

Gloucester Rugby

The Official Matchday Programme of Gloucester Rugby

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Gloucester Rugby
v Bath Rugby
02.12.06 17.30

Anthony Allen on England

It was a fantastic
experience

Dave Sims

Kingsholm legend joins
the Hall of Fame

Get to Know

Mark Foster

Ryan's Review

We will bounce back from
Bristol defeat

Opposition Spotlight

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Captain's Corner

"What is important now is that we maintain our momentum ahead of a hugely important month of **domestic** and **European** activity this afternoon."



IT IS an honour to be asked to captain Gloucester this afternoon – and an even greater privilege that it is against my former club Bath.

Regardless of the situation in our EDF Energy Cup group, this is still a major occasion for both teams because the intensity and rivalry associated with west country derbies is the greatest examination of any player.

You only had to be in or around the Memorial Stadium last Friday night to appreciate the significance of these games and I am sure the feelings and

atmosphere will be the same at Kingsholm this afternoon.

We are obviously aware that the Ospreys are in pole position in our pool but we are hell bent on finishing on a high because there is the outside possibility – however small – that we could still qualify.

We come into this game on the back of last weekend's defeat to Bristol, our first in the Guinness Premiership, and we are intent on bouncing straight back. It is never a pleasant experience losing a game in those conditions, under those circumstances, but we can

take plenty of positives from the manner of performance and professionalism.

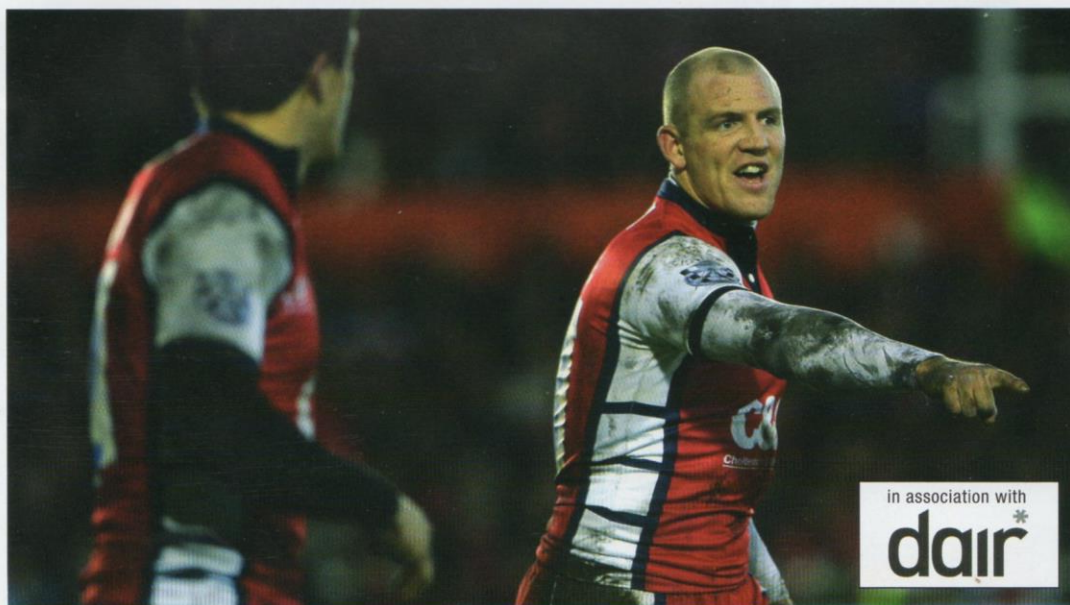
What is important now is that we maintain our momentum ahead of a hugely important month of domestic and European activity this afternoon.

I know from experience how a trip to Kingsholm can raise a side from the Rec – they would love nothing more than inflicting a defeat on us today – and they come into the game after beating Newcastle last Saturday. I am sure there will be changes to both teams but

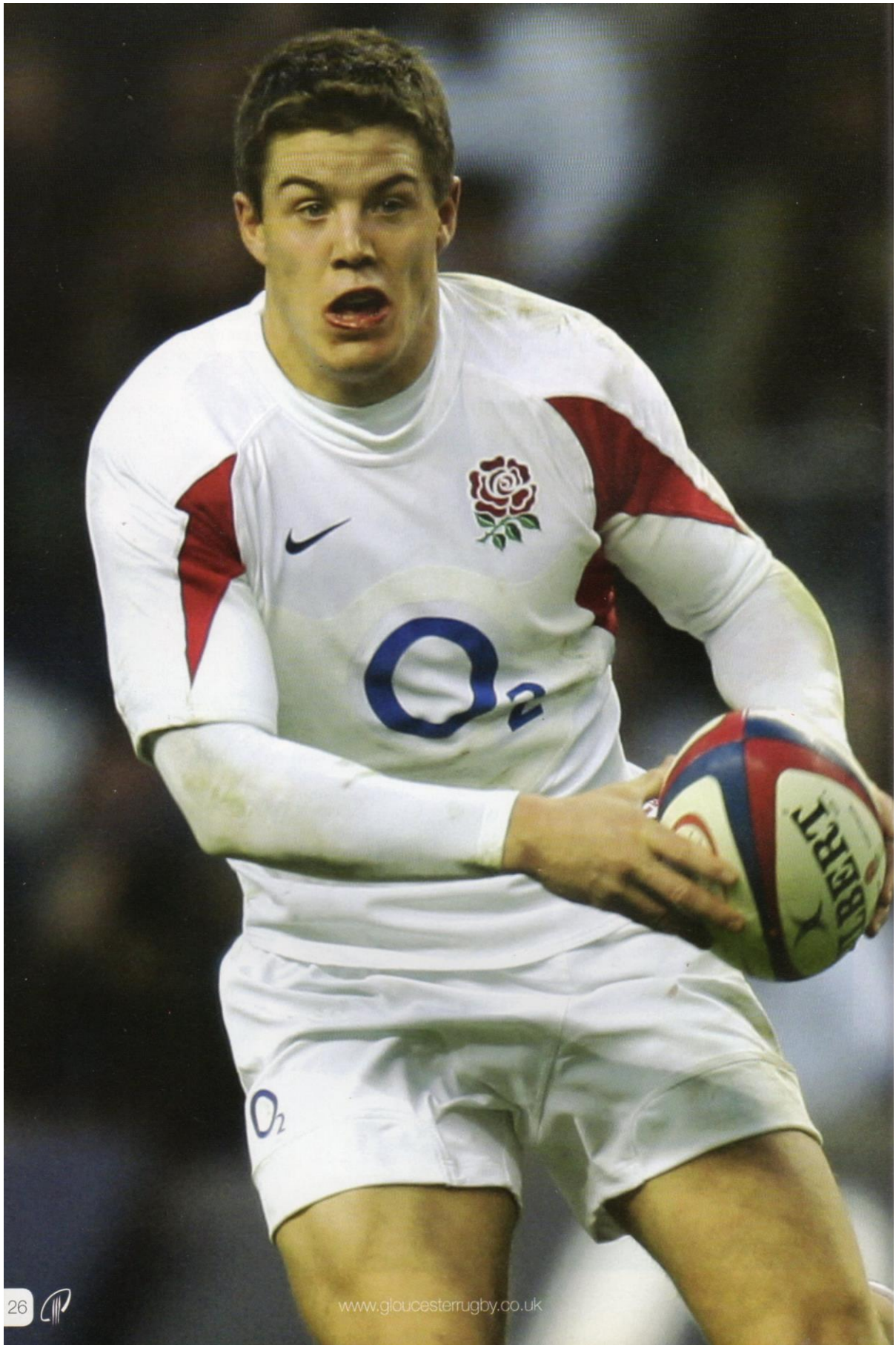
that in no way dilutes the importance of this match and we will pay Bath plenty of respect because we know how dangerous they can be.

