Gloucester during which he scored 54 tries but more importantly, he was credited with revolutionising the role of the flanker forward into the position we know today.

He was the first man from Kingsholm to be capped by the British Lions.

Voyce was born on May 18, 1897 and began his career with local club Gordon League. He appeared in every match for England's Grand Slam winning teams of 1921, 1923 and 1924 and also represented the Army and the Barbarians.

For a period of 76 years, Voyage was Gloucester's most capped England player until Phil Vickery surpassed his total of 27 caps in 2002. Voyage was appointed captain of the club for three consecutive seasons in 1924-1925,

1925-1926 and 1926-1927, and was always instantly recognisable due to his mop of ginger hair.

Peter Ford, Gloucester's current president, said of Voyage: "Of course I did not actually see him play but his record of 27 consecutive caps for England speaks for itself. Tom was very much a local man, his wife hailed from nearby Berkeley, they had a son who moved to America and his daughter stayed local. "Tom was a very hard man and I always recall going with him to Gloucester Railway Station to meet the visiting South Africans in the early 1960's. That most revered of South African rugby

"He was the first man from Kingsholm to be capped by the British Lions."

Year	Versus	Date	Venue	Result
1920	Ireland	14th February	Lansdowne, Rd Dublin	Won 14-11
	Scotland	20th March	Twickenham	Won 13-4
1921	Wales	15th January	Twickenham	Won 18-3
	Ireland	12th February	Twickenham	Won 15-0
	Scotland	19th March	Inverleith, Scotland	Won 18-0
	France	28th March	Stade Colombes, Paris	Won 10-6
1922	Wales	21st January	Cardiff Arms Park	Lost 6-28
	Ireland	11th February	Lansdowne Rd Dublin	Won 12-3
	France	25th February	Twickenham	Drew 11-11
	Scotland	18th March	Twickenham	Won 11-5
1923	Wales	20th January	Twickenham	Won 7-3

Year	Versus	Date	Venue	Result
	Ireland	10th February	Welford Rd, Leicester	Won 23-5
		Scored of 1 of 5 tries		
	Scotland	17th March	Inverleith, Scotland	Won 8-6
	France	2nd April	Stade Colombes, Paris	Won 12-3
1924	Wales	19th January	St Helens, Swansea	Won 17-9
	Ireland	9th February	Ravenhill Belfast	Won 14-3
	France	23rd February	Twickenham	Won 19-7
	Scotland	15th March	Twickenham	Won 19-0
1925	New Zealand	3rd January	Twickenham	Lost 11-17
	Wales	17th January	Twickenham	Won 12-6
		Scored 1 try		
	Ireland	14th February	Twickenham	Drew 6-6
	Scotland	21st March	Murrayfield Edinburgh	Lost 11-14





personalities, Darie Craven was a great friend of Tom's and it was a real pleasure to be in the company of two such great rugby stalwarts."

The outstanding Gloucester flanker was always regarded as a key component in Wavell Wakefield's theory of having a specialised scrum position.

The slim and sinewy Gloucester flanker was a member of Dr. Ronald Cove-Smith's 1924 British Lions touring team that visited South Africa. It was a tour of variation for Voyce for he was pressed into taking over the place kicking duties from Scotland's Daniel Drysdale. Overall, it was not a successful tour as the team only won nine of the 21 matches.

There were various factors for the disappointment but the main problem was the mounting injury crisis they encountered. This saw Voyce, along with Jammie Clinch of Dublin University, playing in the full-back position and also in the three-quarter line.

It led to Tom claiming that he had appeared in every position behind the

scrum for British Lions. This was a time where there were no replacements and players were often requested to play out of position.

To appreciate the value and skill of Voyce, he was regarded as a key element in the best pack of forwards that England had produced up to 1930. It was Wavell Wakefield who had been the innovator of specialist duties in the scrum. Up to then it had always been a case of first to the ball. Tom Voyce suited Wakefield's theory because of his outstanding qualities and strength.

His abundant skills could be utilised to the maximum. It was his outstanding form for England in their Grand Slam success that led to his inclusion on the British Lions Tour of 1924.

The injuries sustained by the Lions on the tour presented Tom with a golden opportunity. Having been omitted from the team for the first two matches at Durban and Johannesburg which the Lions lost 7-3 and 17-0 respectively, he was included in the team for the third Test match at Port Elizabeth, which ended in a 3-3 draw.

In the final test match in Cape Town, despite a 16-9 setback, Voyce scored a try and also kicked a penalty goal.

There was plenty of personal satisfaction for him on that tour for he was the leading points scorer. He was the first player from Gloucester to be capped in a Test match for the British Lions.

This was the pinnacle of his career. It was an amazing achievement because unknown to many he had a serious eye defect. This had occurred when he was serving in the Gloucestershire Regiment in the First World War.

Strength and Goliath are terms synonymous with the name of Tom Voyce OBE. He was a legendary figure in the world of rugby union for more than 50 years. From the time he became a schoolboy international, all the way through his playing career, as an outstanding forward and then when his playing career ended, as an administrator. He was appointed to the post of President of the RFU in 1960.

In a career that encompassed almost

Year	Versus	Date	Venue	Result
	13-	13th April	Stade Colombes, Paris	Won 13-11
1926	Wales	16th January	Cardiff Arms Park	Drew 3-3
	Ireland	13th February	Lansdowne Rd, Dublin	Lost 15-19
	France	27th February	Twickenham	Won 11-0
	Scotland	20th March	Twickenham	Lost 9-17
				Scored 1 try

BRITISH LIONS (2 CAPS)

Year	Versus	Date	Venue	Result
1926	South Africa	13th September	Port Elizabeth S.A.	Drew 3-3
	South Africa	20th September	Cape Town S.A.	Lost 9-16
				Scored a try & penalty goal



Hall of Fame...

every recognition possible, he had the rare privilege of appearing in a combined England and Wales team that defeated Scotland and Ireland at the famous Rugby School Close in 1923 in a match staged to celebrate the Centenary of Rugby.

Tom played a significant part in this match for with 15 minutes of play remaining and the score level at 15 points each, Tom

have had some 50 big games together and I have always known that where he was most wanted, there I would find him."

Voyce was always in demand by both the Barbarians and captained both club and county and was one of the most outstanding forwards in Gloucestershire's history. He was a member of the county teams that won the

"Voyce was always in demand by both the Barbarians and captained both club and county and was one of the most outstanding forwards in Gloucestershire's history."

forced his way over the try line for the winning score. The legendary Wakefield who was knighted in 1946 and became Lord Wakefield of Kendal, said of Tom.

"When captaining England, Tom Voyce was always best in adversity and there is no forward I would rather have with me in a tight corner than Tom Voyce, with his grin, his sleeves rolled up, his tireless energy and his love for the game, for the hard knocks he could give and take. We must

County Championship title on 3rd March 1921, when they defeated Leicestershire 31-4 at Kingsholm and the following year in 1922, when they defeated North Midlands at Villa Park by 19-0.

In 1925 Tom played in most unusual circumstances when representing Gloucestershire.

It was in a County Championship Final versus Leicestershire at Bristol. What made



it such an unusual circumstance was that Leicestershire fielded a team composed of Leicester club players, the only county to have fielded players from one club.

Away from the game of Rugby Union, Tom was Chairman of Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association and President of the St John Ambulance Brigade of the County.

In the Second World War he was a Major in the Royal Army Corp in 1940. He passed away in 1980.

