

Gloucester Rugby

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Gloucester Rugby
v Leinster
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Learning our Lessons

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Still ready to rumble

Will Green

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Opposition Spotlight

All you need to know about tonight's visitors

Mike Teague

Joins the Hall of Fame

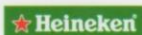
ALSO INSIDE

Ticket updates, Fans Zone, Peter Arnold, Community news.



Heineken® Cup
Round Six

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Captain's Corner

"To lose in the **last minute** to a **penalty** was hard for us to take but at this stage of our development together we are **learning lessons** the hard way."

IF WE had taken our opportunities then maybe we would have been in a position to qualify for the knockout stages of the Heineken Cup.

But that is not our mission tonight. Two defeats against Agen and one against Leinster have cost us a quarter-final place but there is still a lot to be achieved for this team against one of the best in Europe.

We are proud of what we are trying to create at this club and that is why we will be full-on tonight.

It has been a couple of weeks since I have last written these programme notes and since then we have lost two very close games against two very good teams.

In both games, first against Sale and then against Agen last Friday, we have been in a position to win both games of high intensity. Against the champions of England we were the team who played the better rugby, who showed more attacking potency and matched them physically.

To lose in the last minute to



a penalty was hard for us to take but at this stage of our development together we are learning lessons the hard way.

That is simply the position we find ourselves in and we have no option but to fight our way through it.

I have been very proud of the effort and determination of the squad – of the passion they have for the shirt

Tonight, we put that on the line again against Leinster,

and both teams have plenty to play for.

Leinster are full of fantastic players and are aiming for a home quarter-final. We certainly do not want to lose two pool matches at Kingsholm and we are up for the challenge.

The support in France last Friday was fantastic and a number of players paid tribute to the supporters after the game. We need that level of support and terrific noise tonight too – please get right behind the boys.

Action from Gloucester's trip to Leinster



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Lessons to learn

Marco Bortolami will face Leinster tonight convinced Gloucester will be a better side for their experiences gained in Europe this season, as he tells the matchday programme.

WHEN MARCO Bortolami stepped from the away dressing room in the Stade Armandie last Friday night exhausted to the very centre of his soul, bloodied from the furnace of battle and silent at enormity of the result, he may have immediately turned his attentions towards the first steps towards Heineken Cup redemption.

They may well start tonight with a meeting against Leinster, but the look on Bortolami's face said it all: Gloucester have the thick end of 12 months to wait before aiming to put this season's elimination right.

"There is no escaping that the two games at the start of the competition cost us," Bortolami said this week. "We were left with a very tough job and although it was not beyond us it was always difficult.

"I have read and heard a lot about what this team is suppose to mean this week and about why we lost but inside the group and when we are together we are comfortable with our progress.

"To lose in the circumstances we did was very hard but in the long-term it will make us stronger as a unit. To me, how we lose is as just as important as when we win. If the preparation is right we can have no regrets.

"It is not possible to win every game but we are close and building something special at this club."

Bortolami has been a revelation this season. His on-field leadership qualities are second to none, his partnership with Alex Brown in the line-out potentially world class. His will to win is stratospheric.

Despite the potential magnificence of their running game and their technical qualities all over the field, the level of physicality has been a level above that of the Guinness Premiership and it has played a major part in Gloucester's season.

"Emotionally and physically these games are huge – for me, the same intensity as an international – and I don't care what people say but it takes time to adjust to this environment," Bortolami said.

"We have experience in our squad like everyone else but at the same time a lot of young guys who have tasted this level of competition for the first time on our journey together. They will be better for the experience in the long-run but it requires patience to be successful.

"I came to England because everything is more professional, more geared for success and that means the level of scrutiny is greater. But we are working very well together and that is important to me."

Back-to-back defeats against Leinster and Agen at the start of the competition left Gloucester playing



Captain Interview

04



Marco's Stats

Position: Lock
Height: 6'6"
Weight: 17st 2lb
DOB: 12.06.80

catch-up and although they bagged 10 maximum points in games against Edinburgh, Friday's 26-18 defeat ended their hopes for a place in the knockout stages.

While he leads Gloucester tonight, Bortolami is also preparing for the Six Nations and will leave Gloucester fighting it out for a place in the play-offs.

He is enjoying the experience of testing himself against some of the best operators in Europe on a weekly basis and his partnership with Brown against Sale was described as 'world class' by head coach Dean Ryan.

It is not in Bortolami's make-up to avoid an issue or a task ahead of him and that starts against Leinster tonight.

The Irish side are aiming for a top seed and a home quarter-final to boot, which means Gloucester have plenty to play for because a second home defeat in the competition is a pretty unpalatable thought.

"Tonight is the first chance we have to start learning the lessons of the last few weeks," he added. "Leinster are a great team but for me this game is not dead. We have to prove we can match the

best teams in Europe and that is why Friday is significant.

"It is important for a lot of reasons – our progression, our home record, our supporters – and we want to be respected for our rugby and our passion we have in the shirt.


"We want to win, that is simple because the feeling is good and we have some very important matches coming up.

"Our European experience this season has taught us things we needed to learn as a group and individuals and I think we will be better for it. I know it has made me a better player within a team environment and that is what we must build on.

"We do not want to be in the Heineken Cup and not fighting for a place in the knockout stages because this club needs to be regularly competing against the best. That is our aim and that is what we intend to do."

Bortolami has lead Gloucester from the front this season and has no intentions, despite Gloucester's state in the European Cup, to give up now. He knows his side has come too far for that – and will be better for the experience.





"We want to win, that is simple because the feeling is good and we have some very important matches coming up."

Ryan's Review

It has been a **tough start for 2007** for Gloucester and head coach **Dean Ryan** rounds-up all the latest action



First, let's start with tonight: dead game or plenty to play for?