But we are in good shape ourselves. We have players returning from international duty and injury respectively who are desperate to get back into Gloucester colours again.

It should be a great afternoon of cup action between two of the proudest teams in the country – so please get behind the team and cheer us to another victory over our closest rivals.



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England's young gun

Anthony Allen is back in Gloucester colours after facing the Haka, the All Blacks, his own rendition of Build me up Buttercup and 11 stitches in his mouth – he tells the matchday programme about his England experience.



What was it like getting called into the England training squad...

AA. It was a great feeling and a fantastic opportunity – I had a lot to prove – but I just wanted to enjoy it and work with all these really good players. My aim was just to carry on what I had been doing for Gloucester.



What was your first training session like...

AA. I just wanted to go for it. I was alongside better players than me and that makes you concentrate hard and play as well as you can. I didn't really know what to expect but it has helped playing alongside someone like Mike Tindall at Gloucester, who has won 50 caps for England. It was not easy, but I thought it went okay.



What did it feel like when you were named in the team to face New Zealand...

AA: Andy Robinson said he was going to announce the squad on Monday but we had individual meetings with him in the morning and when I went in he said: "I have some good news, you have got the number 12 shirt for the New Zealand game, congratulations and good luck, I

have plenty of confidence in you." He said when he won his first cap he wanted to go into the car park and scream – and that was exactly how I felt. The first person I called was my brother and he said it was fantastic and straight away asked if I could I get him tickets.

I spoke to my dad and it was just a massive buzz – a fantastic feeling – I went back to my room and was just thinking 'oh my god'.

On the day of the game we had to wait for an hour for the bus and I was just pacing up and down my room in a pretty nervous state. It was made a bit easier because we had a team run at Twickenham on the Friday and I had played sevens there too.



What was it like walking into the dressing room...

AA: We were presented with two shirts – one at the hotel before we left and then when we got into the dressing room I was in between Charlie Hodgson and Jamie Noon with my shirt and all my kit laid out. It had first cap, November 5 2006 v New Zealand on it and to see it there was pretty exciting.

It was an amazing experience, to be in there with all those great players was fantastic.



Player Interview

12



Anthony Allen

Position: Centre

Height: 5'10

Weight: 14st 3lb

DOB: 01.09.86



What was the final team talk like...

AA: Martin Corry did it and it was very emotional and exciting at the same time. I was in there experiencing it all and although I was really enjoying it, I was very nervous by that stage. We talked about cool heads and things like that. For my warm-up, I like to do my own thing and then get involved with the team structure – try and stay cool and concentrate on what I am going to have to do.



What was the anthem like...

AA: I had been prepared for it because I had sung it before for the Under-19s. But this was a massive day and totally different to anything I had experienced. But I did sing it and it felt good.

For the Argentina game, I picked out my girlfriend in the crowd but she said to me afterwards she didn't want to look straight at me in case I laughed.



What was the Haka experience like...

AA: I had seen it before and i thought i knew what to expect. I found it better not to look at one of the Maori players doing it because they can be pretty intimidating. I just had a good look round the stadium and took in the atmosphere – I tried not to get drawn in by it. Some of the players smiled back or were pretty intense – you just have to do what feels comfortable.



What did the first contact feel like...

AA: I ended up with 11 stitches in my lip. All I remember is that their winger came in as I went round on the loop and hit me in jaw. I played on until half-time and

then was stitched up a bit and then afterwards I had some more – you could say they left their mark. But I think it went well for me personally. Obviously there were the things that didn't quite go as planned but I was pleased with what I could contribute against the best team in the world.



What did you sing for your debut song...

AA: Thankfully, Shaun Perry went first but I did Build me up, Buttercup – it was quite funny – that's all I am saying.



What are your aims now...

AA: I just want to try and get into rugby with Gloucester, aim to continue playing as well as I can and just take it from there. I loved the experience but I want to concentrate on getting my best form back and hopefully earn another opportunity with England in the future.

I loved every minute of it but all my attention now is on doing well with Gloucester.

ANTHONY ALLEN, one of the most gifted youngsters in English rugby, has pledged his future to Gloucester by signing a new two-year contract extension with Dean Ryan's Guinness Premiership pace-setters this week.

The 20-year-old, who has already won two England caps during the autumn internationals against New Zealand and Argentina, has agreed a deal that will keep him in Gloucester colours until 2009.

"It is an honour to represent a club with such tradition and history and to have my future confirmed for another two years is a great feeling. I just want to continue to develop and learn and try and make myself a better player.

