

Gloucester Rugby

The Official Matchday Programme of Gloucester Rugby

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Gloucester Rugby
v Bristol Rugby
28.04.07 15.05

Ryan Lamb

Born to run. Up close with the Gloucester number 10

On the Up

Exclusive update on the Kingsholm development

Ryan's Review

All the latest from the head coach

The Saint

Philippe Saint-Andre joins the Hall of Fame

Bristol Fashion

Get all the news on the west country rivals

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Ashton Gate
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Captain's Corner

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"I think this team is good enough to go a long way together. We have shown we are capable **beating the best teams** in the country and that is very important for us."

GOOD afternoon and welcome to our home from home this afternoon for the final Guinness Premiership match of the season.

Ashton Gate has become our new Kingsholm. The club have sold thousands and thousands of tickets for this west country derby and I think that is fantastic for us because it will be flooded by red and white this afternoon.

My first season in English rugby has been a memorable

one – we are in the top four of the Guinness Premiership and playing knockout rugby for the rest of the season. We have learnt a lot as a squad; we have developed together, won together, lost together and become a very tight unit.

I think this team is good enough to go a long way together. We have shown we are capable beating the best teams in the country and that is very important for us.

The season has been long

but it is now entering its most important phase. We obviously have injuries around the squad at the moment but we have prepared well and are ready to bounce back from two disappointing performances against Bath and Newcastle.

I missed the game against Bristol in November because of international commitments but they have been very consistent and durable all season and deserve to be chasing a play-off place.

They do the basic things very well, have a tremendous amount of experience and play some good, attacking rugby when in the right positions.

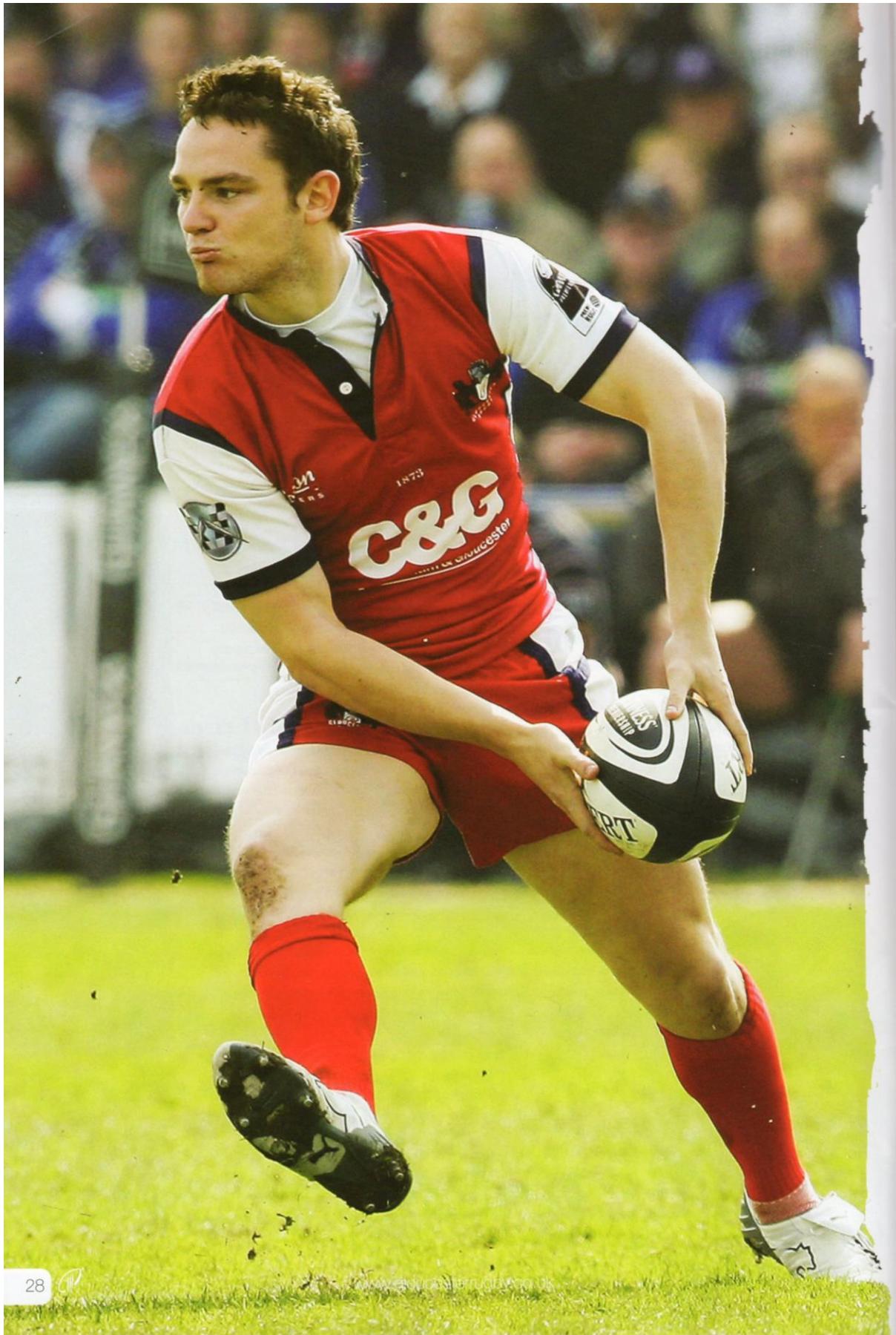
It is a huge challenge for both teams this afternoon – this is one of the biggest derbies in England – and I would ask all our supporters to get right behind the boys today, become the 16th man with your vocal support and quite possibly cheer us to our most important victory of the season so far.