DR: I THINK it would de-value everything we stand for and everything we believe in if we thought this was a dead game. In some respects this could be the most important match of the group phases for us, regardless of the fact we can no longer qualify.



There have been some tough experiences for this group of individuals in this competition this season but the squad are determined to produce the right reaction following Friday's disappointment in France.

We are playing one of the most experienced, gifted and relentless teams in Europe and that is motivation enough. Leinster have obviously already qualified for the knockout stages but I am sure they will not see this as a dead rubber and will come all-out looking for a result to aid their quarter-final seeding.

It is vital we have the same attitude, same desire and same emotional intensity because we have some wrongs we want to right in this competition. We are in one of the premier club tournaments in the world, at our home ground and that is very important.

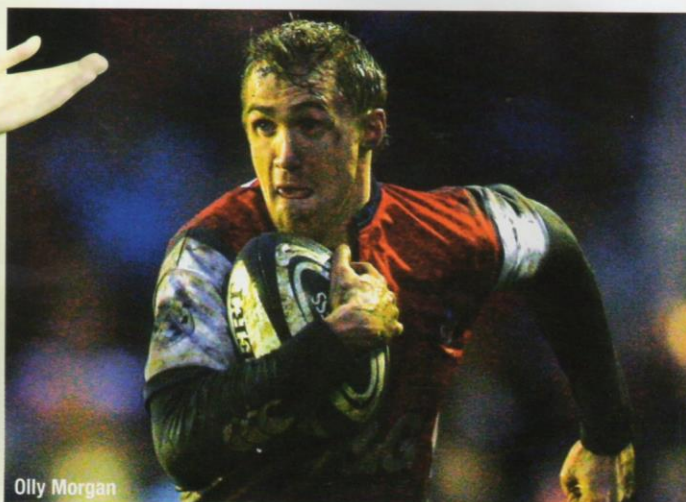
I said after the first two pool matches that it was crucial Europe meant something to us for the next four games and although we were unable to set-up a pool decider, want to test ourselves against one of the best teams around.



Friday's defeat to Agen contained a bit of everything, - can you sum up the feelings you felt?

DR: I KNOW what side we want to be and on Friday we saw an indicator of that. As a side, across the board we have to absorb the lessons quickly to aid the teams development.

Our dressing room was like a casualty department afterwards - emotionally and physically - we have operated at a level that from the sidelines is impossible to imagine, both in terms of the stress on bodies



Ollie Morgan

"We are playing one of the **most experienced, gifted and relentless** teams in Europe and that is motivation enough."

and the stress on minds and in the immediate aftermath of a game like that can leave players vulnerable.

When we found ourselves 14-0 down I thought we handled that pressure brilliantly. There was character and professionalism and heart but these are the contests we need to win if we want that credibility of operating at the top end of Europe.

What really disappointed me though were certain aspects of the refereeing and we are currently reviewing that. To finish on a particularly technical last 10 minutes which hadn't been there for the previous 70 added to the disappointment.



It was the second time in two weeks we have lost in the last 10 minutes does that make it harder to take?

DR: Of course it does, yeah. Against Sale I thought we played some excellent rugby against a top side in difficult conditions and showed just what a threat we are capable of being.

We were against the champion club of England and to me we showed more ambition, more invention and more potency. The game was exceptionally physical and we did very well in that phase of the contest too.

Rather than looking at us I thought Sale's second half performance, considering they lost both half-backs, was very good and we must remember that.

Having said that, we are currently not getting that final five or 10 minutes we require to close these games out and that is something we must learn and learn quickly.



Overall, can you give an assessment of how the team is progressing?

DR: OVERALL I am pretty pleased. After tonight we would obviously love to still be involved in the Heineken Cup but it has been a good reality check for our development as a team and I think we understand exactly the levels we need to be at.

There are a number of individuals within our squad who have gained European experience for the first time and that will be of a significant benefit. Our job is to develop that talent, provide it with the framework it needs to flourish and keep it developing.

We would have obviously have liked one if not both of those recent close results to have gone our way but that is that nature of this sport. We will not let it detract from what we have achieved already and will keep working hard.