"I have had a taste of what it takes to play at a higher level and I think I am in the best environment to help me achieve that with Dean Ryan at Gloucester."





Ryan's Review

In four **Guinness Premiership** matches during the autumn international period, **Gloucester** took 13 points. Head coach **Dean Ryan** rounds-up all the latest activity.



You knew it would happen at some point and on Friday we lost our unbeaten record at Bristol, was it hard to take?

DR: I think people get too pre-occupied with unbeaten records and everything associated with them. As a group, we always knew we would lose at some stage in the

Premiership and now I think it might be a benefit to us because we start from scratch again.

I will not let us get shaken around emotionally because we lost a game in the seventh minute of injury time, away from home in terrible conditions to a drop-goal. We will retain the perspective from that experience.

We learnt an awful lot about ourselves, about the respect we have for each other and the willingness we have got to become better as a team. The hard thing to take was losing in the last minute after all the effort put in but we won three games out of four during a period when we have been hit hard with injuries and international call-ups.

To me, that is a significant improvement because

this time last year we lost virtually all of our momentum during this period – but we can take plenty from our defeat on Friday so we will hopefully not lose that momentum.



Did you exceed expectation during the last four weeks?

DR: Possibly in terms of points, but that is always hard to tell. What was vital was the home win against Saracens because that came on the back of two defeats in Europe. Saracens were gathering momentum and were a genuine threat. It was vital we won that game, particularly with what was to follow against London Irish and Wasps.

After the draw at Leicester when Brad Davies kicked the equalising penalty, I said everyone in the squad would play their part at some





“We must remember we are still very much in the **competition** and it is vital we win at **Kingsholm** next weekend. If we can do that, it's the **first stage** out of four **completed**”

stage and in the last few weeks we have had guys produce the sort of performances that have ensured we can keep our momentum.

We have also been fortunate that players have started to comeback from injury at the right time. We lost Marco to Italy but Alex Brown returned, Ryan Lamb was injured at the start of the season and we had the experience of Willie Walker, Jake Boer has done a tremendous job when we have been without Andy Hazell and Adam Eustace has come into the side and been fantastic in the second row.

I am delighted for everyone who has contributed.



We are close to another test in the Heineken Cup, are you better prepared this time?

DR: We were well prepared last time but came up against two pretty good teams – one who has a tremendous European pedigree and another who played exceptionally well on the day at Kingsholm.

What I want us to be able to do is learn from the lessons we were given in those games, about how we attack, how we defend and how we close games out. We are used to operating within boundaries we are comfortable in like the Premiership. Europe takes us out of those confines and we must learn to deal with them.

We must remember we are still very much in the competition and it is vital we win at Kingsholm next weekend. If we can do that, it's the first stage



out of four completed. That is all we can control at the moment.



You have obviously been without a number of players because of international duties, how do you think they have fared?

DR: It has been a difficult month for England in terms of results and performances but the exposure given to Pete Richards, Iain Balshaw and Anthony Allen in particular will be of a huge benefit to them.

I don't think Pete did himself any harm with the level of his performances and everyone is aware that Anthony is a highly regarded individual with a massive future ahead of him.

We will only know if these guys are good enough if they play at that intensity level but we want everyone to be successful and progress as far

as they can and they are doing that. Marco is an international-quality athlete and it will be great to have him back with us and hopefully Carlos Nieto will have got some game-time. Hopefully, it will make us a better team for the experiences.



Today is our second west country derby in a week, how are you looking forward to it?

DR: They are always great games for different reasons. They are massively physical, hugely intense and great to be a part of. We are involved in knock-out rugby this afternoon and do have a lot to play for.

We know Bath are a massive set-piece threat – they have a big, powerful, forward pack and will be dangerous outside. We know what we are up against this afternoon and it will be a great test for us with what we have to come in the next few weeks.

Gloucester RUGBY



Bath RUGBY

	<u>Olly MORGAN</u>	15	Full Back	15	<u>Michael STEPHENSON</u>	
	<u>Karl PRYCE</u>	14	Right Wing	14	<u>Ian DAVEY</u>	
	<u>Jack ADAMS</u>	13	Centre	13	<u>Chev WALKER</u>	
	© <u>Mike TINDALL</u>	12	Centre	12	<u>Tom CHEESEMAN</u>	
	<u>Mark FOSTER</u>	11	Left Wing	11	<u>David BORY</u>	
	<u>Willie WALKER</u>	10	Fly Half	10	<u>Chris MALONE</u> ©	
	<u>Haydn THOMAS</u>	9	Scrum Half	9	<u>Pietro TRAVAGLI</u>	
	<u>Patrice COLLAZO</u>	1	Prop	1	<u>Daniel PARKES</u>	
	<u>Rob ELLOWAY</u>	2	Hooker	2	<u>Dave WARD</u>	
	<u>Carlos NIETO</u>	3	Prop	3	<u>Laurence OVENS</u>	
	<u>Jonathan PENDLEBURY</u>	4	Lock	4	<u>Dan SMITH</u>	
	<u>Will JAMES</u>	5	Lock	5	<u>Rob FIDLER</u>	
	<u>Jake BOER</u>	6	Flanker	6	<u>Hottie LOUW</u>	
	<u>James MERRIMAN</u>	7	Flanker	7	<u>Jonny FAAMATUAINU</u>	
	<u>Adam BALDING</u>	8	No 8	8	<u>Chris GOODMAN</u>	

Replacements

	<u>Olivier AZAM</u>	16	Substitute 1	16	<u>Chris BROOKER</u>	
	<u>Jack FORSTER</u>	17	Substitute 2	17	<u>David BARNES</u>	
	<u>Alex BROWN</u>	18	Substitute 3	18	<u>Jack BENTALL</u>	
	<u>Andy HAZELL</u>	19	Substitute 4	19	<u>Jamie MILLER</u>	
	<u>Rory LAWSON</u>	20	Substitute 5	20	<u>Andy WILLIAMS</u>	
	<u>Brad DAVIES</u>	21	Substitute 6	21	<u>Mike MANGEOLLES</u>	
	<u>James SIMPSON-DANIEL</u>	22	Substitute 7	22	<u>Jack CUTHBERT</u>	

Bryan Redpath Interview

The former Scotland scrum-half works with one of the most exciting groups of backs in the country and here he tells the matchday programme about his thoughts on the season so far the challenges that await Gloucester later in the season.