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Lamb ready to spring into action

Bristol have been one of the toughest nuts to crack in the Premiership this season but Ryan Lamb insists Gloucester will not be taking anything for granted this afternoon, as Steve Cotton finds out.

GLOUCESTER, Leicester, Wasps and Saracens have two things in common as they head into the final weekend of regular season Guinness Premiership action. Not only are they all still in the semi-final shake-up, they have all failed to win in Bristol this season.

Gloucester were denied by a last-minute drop goal in November, Leicester were humbled in the city earlier this week, Wasps were comprehensively put to the sword in September, and Saracens only managed a draw in the first fortnight of the season.

And among the catalogue of rugby lessons Ryan Lamb has learned during his first full season in the Gloucester No 10 shirt is the following: underestimate Bristol and pay the price.

The 20-year-old fly-half missed his side's trip to the Memorial Stadium before Christmas through injury, but he is likely to take on a central role at Ashton Gate this afternoon and he is full of admiration and respect for what Bristol have achieved.

"Bristol are a good side, there can be no doubt about that now - but people do keep underestimating them," said Lamb. "I think most teams have thought they can go and do a job on them down there, but not many have come away with a win. "Everyone wrote them off and people still underestimate them now for some reason. "I think they probably like the fact that sides underestimate them, they seem to thrive on it a bit.

"Bristol have got the best defence in the

league and they certainly know how to defend their own line. It's going to be tough for us to try to break them down," said Lamb.

Gloucester's proactive 'paint the town red' campaign to get their supporters down to Ashton Gate appears to have been a success.

Ticket sales have been hugely encouraging, and Gloucester-born Lamb is looking forward to sampling the atmosphere at Bristol City's home this afternoon.

"I think the club have sold around 13,000 tickets so we are looking forward to it," he said. "Hopefully it will be a big turnout from our supporters, and it definitely sounds like it will. I think because we have got the ticket sales and things like that, playing there will not be a problem.

"Obviously it would be great to play at Kingsholm, but we are just looking forward to the game. It's going to be a big atmosphere and a big game. We are not really taking the venue into consideration, because we are going to have a lot of supporters there."

And even despite his tender years, Lamb fully appreciates the significance of this afternoon's contest.

"At the start of the season, we were quite an inexperienced side in the big games," he said. "But having come through the season I think a lot of us have learned quite a lot.

"This is a big game, it's a big occasion, and these are the games you want to play in."



Player Interview

10



Ryan's Stats

Position: Stand-Off

Height: 5'9"

Weight: 13st 6lb

DOB: 18.05.86



Ryan's Review

It has been a **hectic couple of weeks** on and off the field for Gloucester and **Head Coach Dean Ryan** rounds up all the latest activity.