Alex Brown



Jake Boer

Gloucester RUGBY

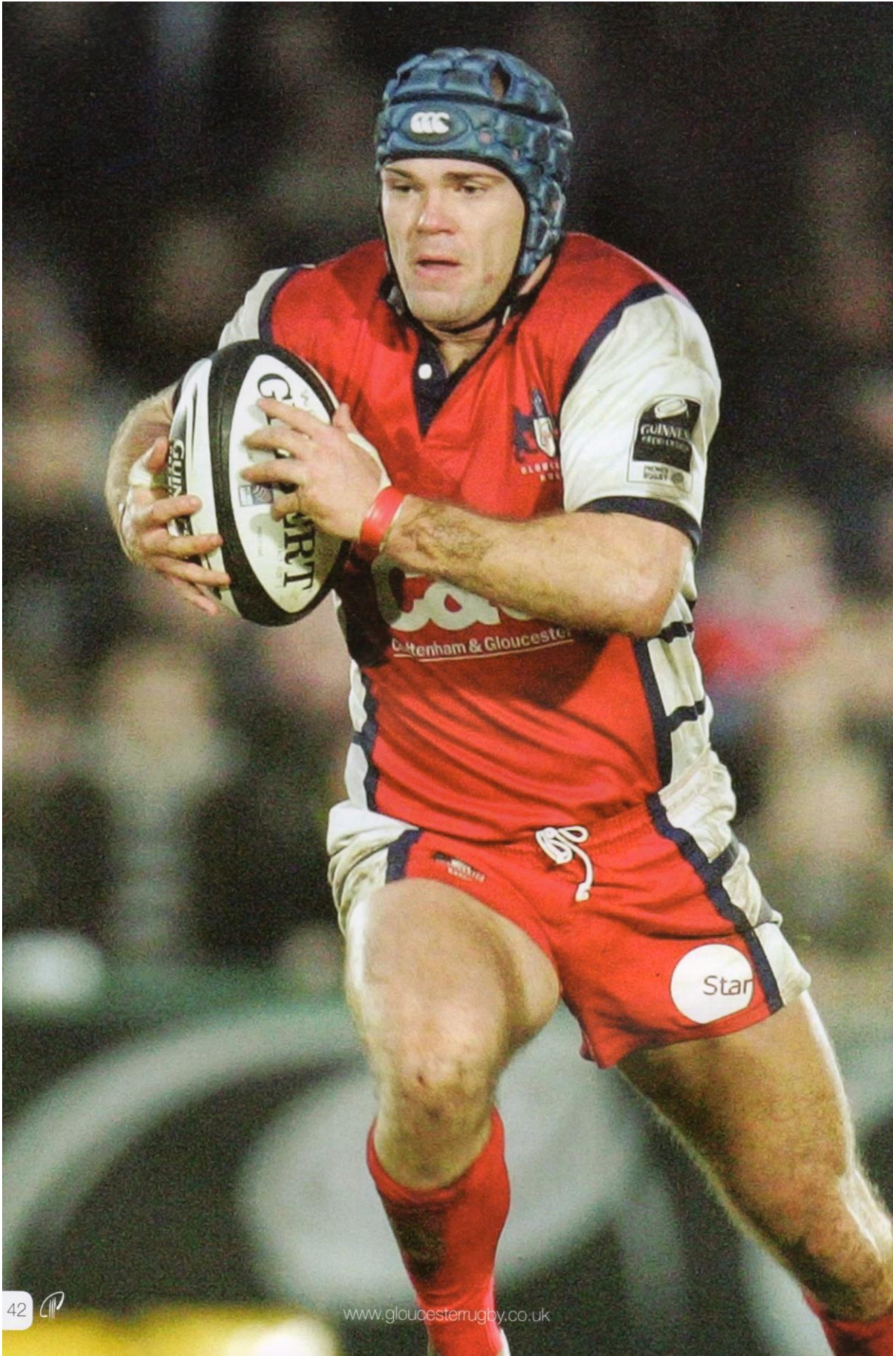


Leinster RUGBY

	Iain BALSHAW	15	Full Back	15	Rob KEARNEY	
	James BAILEY	14	Right Wing	14	Shane HORGAN	
	Jack ADAMS	13	Centre	13	Brian O'DRISCOLL ©	
	Mike TINDALL	12	Centre	12	Gordon D'ARCY	
	Mark FOSTER	11	Left Wing	11	Denis HICKIE	
	Willie WALKER	10	Fly Half	10	Felipe CONTEPOMI	
	Pete RICHARDS	9	Scrum Half	9	Chris WHITAKER	
	Nick WOOD	1	Prop	1	Stanley WRIGHT	
	Olivier AZAM	2	Hooker	2	Bernard JACKMAN	
	Carlos NIETO	3	Prop	3	Will GREEN	
	© Marco BORTOLAMI	4	Lock	4	Trevor HOGAN	
	Alex BROWN	5	Lock	5	Malcolm O'KELLY	
	Andy HAZELL	6	Flanker	6	Stephen KEOGH	
	Peter BUXTON	7	Flanker	7	Keith GLEESON	
	Adam BALDING	8	No 8	8	Jamie HEASLIP	

Replacements

	Mefin DAVIES	16	Substitute 1	16	Brian BLANEY	
	Patrice COLLAZO	17	Substitute 2	17	Reggie CORRIGAN	
	Will JAMES	18	Substitute 3	18	Owen FINEGAN	
	Jake BOER	19	Substitute 4	19	Cameron JOWITT	
	Rory LAWSON	20	Substitute 5	20	Guy EASTERBY	
	Ryan LAMB	21	Substitute 6	21	Christian WARNER	
	Rudi KEIL	22	Substitute 7	22	Girvan DEMPSEY	



Ready to go again

Andy Hazell has been one of Gloucester's key performers this season and despite the disappointment in Agen last Friday, the openside flanker is desperate to get back into the action tonight.

IF HEINEKEN CUP salvation was guaranteed through sheer bravery, forcefulness of attitude and utter dedication, then Andy Hazell would more than likely have a gold medallion around his neck by now.

The Kingsholm openside lives his rugby life on the edge – running a never ending battle against opponents and officials down among the hacking boots, always on the edge of legality and pushed – and punished by the crushing weight per square inch week after week.

Hazell will be up against all those things tonight against Leinster, the fierce Irish province who have already beaten the Kingsholm club once and have subsequently qualified for the knockout stages as winners of Pool Two.

You can be certain that Hazell will attempt to stretch the bounds of what is humanely possible against the outstanding Keith Gleeson as Gloucester go on the offensive one last time in this season's competition.

Defeat in France last weekend put paid to a last-game showdown and Hazell admitted to the matchday

programme that it has been a tough week as Dean Ryan's squad digest the impact of their 26-18 set-back in Agen.

"What can I say? Last week in France was a massive disappointment for everyone involved – it was terrible and only began to sink in that we are not going any further when we were back in training," he said.

"I would be lying to say we were not down about it but we have one game left and you can guarantee we will be pretty pumped up for it – it's massive.

"Some frustration has built up and as a squad we cannot wait for Friday and to get back out there – that's what we do and we are relishing it."