Bryan, how would you sum up the season so far?

BR: I think we are delighted with the progress we have made so far. We were realistic enough to set achievable goals and nine matches into the season our start has to be regarded as very good. But I think we will be more aware of our capabilities after the next nine

games, when the season is towards the end of January. In my view, the next nine games are the most important and a massive challenge. A lot of teams can get off to a good start and then there are always one or two who claw their way back into contention at that stage. Our main aim has been to establish some consistency and stability but after the next nine games I think we will have a better indication of where we are and where we might be.



Was dealing with the expectation the biggest difficulty at the start of the season?

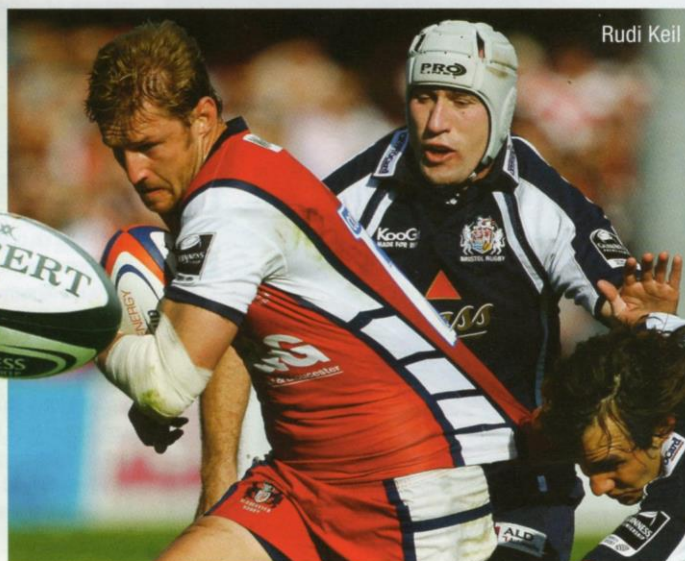
BR: On that side of things, we have done well. You never know exactly how everything is going to go, particularly with the level of expectation on the youngsters after

what they achieved last season. Our expectation as a group of coaches is built game on game. We have won games this season we could easily have lost and that shows we have a group of players who are aware of what it takes to be successful and are capable of learning quickly. Nobody carries more expectation than the players and coaches themselves and we are in a position where we can kick on and do well. The Heineken Cup, so far at least, has been a massive disappointment for everyone but we are pretty happy with how we have handled the Premiership.



What has pleased you the most so far?

BR: What has pleased me most has been our understanding and control



Rudi Keil



“A lot of players – guys like **Rudi Keil**, **Rory Lawson** and **Willie Walker** have been great.”

of the game and where we want to play it. I think we have executed that in the Guinness Premiership very well. Where we have slipped is obviously in Europe against different players, different referees and different systems. We don't know as much about these teams but as a group we are better off after the experiences now because we understand what is required to manipulate a game at that level. In the Premiership, we are able to manipulate field position and stay in attacking zones longer. The European experiences may not have been a shock to the coaches but it probably was for the players. As coaches, it highlighted certain aspects of our game that need to be better if we want to thrive at a higher level. If you don't front up, you won't play well and I think everyone understands that.



You bounced back well after Europe, that was vital for you?

BR: The Saracens game was massive for us and it was crucial we came back positively after two major European defeats. That really set us up for the month because they were playing pretty well and we had a lot of players injured or away on international duty. To come out and win three games like we have has highlighted the ability and passion we have to succeed in this squad because an away game against London Irish and then back against Wasps were very tough, particularly with the way they play. They all have big set-pieces, are



Willie Walker

physically strong and can cause real problems. Even though we lost to Bristol, we are really pleased with what we managed to achieve in November.



How have the young players settled in?

BR: We know they are all very good players and all have done well. Anthony Allen has obviously been exposed at an international level and that, in the future, will be a massive benefit to him. Ryan [Lamb] got a bit of a wake-up call from the European experiences but he will certainly be a better player for the experience and has already started to show it, but a lot of players – guys like Rudi Keil, Rory Lawson and Willie Walker have been great. I

hate picking anyone out for individual praise because our squad is strong and that has really shone through. The boys are honest and have risen to each challenge they have been set.















What are the immediate aims now?

BR: We want to desperately recover something out of our Heineken Cup campaign, learn from that environment and get things right for when we go back into the Premiership. Europe is a cultural change and we obviously have two very big games coming up against Edinburgh. We don't want to set huge long-term goals but take everything basically match by match. We have a lot to improve on each week but we are pleased with where we are at the moment.

Match Action

Time line

 12 mins	Haskell TRY, Van Gisbergen CON	0-7
 20 mins	Van Gisbergen PEN	0-10
 22 mins	Walker PEN	3-10
 36 mins	Walker PEN	6-10
 40mins	Walker PEN	9-10
 42 mins	Walker PEN	12-10
 55 mins	Bailey TRY	17-10
 57 mins	Allen TRY, Walker CON	24-10
 61 mins	Van Gisbergen PEN	24-13
 73 mins	Walker PEN	27-13
 76 mins	Ward TRY	27-18
 80 mins	Van Gisbergen PEN	27-21

Gloucester Line-up

15	Willie Walker	(5 pens, 1 con)
14	James Bailey	(1t)
13	Mike Tindall	
12	Anthony Allen	(1t)
11	James Simpson-Daniel	
10	Ryan Lamb	
9	Rory Lawson	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Olivier Azam	
3	Christian Califano	
4	Adam Eustace	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Peter Buxton	(capt)
7	Jake Boer	
8	Luke Narraway	
REPS		
16	Rob Elloway	
17	Patrice Collazo	(Wood)
18	Jonathan Pendlebury	
19	Adam Balding	
20	Haydn Thomas	
21	Jack Adams	
22	Olly Morgan	(Lamb)

Gloucester Rugby 27
London Wasps 21



Wasps get Stung

Saturday, November 4
Ref: Martin Fox Att: 12,500

GLOUCESTER claimed their first victory over Wasps at Kingsholm in three attempts thanks to two second half tries from James Bailey and Anthony Allen – and a punishing forward effort.