We have only lost one game in six Premiership matches but have drawn and lost the last two, is that a concern with the play-off situation?

DR: NO, I don't think it is. As far as the Premiership is concerned we have only been thoroughly beaten once and that was against Wasps.

What has been ultimately disappointing against Bath and Newcastle was the overall level of performance we produced against opponents we could and should have done better against.

We were very conservative against Bath in the second half and simply did not dictate the pattern and style of play we wanted. That is particularly disappointing because we didn't force our personality on either game consistently enough.

Against Newcastle we had issues of threat and control and they are obviously significant ones at this stage of the season. We need to be patient, maintain possession of the ball and work for openings. We are on a great run – our aim was the top four and we have achieved it.

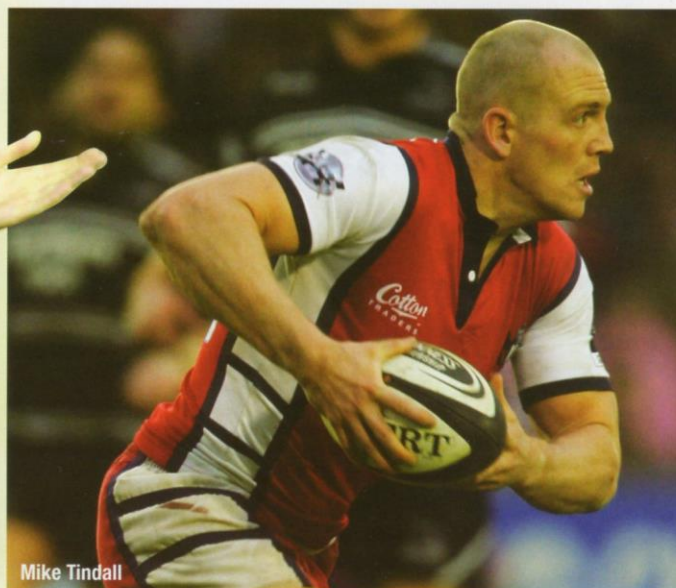
Sometimes it is hard to look back but when you consider how far this group has come in the last 12 months to only be beaten five times in the Premiership, have the most wins and be in contention for finishing top, I think that is a fantastic testament to what we are trying to achieve in the long-term.



Mike Tindall broke his leg against Newcastle. How big a blow is losing a player of his experience at this stage?

DR: OBVIOUSLY it is a significant one – I think any team would feel a loss of a player of Mike's all-round experience, attitude and leadership qualities.

But we have worked with injuries for the last nine months, the situation is nothing new to us and we will have to



Mike Tindall



“We have already been in a position to announce the likes of **Gareth Cooper, Andy Titterrell and Gareth Delve** – all of whom are **international quality players.**”



develop new combinations at this late stage but that is what we have a big, strong squad for.

I feel really sorry for Mike because he was a major contributor, was playing really well and deserved a really good finish to the season with us.



There has also been a lot of off-field activity in the last few weeks – will the signings continue?

DR: I AM really pleased with the quality of the signings we have made so far. We have brought in some good quality players in areas we felt needed reinforcements and it has been an incredibly busy time in recent weeks.

We have already been in a position to announce the likes of Gareth Cooper,

Andy Titterrell and Gareth Delve – all of whom are international quality players.

At this stage of the season the speculation is huge and I have said before that we do not comment on players who are out of contract at other clubs. We aim to conduct our business in the right way and when we are in a position to make an announcement, we will do.



Today is a pretty unique event for Gloucester Rugby for the final match of the season?

DR: ASHTON Gate is a fantastic stadium and we trained down here on Wednesday to get a feel for the place and of the atmosphere.

Bristol obviously staged a very

successful game against Bath earlier in the season and as a club I think we have also done a fantastic job in selling the number of tickets we have.

I think I am right in saying we have sold more than 12,500 tickets for this game which is the same number you can get into Kingsholm. That is great for us and we help create an atmosphere we experience for regular home games.

For our players to see all that red when they come out will be fantastic.



Bristol have had an excellent season, how impressed have you been with them this year?

DR: I HAVE a huge amount of respect for what they have achieved and in many ways it makes a mockery of the pre-season predictions.

They are really well coached by Richard Hill and have a core of senior individuals who have totally bought into what they are trying to achieve.