Hazell has done as much as anybody in an attempt to drag Gloucester through to the quarter-final stages but admits it has been a tough experience for a side that is still learning and developing together.

"Some of the guys had not played Heineken Cup rugby before this season so it was a huge new



Player Interview

07



Andy's Stats

Position: Flanker

Height: 6'0"

Weight: 15st 8lb

DOB: 25.04.78

"But if you asked me if we are a better team now than when we started the tournament I would say yes. I think we were probably a little naïve to start with, particularly with regard to the intensity levels and the interpretation of the breakdown but we have got ourselves in position to win matches but have not closed them out."

experience but there is no doubt we have learnt a lot along the way," he said.

"I think the biggest thing is that when you get a chance in this competition you really have to take it and make the most of them because they don't come around that often. The margins between winning and losing are even finer than those in the Premiership and the mistakes you make get magnified."

"But if you asked me if we are a better team now than when we started the tournament I would say yes. I think we were probably a little naïve to start with,

particularly with regard to the intensity levels and the interpretation of the breakdown but we have got ourselves in position to win matches but have not closed them out."

The breakdown is where Hazell spends the majority of his working and being able to adapt is the key. He admits at being surprised with how certain areas of the game operate at European level but he is never anything than totally selfless in the disregard

he has for his own safety and is competitiveness personified when he throws himself into the contact area.

"The breakdown is massive in Europe and I have found myself adapting differently. I saw things in the first few games that if I tried in the Premiership I would be yellow carded every week but some of these guys are at it week in, week out in exactly the same way in the Magners League and that is an advantage to them."

"I have learnt when and where I can push things and that can hopefully make me a better player in the future and that is what I have got to take out of the experience."

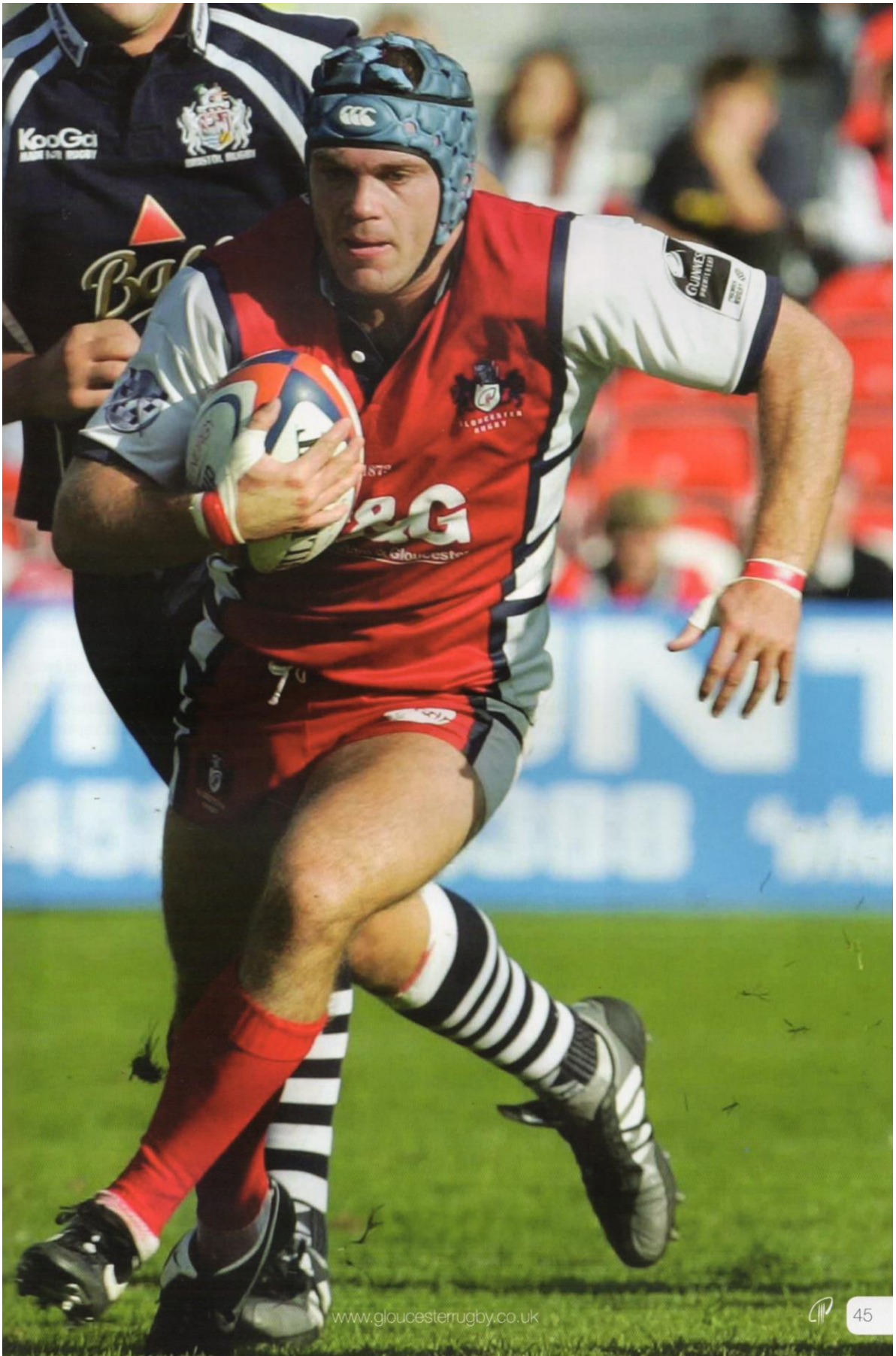
"I think everyone has learnt a lot about themselves and the levels you need to be at to be successful in this competition."