It was a terrific performance, set-up by the front row effort of Nick Wood, Olivier Azam and Christian Califano, who provided the frame-work for Gloucester to operate from.

Wood and Califano were particularly impressive at

the scrummage, while a typically robust Azam set the seal on the contest when he bumped Lawrence Dallaglio off in the second half.

Gloucester started well but trailed to a 12th minute try. Wasps turned over a Gloucester attack and went blind from a line-out where Tom Voyce put the impressive James Haskell away to score.

The lead soon became 10-0 with a Mark Van Gisbergen penalty and Gloucester needed all



their resolve and determination to drag themselves back into the game with three Willie Walker penalties after 22, 36 and 40 minutes to leave the home side trailing 10-9 at the break. It was the momentum required and with the likes of Jake Boer, Alex Brown, Adam Eustace and Peter Buxton churning through a vast amount of work, Walker gave Gloucester a 42nd minute lead with his fourth penalty.

What they desperately needed was a try and at the end of the third quarter they got it. Luke Narraway fed James Simpson-Daniel, who carved his way through midfield and fed Bailey. Wasps initially got back to defend well, but the clearance landed straight in the arms of Bailey



again, who just managed to reach the line. And three minutes later Gloucester went 24-10 ahead when Anthony Allen picked up a dropped pass by Tom Rees close to the touchline and had the legs to beat the cover and score.

Although Van Gisbergen landed a penalty when Buxton was penalised at a ruck, Walker made it 27-13 with a 73 minute penalty. However, there was still time for Joe Ward to score from a line-out and Van Gisbergen to earn a losing bonus point with the final kick of the match.

Man of the Match...

Christian Califano



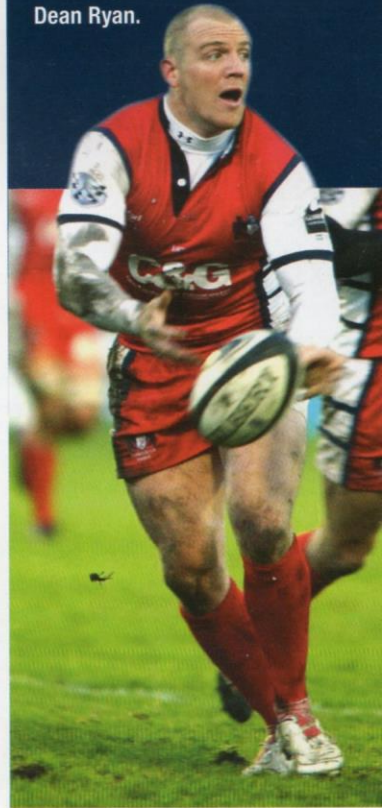
Christian Califano – the former French international produced a wonderful set-piece performance to dominate England squad member Tim Payne.

Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



"Any victory over Wasps is extremely satisfying, particularly for this group of players and I am really pleased because we stuck at our task very well," head coach Dean Ryan.





Peter Arnold

It has been a hectic four weeks domestically and internationally but **Peter Arnold** rounds up all the comings and goings with his usual experienced eye.

BAD LUCK ANTHONY...

WE WERE all sorry to see that Anthony Allen got released from the England squad for the two Springbok matches. Or were we? At least Andy Robinson's rather insensitive decision made young Anthony available for Gloucester for a couple of matches.

The timing intrigues me. His omission from the squad for the first match was understandable. At the time that side was announced the agreement between the clubs and the RFU that no player would be picked for more than three matches was still in force. Only a day or so later was the restriction relaxed, so that could have been the game which Anthony was due to miss anyway.

Then the agreement went by the board. At that point, or thereabouts, Dean Ryan, never a man to leave anyone in doubt as to his opinions, expressed his displeasure at the discarding of Allen. The criticism of the

selectors was fairly blunt. The next thing we knew was that the lad was left out of the squad for the fourth international.

Of course, the two things couldn't be connected, could they? The England selectors wouldn't be small minded enough to let their reactions to honest criticism cloud their judgement in this way, would they?

Of course not.

...BUT WELL DONE PETE.

IN MY humble, and probably biased, view, Peter Richards is one of the few England players to come out of the autumn international series with an enhanced reputation.

His characteristically feisty performances certainly added some much-needed fire to a fairly damp England series. And only a piece of desperate defending denied him a try in the first South African game. Good on you Pete. Keep rocking and rumbling.

RORY AT THE TOP

ONE side effect of the Richards elevation to the ranks of the high and mighty was that Rory Lawson got a few chances to show us what he can do. It appears that the Scottish selectors were watching, too, and drafted him into the Scotland squad after the injury to Chris Cussiter.

By joining the squad Rory is following in his father's footsteps, and I'll bet his granddad, our old friend and best TV commentator on the game who ever lived, Bill McLaren is absolutely over the moon. And so he should be.

THE STING

ICAN'T help feeling a sense of personal satisfaction at the victory over Wasps the other week. It's three years since we beat them in any competition and our comeuppance was well overdue.

You'll recall the equivalent fixture last season, when we played all the rugby but neglected the small matter of scoring as many points as the High Wycombe outfit. Going back a season or two, you may also remember a game where Adam Eustace was shown the red card when the game was only a couple of minutes old. At the subsequent disciplinary hearing Adam was exonerated completely, but that was small consolation after a lost match and loss of valuable points. You don't expect to be able to take on a side of Wasps' calibre for a whole match with only 14 men.

You do have to admire the Wasps' achievements over the past few seasons. Undoubtedly the leading club in the country over that time, they eclipsed even the formidable Leicester outfit. Nevertheless, there is a feeling of justice



Anthony Allen





Action v Wasps

“It’s three years since we beat them in any competition and our comeuppance was well overdue.”

having been done this time round as far as Gloucester is concerned

They’ll be out to get us in the return fixture though, won’t they?