In the likes of Mark Regan, Dave Hilton and Roy Winters to name only three, they have a huge amount of experience and know-how and it has served them brilliantly. They play the game in a certain way, are outstanding at the basics and fully deserve to be aiming for a play-off because of their consistency.

It should be a cracking game to end the regular season.



Andy Titterrell (middle)

Today's Officials

Referee: Sean Davey

TJ: Andrew Pearce

TJ: Kevin Stewart

4th: Mark Tovey

Replacement Ref: Tim Beddow

Gloucester RUGBY

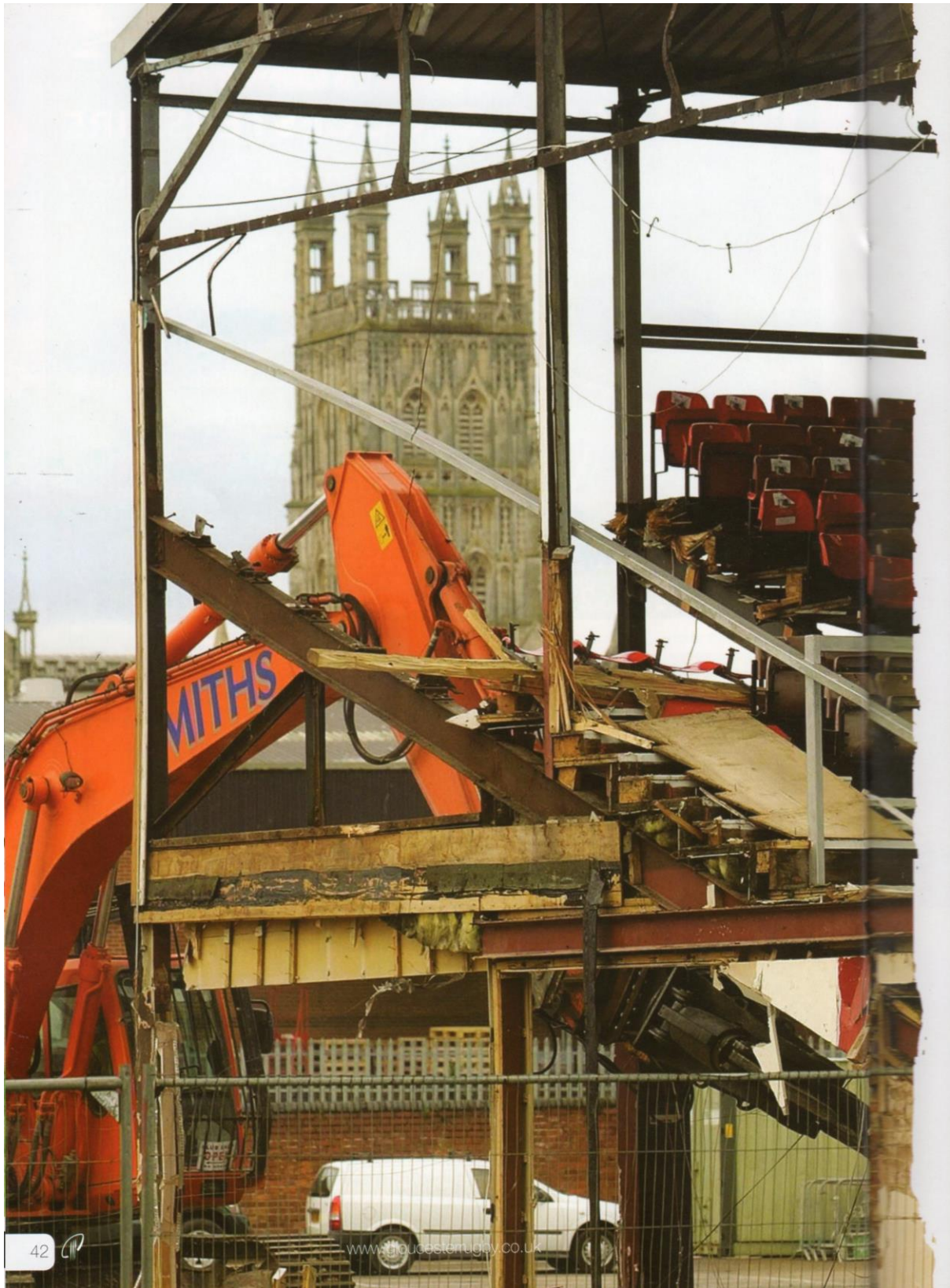


Bristol RUGBY

	Willie WALKER	15	Full Back	15	Luke ARSCOTT	
	Mark FOSTER	14	Right Wing	14	Lee ROBINSON	
	James SIMPSON-DANIEL	13	Centre	13	Neil BREW	
	Anthony ALLEN	12	Centre	12	Sam COX	
	Iain BALSHAW	11	Left Wing	11	David LEMI	
	Ryan LAMB	10	Fly Half	10	Danny GRAY	
	Peter RICHARDS	9	Scrum Half	9	Greg NICHOLLS	
	Nick WOOD	1	Prop	1	Alex CLARKE	
	Olivier AZAM	2	Hooker	2	Scott LINKLATER	
	Carlos NIETO	3	Prop	3	Darren CROMPTON	
	© Marco BORTOLAMI	4	Lock	4	Mariano SAMBUCETTI	
	Alex BROWN	5	Lock	5	Sean HOHNECK	
	Peter BUXTON	6	Flanker	6	Alfie TO'OALA	
	Andy HAZELL	7	Flanker	7	Joe EL ABD	
	James FORRESTER	8	No 8	8	Andrew BLOWERS	

Replacements

	Mefin DAVIES	16	Substitute 1	16	Mark REGAN	
	Christian CALIFANO	17	Substitute 2	17	Dave HILTON	
	Will JAMES	18	Substitute 3	18	Gareth LLEWELLYN	
	Jake BOER	19	Substitute 4	19	Nathan BUDGETT	
	Rory LAWSON	20	Substitute 5	20	Chris HALLAM	
	Jack ADAMS	21	Substitute 6	21	David HILL	
	Jon GOODRIDGE	22	Substitute 7	22	Brian LIMA	





Stand and delivered

Gloucester are now into the second phase of their Grandstand development. Following the demolition of the old structure, the foundations will be laid before the new South Stand starts to take shape.

FOR THOSE who have missed it – and there can be precious few judging by the success of the webcam – the old Grandstand at Kingsholm has been demolished to make way for the new South Stand development.

By tomorrow, work will have been underway for a month and in that time an astonishing amount has been completed – starting with the installation of the new sewer diversion 130 metres long, the soft demolition of the interior and then the heavy work.