"Winning the Challenge Cup was fantastic for the players and a great experience – the Heineken Cup is different and we want to experience the competition again."

Tonight, Gloucester get one last shot at ending on a high with the visit of last season's semi-finalists.

Leinster are aiming for a home quarter-final which will mean Hazell and his team-mates – Peter Buxton, Alex Brown, Carlos Nieto et al have a huge task ahead of them.

"This has been a big week for the squad and we have done a lot of talking together," Hazell said. "We have a lot we want to prove and that starts on Friday – we cannot wait to get back out there."



Match Action

Time line

 9 mins	
Elhorga TRY, Miquel CON	7-0
 13 mins	
Mignardi TRY, Miquel CON	14-0
 31 mins	
Balshaw TRY	14-5
 36 mins	
Tindall YELLOW CARD	
 39 mins	
Nieto YELLOW CARD	
 54 mins	
Lamb PEN	14-8
 61 mins	
Richards TRY, Lamb CON	14-15
 66 mins	
Lamb PEN	14-18
 69 mins	
Miquel PEN	17-18
 72 mins	
Miquel PEN	20-18
 79 mins	
Miquel PEN	23-18
 83 mins	
Boer YELLOW CARD	
 83 mins	
Miquel PEN	26-18

Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	
14	James Simpson-Daniel	
13	Mike Tindall	(yellow card)
12	Anthony Allen	
11	Iain Balshaw	(11)
10	Ryan Lamb	(2p, 1c)
9	Rory Lawson	
1	Christian Califano	
2	Mefin Davies	
3	Carlos Nieto	(yellow card)
4	Marco Bortolami	(capt)
5	Alex Brown	
6	Peter Buxton	
7	Andy Hazell	
8	Adam Balding	
REPS		
16	Olivier Azam	(M. Davies)
17	Patrice Collazo	(Christian Califano)
18	Will James	
19	Jake Boer	(Andy Hazell)
20	Peter Richards	(11) (Allen)
21	Willie Walker	
22	Mark Foster	(Olly Morgan)

Agen
Gloucester Rugby

26
18



Miquel ended Gloucester dreams with 3 late penalties

Friday, January 12

Ref: Donal Courtney (Ire) Att: 7,000

IN A MATCH littered with yellow cards, controversy and some outstanding attacking rugby, Gloucester's Heineken Cup dreams were dealt a terminal blow against Agen last Friday.

The French side completed a Pool Two double over the Kingsholm club despite a remarkable second half fight-back that threatened what would have been a sensational victory.

Gloucester found themselves 14-0 down after as many minutes thanks to some brilliant counter-attacking from Fijian Rupeni Caucaunibuca, who ran a great line from

Jerome Miquel's pass to off-load to full-back Pepito Elhorga, who scored by the posts.

And when Manu Ahotaeiloa collected Ryan Lamb's high kick, fed Ace Tiatia before Dave Vainqueur made great ground and sent centre Arnaud Mignardi in for the try.

Gloucester were up against it now, but through the expert work of their set-piece game, some heavy charging from Adam Balding and Peter Buxton, the visitors battled their way back.

They could have been awarded a penalty





try when Wilhelm Stoltz was sinbinned for dragging down a series of line-out drives but they got on the board when Rory Lawson made a blindside break from a ruck, drew the last man and sent Iain Balshaw into score.

Although both Mike Tindall and Carlos Nieto were controversially yellow carded before the break, Lamb kicked a 54th minute penalty to drag the score back to 14-8 before Gloucester went ahead with a wonderful score.

Tindall carried mightily from a scrum inside

Gloucester's 22 before Balshaw added support and sent Simpson-Daniel on an outside break past Vainqueur. The winger drew the last man before sending Pete Richards into score.

Gloucester were within touching distance of a famous victory and when Lamb added a 66th minute penalty, they were 18-14 ahead.

However, Agen mounted a stirring late recovery and Miquel landed penalties after 69, 79 and 83 minutes to seal victory and break Gloucester hearts.



Man of the Match...

Carlos Nieto



Although he was harshly yellow carded, Carlos Nieto produced an outstanding performance in the tight on Friday.

Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



"Our dressing room is a pretty hurting place right now. We got ourselves into a position to win the game but gave away a few cheap penalties and that cost us."



Hall of Fame

with Dave King



Mike Teague

He is one of the hardest men to have represented **Gloucester, England, and the British Lions**. And tonight **Iron Mike** is entering the **Hall of Fame**.

IF TWO words are capable of summing up Gloucester's spirit, full-on attitude and determination they may well be 'Mike Teague'.

He was a player who was idolised by the loyal Kingsholm faithful, a player who was renowned for his line-out play in the back row, was remorselessly hard and was always in the thick of the action, he was genuinely one of Gloucester's all time greats.

The pinnacle of Teague's career was on the 1989 British Lions tour to Australia, where he was named 'Man of the Series' and christened 'Iron Mike' because of his

remarkable forcefulness and sheer will to win on the back of the scrum.

Teague is arguably the club's most revered player of all time. Others may have been awarded more international caps by England, notably Phil Vickery and Tom Voyce but who would argue with the fact that Teague was equally, if not more influential for both club and country.

He was born on 8th October 1960 in Gloucester and was educated at Churchdown School.

Although a native of the city, Teague had a nomadic career for he did not spend his entire playing days at Kingsholm. He had spells with Cardiff, Moseley and also Stroud. Yet, it was always with Gloucester that he was mainly associated.

Mike initially played for local Gloucester club, 'All Blues', before joining the Kingsholm Club. Success soon for Teague and in the 1981-1982 season he scored 21 tries and in the process surpassed John Watkins previous record for a Gloucester forward.