SEEN IT ALL BEFORE

THERE’S no point in speculating about the future of the England set-up because events are moving rapidly and there may well have been radical developments by the time you read this. All I will say is that, here at Kingsholm, we’ve seen it all before. In fact, we’ve seen it three, or perhaps three-and-a-half times.

The whole atmosphere around Twickenham at the moment reminds me, only too well, of the way things felt around here towards the end of the reigns of Richard Hill, Philippe Saint-Andre and Nigel Melville. I don’t profess to know the causes, but there is that same sense of malaise, of helplessness, of the inevitability of defeat which we endured here over those dark periods. How do you explain the sight of skilled, professional players dropping the ball, missing their touches, falling into schoolboy offside errors?

At Gloucester, we solved the problem three times by changing the management. Interestingly, Richard and Philippe disappeared from our radar for a while

and have now returned and are doing splendid jobs for Bristol and Sale respectively. Nigel has disappeared to America, I believe, but I wouldn’t be at all surprised if he were to make a similarly successful return in the fullness of time.

At one point towards the end of last season we appeared to be approaching the same melancholy downward spiral. Dean Ryan nipped that one in the bud by making radical changes to the side and introducing what the press are calling “Gloucester’s young guns” to turn things round. This stirred the imagination and added a spring to the step of players and supporters alike.

I hope the Twickenham hierarchy is taking note.

FIRST LOSS

IF WE had to lose a Premiership game, and of course we did at some point, then I’d as soon it was against Bristol, away, as anyone. Even so, we so very nearly nicked it, and that isn’t too bad a result at the Memorial Ground in monsoon conditions on a Friday evening, with an untried half-back pairing.

We shall await the return fixture with considerable interest.



Nigel Melville

Hall of Fame with Dave King



Dave Sims

He was easily one of the best lock forwards in the country and the heart beat of his Gloucester for season after season. Today **Dave Sims** joins the hall of fame.

DAVE SIMS is a modern-day Kingsholm legend. A formidable middle jumper, he was a genuinely brilliant competitor and during a tumultuous period for the club, almost single-handedly kept Gloucester in the top-flight alongside luminaries like Andy Deacon and Pete Glanville.

Sims, or 'our dad' as he was known, was one of Gloucester's very own legends. Born on November 22 1969, he was educated at Churchdown School and had a rugby

pedigree running through his veins. He was the grandson of Gloucester, Cheltenham and England front row forward Tom Price.

It was almost inevitable he would pursue a career in the game and progressed to Gloucester from one of the finest local breeding grounds possible – the wonderful Longlevens club – who also produced Deacon and a series of other outstanding players down the ages.

Sims reached the zenith of his club

aspirations when he was appointed Gloucester Rugby captain in two spells, the first in the seasons of 1995-1996 and 1996-1997 and again in 1998-1999. Dave's club rugby was not restricted to the English game for he also had a spell in Australia representing Sunnybank RFC.

At Kingsholm, Sims was the master – he led the line-out brilliantly and for seasons was one of the most respected locks in the country. He appeared at regional level for the south west of England, Gloucestershire and the famed Barbarians. He also made 22 appearances for England A Team.

A token of the esteem in which he was held within the club was the fact that Dave Sims became the first professional player of the club. He was also the first club captain when the game went professional

Sims had signed a two year contract at the start of the 1995-1996 season but times were changing at Kingsholm. The professional era possessed little sentiment for the great talismanic figures in Gloucester's history. Richard Hill had been replaced by Philippe Saint-Andre, who immediately started to rebuild the club. The first casualties were scrum-half Scott Benton and Sims as the Frenchman took control of playing matters at Kingsholm ahead of the 1999-2000 season. It brought to an end an era in which one of the club's





finest ever lock forwards had made 255 first team appearances in 11 seasons at Kingsholm and the emotional fall-out was huge. Upon leaving the club he had served so well he headed north to Sixways, home of Worcester RFC and a base that was already familiar to the discarded from this club.

Sims spent two seasons with the south midlands club and was proud to have captained the fast rising National League Division One club. After two seasons with Worcester he departed from Sixways to join fellow National Division One club, Exeter.

One of the greatest feats for Sims, after years of wonderful service, was to represent England and he made his international debut for England in the summer tour of New Zealand and Australia in 1998.

England Team versus New Zealand at Dunedin, New Zealand on 20th June 1998 on Dave Sim's debut: -

M.B. Perry (Bath); T.G. Stimpson (Newcastle), N.D. Beal (Northampton), O.J. Lewsey (Wasps), A.S. Healey (Leicester); J.P. Wilkinson (Newcastle), M.J.S. Dawson (Northampton); G.C. Rowntree (Leicester), R. Cockerill (Leicester), P.J. Vickery (Gloucester), G.S. Archer (Newcastle), D.J. Grewcock (Saracens), B.B. Clarke (Bath), S.O. Ojomoh (Gloucester), P.H. Sanderson (Sale). Replacements; W.J. Green (Wasps) for P.J. Vickery, B. Sturnham (Saracens) for S.O. Ojomoh, T.D. Beim (Sale) for J.P. Wilkinson, P.B.T. Greening (Sale) for R. Cockerill, **D. Sims (Gloucester) for G.S. Archer.**

Referee: Mr W.J. Erickson (Australia).

Sims made one appearance as a replacement, the other in the England starting line-up. In his international debut his Gloucester colleagues, Phil Vickery and Steve Ojomoh, also played. Alongside him on the England's replacement bench was former Gloucester winger Tom Beim, who had joined Sale.

Sims had the honour of captaining Gloucestershire to County Championship success at the completion of the 2001-2002 season, when they defeated Cheshire in a Twickenham final on 1st June 2002. The Gloucestershire team were:- D. Knight (Birmingham & Solihull); S. Pollock (Old Patesians), S. Martin (Coventry), M. Davies (Caerphilly), N. Ainslow (Cheltenham); S. Thompson (Stroud), P. Knight (Birmingham & Solihull); T. Windo (Worcester), P. Price (Lydney), L. Fortey (Birmingham & Solihull), C. Raymond (Old Patesians), **D. Sims (Worcester, Captain)**, R. James (Stroud), N. Carter (Worcester), J. Horrobin (Coventry).