“Demolition can mean an awful lot of things for many different people but in this case I think it is a real sign of progress, of something new and exciting happening at Gloucester Rugby and we can all be proud of that,” said Gloucester’s managing director Ken Nottage.

“The old Grandstand held terrific memories for a huge number of people down the years and we appreciate that but our aim now are to create something they can be equally proud of. These are tremendously exciting times for this famous club and I think the enthusiasm the work has already created in the city is testament to the interest in the project.

“Now the old structure has been demolished, the site will be cleared and prepared for the development. In many ways, that is when the hard work will really begin but it will open up another chapter for us at Kingsholm.

“We have obviously taken the decision to stay at our spiritual home of 116 years but I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Gloucester Heritage Urban Regeneration Company for all their outstanding work in exploring the feasibility study of the Railway Triangle.

“There has been a tremendous amount of work completed – not only by the contractors but also by Gloucester Rugby staff members who have ensured the work has run smoothly and on time.”

Since the work started, Gloucester have also opened a webcam and it has proved the most successful in Streamdays’ history – attracting more than 1,000 unique users a day – many of whom leave the link open for hours at a time, as Gloucester supporters keep right up to date with the latest work.

Once the old services and Asbestos was removed the demolition work began and included the crushing



and recycling of almost 1,500 tonnes of concrete and brick on the site.

All the steelwork from the old Grandstand was cut up and approximately 40 tonnes sent for recycling along with 40 lorry loads of soil and general debris. The site is currently undergoing Vibro piling – the introduction of stone columns to increase the bearing capacity of the ground – before the driving of pre-cast concrete piles to support the new steel columns are introduced.