Teague's outstanding club form soon attracted the attention of the England selectors and he represented his country at both Under-23 level and 'B' status. Eventually he made his debut at full international level as a replacement against France at Twickenham on 2nd February 1985 for John Hall of Bath. His Gloucester colleagues Phil Blakeway and John Orwin were in the England XV which was:-

*C.R. Martin (Bath); S.T. Smith (Wasps), K.G. Simms (Cambridge University), P.W. Dodge (Leicester, Captain), R. Underwood (Leicester); C.R. Andrew (Cambridge University), R.M. Harding (Bristol); P.J. Blakeway (Gloucester), S.E. Brain (Coventry), G.S. Pearce (Northampton), J. Orwin (Gloucester), W.A. Dooley (Preston Grasshoppers), J.P. Hall (Bath), R. Hesford (Bristol), D.H. Cooke (Harlequins). **Mike Teague replaced J.P. Hall.***

The match ended in a 9-9 draw.

In the summer of 1985, four months after his International debut, Teague was selected for England's tour to New Zealand. He was awarded a total of nine caps by England before he was named in the British Lions touring party to visit Australia in 1989.

On that tour Mike played in two of the Test matches against Australia. In the first Test played at Sydney Football Stadium on the 4th June the British Lions were defeated 30-12 but the Gloucester man was not selected for the match.

Following that defeat he was selected for the second Test match at Ballymore, Brisbane on 8th July. The Lions subsequently defeated the Wallabies 19-12 in an infamous encounter that required Teague at his finest.

The Lions Team was as follows:-

G. Hastings (Scotland); I. Evans (Wales), S. Hastings (Scotland), J. Guscott (England), R. Underwood (England); C.R. Andrew (England), R. Jones (Wales); D. Young (Wales),





*B.C. Moore (England), D. Sole (Scotland), W. Dooley (England), P. Ackford (England), F. Calder (Scotland), **M. Teague (Gloucester & England)**, D. Richards (England).*

Referee: - Mr R. Horguet (France).

In the deciding match of the series played at Sydney Football Stadium Ground on 15th July, the Lions defeated Australia 19-18 in front of 39,401 spectators. Mike had retained his position to make his second Lions Test appearance.

Upon his return to England he was a member of the England team that recorded the Grand Slam of the 1990-1991 season. They defeated Wales by 25-6 at Cardiff Arms Park on the 19th January, they then defeated Scotland by 21-12 at Twickenham on 16th February and Teague scored the only try of the match.

England were triumphant at Lansdowne Road, Dublin on 2nd March with Mike once again scoring a try in England's 16-7 victory.

A narrow 21-19 victory sealed the Slam when France were the visitors to Twickenham on 16th March. This was England's first clean sweep since 1980. England remained unchanged in team selection in the Five Nation's Championship for only the second time.

Touring was becoming a habit for the influential number eight and he toured Fiji and Australia with England in the summer of 1991. It was a year which was a highlight in the back row forward's career for he was selected in the England party for the World Cup.

Mike appeared in all but one of the group matches but their cup aspirations were dashed when Australia defeated England 12-6 six in the Twickenham final.

J.M. Webb (Bath); S.J. Halliday (Harlequins), W.D.E. Carling (Harlequins, Captain), J.C. Guscott (Bath), R. Underwood (Leicester); C.R. Andrew (Wasps), R.J. Hill (Bath); J. Leonard (Saracens), B.C. Moore (Harlequins), J.A.

*.Probyn (Wasps), P.J. Ackford (Harlequins), W.A. Dooley (Preston Grasshoppers), M.G. Skinner (Harlequins), **M.C. Teague (Gloucester)**, P.J. Winterbottom (Harlequins).*

But his time at Gloucester was also coming to an end and he departed from Kingsholm to link up with Moseley for the 1992-1993 season.

He made his debut for the Midland club on 5th September 1992. He remained at The Reddings for two seasons and was awarded an England berth while he was with Moseley against South Africa in 1992 in a 33-16 victory.

Teague was ever present in England's Five Nation's Championship campaign of 1993. A defeat by Ireland at Lansdowne Road marked the end of Mike's international career on 20th March in a 17-3 defeat. He toured with the British Lions to New Zealand in 1993 playing in seven matches but only appearing as a replacement in a 20-7 defeat in the Second Test.

Hall of Fame...

ENGLAND CAPS (WITH GLOUCESTER RFC)

YEAR	VERSUS	DATE	VENUE	RESULT
1985	France As a Replacement	2nd February	Twickenham	Drew 9-9
	New Zealand Scored 1 try	1st June	Christchurch, N.Zealand	Lost 13-18
	New Zealand	8th June	Wellington, N.Zealand	Lost 15-42
1989	Scotland	4th February	Twickenham	Drew 12-12
	Ireland	18 February	Lansdowne Road, Dublin	Won 16-3
	France	4th March	Twickenham	Won 11-0
	Wales	18th March	Cardiff Arms Park	Lost 9-12
	Romania	13th May	Bucharest	Won 58-3
1990	France	3rd February	Parc de Princes, Paris	Won 26-7
	Wales	17th February	Twickenham	Won 34-6
	Scotland	17th March	Murrayfield, Edinburgh	Lost 7-13
1991	Wales Scored 1 try	19th February	Cardiff Arms Park	Won 25-6
	Scotland	16th February	Twickenham	Won 21-12
	Ireland Scored 1 try	2nd March	Lansdowne Road, Dublin	Won 16-7
	France	16th March	Twickenham	Won 21-19
	Fiji	20th July	Suila	Won 28-12
	Australia	27th July	Sydney Football Stadium	Lost 15-40
	New Zealand	3rd October	Twickenham (World Cup)	Lost 12-18
	Italy	8th October	Twickenham (World Cup)	Won 36-6
	France	19th October	Parc de Princes, Paris (World Cup)	Won 19-10
	Scotland	26th October	Murrayfield, Edinburgh (World Cup)	Won 9-6
	Australia	2nd November	Twickenham (World Cup)	Lost 6-12

In three spells at Kingsholm, Mike made 291 appearances for the club before bringing his playing career to a close in 1995. In total Mike Teague played 27 matches for his country.