Several of these players had played for Gloucester alongside Sims. The Knight brothers, David and Paul; Tony Windo; Lee Fortey; Chris Raymond; Rob James and Nathan Carter. On the replacement bench were: Kevin Dunn (Gloucester O.B.) and Virgil Hartland (Old Patesians) both had been former players with the club.

Hall of Fame...

CAPS

YEAR	VERSUS	DATE	VENUE	RESULT
1998	New Zealand	20th June	Dunedin, N.Zealand	Lost 22-64
	New Zealand	27th June	Auckland, N.Zealand	Lost 10-40
	South Africa	4th July	Cape Town, South Africa	Lost 0-18



Dave Sims now lives in Exeter and he plays for the Chiefs. Never a man to let the grass grow beneath his feet – he is now happy to do so, for he is now a grounds man at the Chief's new Sandy Lane complex.

Still turning out for the odd game for Exeter United, he scored an early season try against Redruth. An added duty for the former Gloucester captain is the fact that along with former Crediton coach Keith Fleming, he is now in charge of the Devon club's Tamar League team.

With half of the clubs playing staff in the 18 to 23 years of age bracket the experience he can hand down will be invaluable to the up and coming aspirations of the club's young hopefuls.

As Peter Arnold, a fellow contributor to the programme, wrote in the '125 Glorious Years': "Dave is one of those players whose sheer presence is almost tangible from the moment he leads the team on to the field until the final whistle. Dave eats, sleeps and thinks Gloucester all the time. The club has never had a better ambassador."

That just about sums up Gloucester's man mountain.

David King

Fan Zone with Bob Fenton

Gloucester's unbeaten Guinness Premiership record may have ended last Friday, but **Bob Fenton** is very happy with their points return during the international period – but thinks it is time for a change at the top for England.

SO THE unbeaten record goes for this season and we tumble from the top of the table into second place behind Bristol. Is that a bad thing?

Well, losing any game isn't particularly good – especially when it's to one of your nearest rivals – however it's nothing to get too down heartened about. Having been banished to London I was forced to watch it on TV so can't really comment on the game as a whole because you only see such a small part of it.

The conditions played a huge part and made it a bit of a lottery. Credit to Jason Strange though, his last gasp drop-goal took nerves of steel to convert – more so when you consider that he had only been on the park for about five minutes.

And the aging front three of Bristol did the business for them. Whatever age-reducing chemical they pump them full of during the week works wonders – put me down for a lorry load now!

Mind you – talking of ages, if you believe Sky Sports our Peter Richards is the oldest player around, coming in at an impressive 106 years old. On their website they have his date of birth down as 28 August 1900. That means he is either incredibly youthful for his advancing years or he has a very old-looking portrait hanging somewhere in his house.

Or maybe Sky have got their facts wrong... again!

Anyway, back to the Premiership. When you consider that you could have

probably put out a pretty good first team from those who are currently on our treatment table or were away on international duty, we came out of that game pretty well.

We got our first bonus point of the season, and courtesy of Wasps going belly up at home to Leicester we are still well placed points wise compared to our closest rivals.

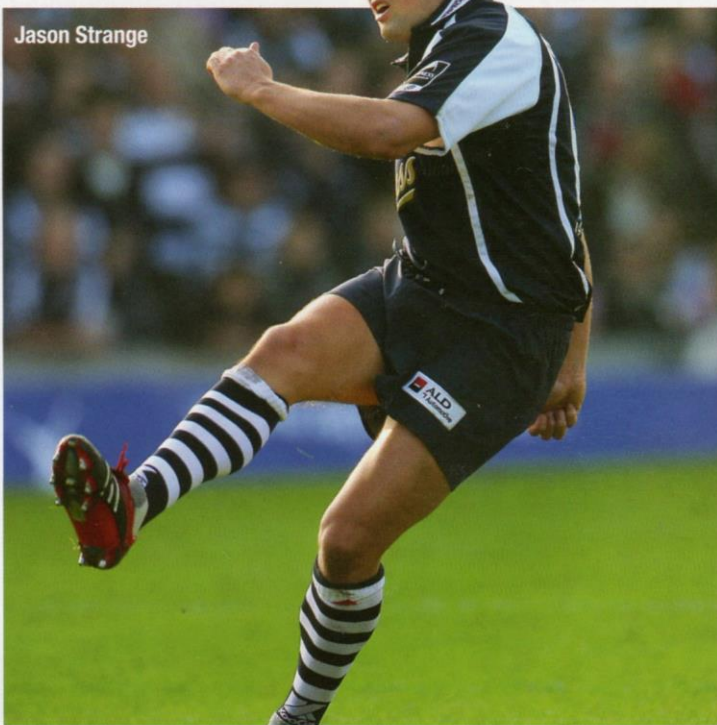
In fact we came out of this whole autumn international period in pretty good shape. One defeat from four games while missing several key players is a damn good return, and to be honest a bit

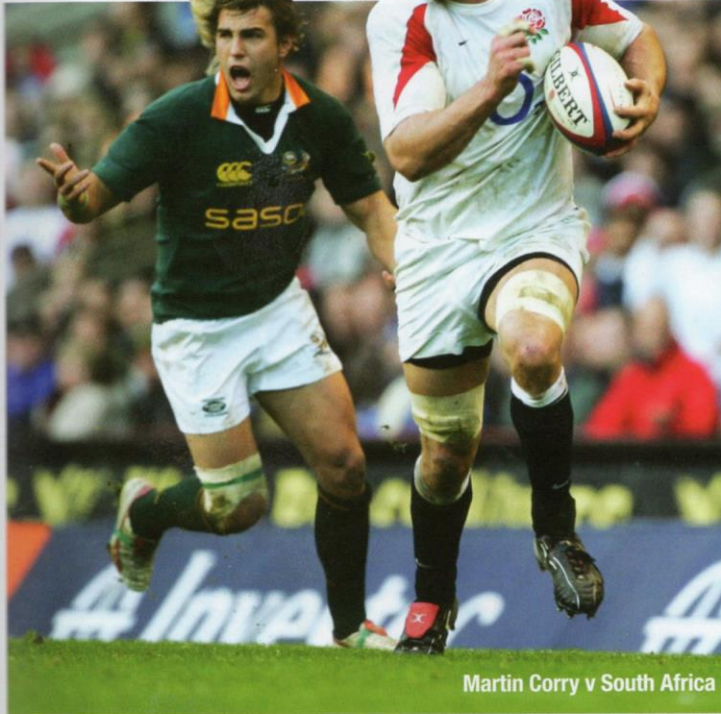
better than I had anticipated.