Mike Burton, also of Gloucester Rugby and England fame, recently chose Mike in his all time Red Rose selection saying:

"They did not call him 'Iron Mike' for nothing. He was a massive influence on those around him without ever having to say too much. He always delivered."

John Gadd who helped form a formidable back row partnership with Mike Teague and Mike Longstaff said of his long time friend: "Mike Teague must

be the greatest player that Gloucester has ever produced. He always had the ability to do something with the ball in his hand. He was always very fast for a big strong man and in his early years was a try scoring machine for Gloucester."

David King



Fan Zone

with Bob Fenton

Bob Fenton gets serious tonight. The Shedhead is angered by suggestions that the club game could be split into **10 regional franchises** – and vents his frustration at the RFU.

WELL THE Heineken Cup dream is over for another year. Despite a great fight back in France last week it proved to be fruitless as a few late penalties cost us the game and the (very) slim hope of qualifying from the group.

The first two defeats showed how little room for error there is in this competition. Realistically if you lose two games then that's pretty much it. What would be nice would be for us to end up in a pool like Northampton have this season.

A struggling French side and an Italian side give a team that can hardly buy a win in the Premiership the chance to run in dozens of tries and at worst be in with a great shout of a best runners up qualifying spot.

Maybe next season when we qualify for the

tournament (as we surely will) we can get a group like this, instead of one with one of the top Irish provinces and a strong French side. Chances are, though, that the seeding arrangements will be changed and we'll miss out again. Oh well, at least when we win the Heineken Cup we can say we had to do it the hard way.

We can still have a big say on the later stages of the competition though. Although Leinster have already qualified for the knock out stages they will need a good result tonight to try to ensure that they have a home draw in the next round.

That's a good thing because it means they will not be holding anything back, or will consider resting any of their key players. The great thing about this competition is getting to see truly world class players running out

at Kingsholm, tonight we may be able to add Brian O'Driscoll et al to the list.

It's also another good opportunity for our boys to test themselves against the best in the business, and continue the learning experience of some of the younger members of the squad. There's also a small, but not inconsequential, matter of pride to play for – after all we owe them one for turning us over in Dublin last year.

Final word on this year's campaign has to be to mention the fantastic support that follows Gloucester on their European travels. At Lansdowne Road and Murrayfield you clearly hear the Gloucester boys on the TV, last Friday against Agen it was even louder. Seemingly like every other French outfit Agen had their own band, they were no match for the

"Final word on this year's campaign has to be to mention the **fantastic support** that follows **Gloucester** on their European travels. At Lansdowne Road and Murrayfield you clearly hear the **Gloucester boys** on the TV..."



Fans at the Agen game



Balshaw touching down the first try for Gloucester v Agen

Gloucester 'choir'. Huge respect boys, you did us proud – again.

And so to other things... Last weekend's Sunday Times had another article setting out what seems to be another blueprint for the future of rugby union in England. This time everything seems to be centred on a Super 10 competition with regionally based teams.

According to the article this plan would mean the end of teams like Leicester and Gloucester, as we all get rolled up into some amorphous mass of a franchise club. As with all things that emanate from RFU HQ, this seems to be surrounded by a lot of smoke and uncertainty, and the chances are that by the time this programme appears it'll all have blown over.

The thing is, all these articles do so much damage to the reputation of the game, and you have to wonder what is to be gained from it. The Guinness Premiership is one of the premier rugby competitions around, it is more open than most competitions and through the salary cap the playing field is kept pretty much level.

Over the last few years the clubs have gone from strength to strength and improvements are being made to the

various grounds. We'll get a new stand to go with the still quite new Buildbase later this year, who is going to put that kind of investment into a club that could be wiped out at the stroke of a pen?

I know the various owners of the clubs get a bad press from time to time, but you cannot argue with the fact that, to a man, they have put in a lot of time and effort – not to mention money – into dragging the clubs and the competition into a professional environment. So why change it... It's so frustrating for supporters to read about half-thought out changes like this and to be left with the thought that the clubs you have supported since way back when are going to be sacrificed on the alter of Club England.

Let me tell you that I don't really care about the England team, yes I like them to do well and occasionally I will make the trip to Twickenham to watch them. I'm going to the France match later this year as it happens – and paying a cool £65 for the privilege of sitting in a big stand watching people who really don't care about what's going on down on the pitch in front of them get up and down for a few hours.

Sixty five quid. That's about a third of

the cost of my Gloucester season ticket. Club England is beyond the reach of most supporters, and even if you could afford a massively overpriced ticket the fact that so many go to corporate clients that you can't get your hands on them anyway. Ask yourself this... would this happen in soccer? rugby league? Any other sport? Of course not. To me it smacks of a bunch of administrators doing everything they can to cling on to the last vestiges of power – rather like the last days of an Empire as democracy and self rule takes a hold.

Every Sunday I watch my boy and his mates clattering around the junior rugby scene, they all have one sporting ambition – to play for Gloucester. Not some dreamt up, made up 'West Country Wanderers'. This move will do nothing for grass routes rugby, other than to make the dreams of 13-year-old kids even more unlikely to come to fruition.

Club rugby is not broken, it doesn't need fixing. Certainly not by a bunch of unqualified mechanics, anyway.

I'm sorry if this all a bit serious this week, thing is I find it hard to stomach when I see the game I have loved for the last 40 years (yes I am that old) being ripped apart like this. I'll try to do better next time!

Match Action

Man of the Match...

Mike Tindall



Although the forwards slogged it out, centre Mike Tindall had an outstanding game

- he carried the ball hard, was defensively excellent and provided impetus at just the right time.

Coaches Comments...

Dean Ryan



"The conditions were impossible but for us it is a tremendous boost to come away with a

victory against a very physical side - it is a huge confidence boost."

Time line

4 mins	
Morgan TRY	5-0
28 mins	
Geraghty PEN	5-3
70 mins	
Balshaw TRY, Walker CON	12-3
77 mins	
Walker PEN	15-3

Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	(1T)
14	James Simpson-Daniel	
13	Anthony Allen	
12	Mike Tindall	
11	Mark Foster	
10	Ryan Lamb	
9	Rory Lawson	
1	Christian Califano	
2	Mefin Davies	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Marco Bortolami	(capt)
5	Alex Brown	
6	Peter Buxton	
7	Andy Hazell	
8	James Forrester	
REPS		
16	Olivier Azam	
17	Nick Wood	(Califano)
18	Adam Eustace	
19	Jaiko Boer	(Buxton)
20	Pete Richards	(Lawson)
21	Willie Walker	(1C, 1P, Lamb)
22	Iain Balshaw (1T)	(Foster)

Gloucester Rugby
London Irish

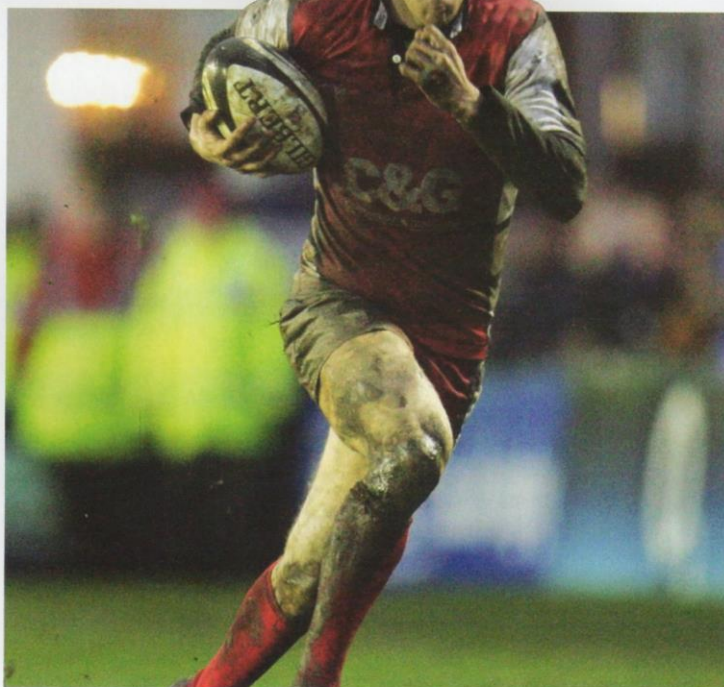
15
3



Morgan and Balshaw down Irish

Monday, January 1

Ref: Tony Spreadbury Att: 12,500



Sale Sharks
Gloucester Rugby

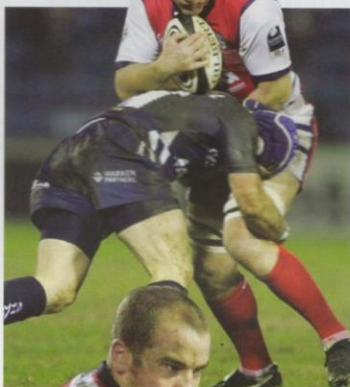
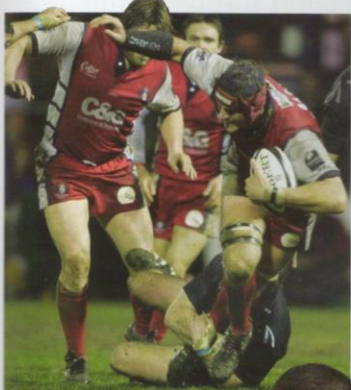
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19



Sharks leave a nasty bite

Saturday, January 6

Ref: Wayne Barnes Att: 8,377



Man of the Match...

Alex Brown



Gloucester lock Alex Brown was at the forefront of the effort against the Guinness Premiership champions

- not only in the line-out but in his physicality around the field.

Time line

8 mins	
Lamb PEN	0-3
15 mins	
Lamb PEN	0-6
17 mins	
Blair PEN	3-6
23 mins	
Lamb PEN	3-9
38 mins	
Simpson-Daniel TRY, Lamb CON	3-16
55 mins	
Bell TRY, Wigglesworth CON	10-16
59 mins	
Lamb PEN	10-19
70 mins	
Bruno TRY, Wigglesworth CON	17-19
79 mins	
Wigglesworth PEN	20-19

Gloucester Line-up

15	Olly Morgan	
14	James Simpson-Daniel	(1T)
13	Mike Tindall	
12	Anthony Allen	
11	Iain Balshaw	
10	Ryan Lamb	(4p, 1c)
9	Rory Lawson	
1	Nick Wood	
2	Mefin Davies	
3	Carlos Nieto	
4	Marco Bortolami	(capt)
5	Alex Brown	
6	Peter Buxton	
7	Andy Hazell	
8	James Forrester	
REPS		
16	Olivier Azam	
17	Christian Califano	(yellow card, Wood)
18	Jonathan Pendlebury	
19	Jake Boer	(Buxton)
20	Peter Richards	(Lawson)
21	Willie Walker	(Lamb)
22	Mark Foster	