I still think that the international weekends create a massively unfair situation for the clubs who provide the players for the international cause while those like Saracens and London Irish carry on regardless.

Having got all the players back it's time for another break from the Premiership and today's EDF Energy Cup match, then next week the start of back to back games against Edinburgh. We won't see the Premiership until three days before Christmas when the Falcons come to town.

Jason Strange





Martin Corry v South Africa

We got our **first bonus point** of the season, and courtesy of **Wasps** going belly up at home to **Leicester** we are still well placed points wise compared to our closest rivals.

Leicester can do us a favour by sticking one over Bristol at Welford Road on the same day, and if we do the business over the Geordies (well, Kiwi's, Aussies, South Africans and various other nationalities) we can be sitting on top of the pile for Christmas. Very nice.

But its' the Cup today, so let's forget about the Premiership. It's going to be a bit of an odd match with both sides in a position of having nothing really to play for. Our defeat at the Ospreys all but puts us out of the competition – unless Bristol go down there and cause a bit of an upset today. I can't really see that happening so we can probably expect to see a few players who have not had regular starts trotting out this afternoon.

In a way I hope not, I would love to see us send a full strength side out, after all it's Bath we are playing and it's been over four years since we rattled in that magical 68 points against them. A repeat today would be very sweet indeed. It's pretty unlikely though, more's the pity.

Changing tack slightly, what are we to make of the state England have got themselves into. Having sat through the debacle that was the game against the All Blacks, the embarrassment that was Argentina and the final insult against South Africa seconds you have to wonder where the national game is going. By now all the excuses – too much rugby... too little preparation time...

clubs have too much power... will have been trotted out to try to mask the cracks.

Cracks? Cracks??? It's not a crack, it's a chasm the size of the Grand Canyon! Sorry an' all, but the buck has to stop somewhere – or perhaps several some where's before coming to a halt.

Martin Corry – great player though he is – looked bereft of ideas and England struggled for leadership generally. Andy Robinson appears to be so far out of his depth a change needs to be made at the top and i am glad it has been made this week.

We need a complete clear out at international level, not just of the remaining 'old guard' of players and coaches, but of the administrators as well. It's time to derail the gravy train and take the game back to where it should be.

And while they're at it they can look at the pricing structure that means people like me cannot afford to go to Twickenham more than once in a blue moon.

Meanwhile a load of people on corporate day-outs moan and grumble about what's going on in front of them because we are not running sixty million points in against every side we face.

Time to bite the bullet – forget next year's Six Nations, forget the World Cup and start building a team around players who are going to get better, rather than those who once were. Bring in a forward thinking coach who is prepared to do that, prepared to take a few losses, prepared to gamble on youth and will stick by his players rather than tossing them aside after two or three appearances.

Trouble is, that sounds like I am making a good case for one Dean Ryan and I don't want him to go just yet, if that's all the same to you...

Match Action

Time line

 5 mins	
Regan TRY	5-0
 14 mins	
David Hill PEN	8-0
 24 mins	
Walker PEN	8-3
 31 mins	
Hill DROP-GOAL	11-3
 36 mins	
Walker PEN	11-6
 40mins	
Walker PEN	11-9
 76 mins	
Walker PEN	11-12
 80 mins	
Strange DROP-GOAL	14-12

Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	
14	James Bailey	
13	Mike Tindall	
12	Anthony Allen	
11	James Simpson-Daniel	
10	Willie Walker	(4pens)
9	Haydn Thomas	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Olivier Azam	
3	Christian Califano	
4	Adam Eustace	
5	Alex Brown	
6	Peter Buxton	(capt)
7	Jake Boer	
8	Luke Narraway	
REPS		
16	Rob Elloway	
17	Jack Forster	(Califano)
18	Patrice Collazo	(Wood)
19	Adam Balding	(Narraway)
20	Jack Adams	
21	Jonathan Pendlebury	
22	Brad Davies	

Bristol Rugby
Gloucester Rugby

14
12



Super Strange

Friday, November 24
Ref: Rob Debney Att: 12,000

JASON STRANGE ended Gloucester's eight-match unbeaten Guinness Premiership record with a last-minute drop-goal to seal a tough, tense west country victory last Friday.

In terrible conditions, that made any meaningful rugby virtually impossible, Gloucester looked to have stolen the game when Willie Walker kicked a 75th minute penalty to hand the visitors a one point lead.

But Bristol ploughed forward in the closing stages, retained possession

brilliantly through almost 15 phases and got within range for Strange to win the match with the final kick of the game.

Bristol were well worth their victory that put them back on top of the table. They scored the one and only try when Mark Regan finished off a powerful attack that showed Bristol's kick and chase game off perfectly and also the power of Dan Ward-Smith.

There were eye-catching performances from Ward-Smith and Gareth Llewellyn but Gloucester can be proud of their efforts and





can take plenty of positives out of a game they came within an ace of winning away from home and in conditions that made their expansive game almost impossible.

Bristol led 8-0 – David Hill following up Regan’s try with a penalty – but Gloucester battled back through the accuracy of Walker’s boot to trail only 11-9 at the break.

In the second half, they had their chances to deep inside Bristol territory but lacked the accuracy to make

their pressure tell, particularly from a series of close-range scrums in the third quarter.

However, they looked to have won the game when Bristol were penalised for dragging down a driving maul and Walker held his nerve brilliantly to slot his kick between the sticks.

But then came Bristol’s last, furious, frantic play that allowed Strange to grab the points and send the majority inside the Memorial Stadium home happy.



Man of the Match...

Jake Boer



Jake Boer – all the Gloucester forwards had their good moments but the flanker’s work-rate stood out throughout

Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



“We are not going to get emotionally shaken up because we have lost this game. We stayed in a contest for 87 minutes, away from home. We can bounce right back.”