In the next few weeks the ground works contractor, Smiths, will be constructing the column bases and wall foundations before steelwork starts going up in late May.

Sean Roberts, Gloucester Rugby's operations manager added: "We are now into the most important phase of the development because ensuring the preparation of the foundations is right is obviously crucial and this will take some time.

"But it will not be long until supporters are able to see outlines of the structure taking shape and that will take the project to a whole new level. I would just like to reiterate what has already been said – a huge amount of work has already been completed, this is a round the clock operation on many fronts and hugely exciting.

"You only have to appreciate the success of the webcam to appreciate just how much this project has caught the imagination of the supporters."

The new South Stand will accommodate 7,000 seats and will increase Kingsholm's capacity to almost 16,000 and make it one of the biggest all-purpose rugby grounds in the country.





Match Action

Time line

 3 min	
Barkley PEN	3-0
 6 min	
Barkley PEN	6-0
 8 mins	
Lamb PEN	6-3
 21 mins	
Bortolami YELLOW CARD	
 22 mins	
Barkley PEN	9-3
 24 mins	
Feau'natu YELLOW CARD	
 27 mins	
James TRY, Lamb CON	9-10
 35 mins	
Bailey TRY	9-15
 45 mins	
Lamb PEN	9-18
 49 mins	
Barkley PEN	12-18
 55 mins	
Barkley PEN	15-18
 56 mins	
Lamb PEN	15-21
 59 mins	
Barkley PEN	18-21
 74 mins	
Barkley PEN	21-21

Gloucester Line-up

15	Balshaw	
14	Bailey	(11)
13	Allen	
12	Tindall	
11	Simpson-Daniel	
10	Lamb	(1c, 3p)
9	Lawson	
1	Wood	
2	Azam	
3	Nieto	
4	James	(11)
5	Bortolami	(capt) (yellow card)
6	Buxton	
7	Hazell	
8	Forrester	
REPS		
16	M. Davies	(Azam)
17	Forster	
18	Boer	(Hazell)
19	Eustace	(James)
20	Richards	(Lawson)
21	Walker	(Lamb)
22	Foster	

Bath Rugby **21**
 Gloucester Rugby **21**



Brilliant Barkley

Saturday, April 7

Referee: Dave Pearson, Attendance: 10,600

GLOUCESTER once again failed to end their Bath hoodoo – letting slip a half-time lead to draw at the Rec.

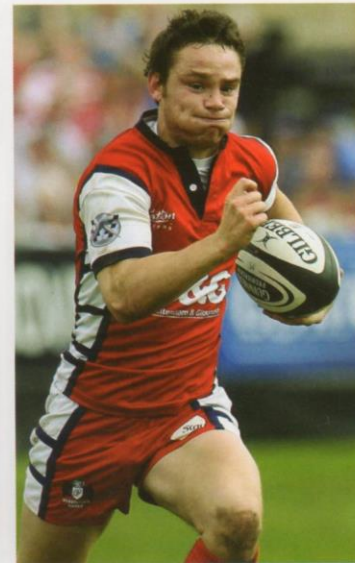
Despite first-half tries from Will James and James Bailey, Gloucester stumbled and lost their way in the second, forced back by the power and ferocity of the Bath pack at the contact area and the precision of Olly Barkley's left foot.

He landed a perfect seven from seven attempts at goal to frustrate the men from Kingsholm once again by the banks of the Avon.

Despite trailing early to Barkley's boot, Gloucester hit Bath with two tries in quick succession. First, Mike Tindall ran back a clearance kick and fed Ryan Lamb, who got Iain Balshaw away down the left.

Gloucester maintained possession through barreling bursts from Peter Buxton and Olivier Azam before lock Will James burst clear from a short pass to score.

Minutes later, Gloucester scored again. They dominated the scrums throughout and when Buxton clattered forward to





set up a ruck, Lamb broke across the face of the Bath defence, drew the cover and sent Bailey in for the try. The scores created a 15-9 half-time lead but Gloucester failed to build on the advantage thereafter because they were much the more incisive and inventive team.

At the start of the second half they began to kick from first phase – something they had not done in the first-half – as they succumbed to a major bout of conservatism that eventually cost them the match. Rory Lawson had a

kick charged down and Mike Tindall was sacked beneath his own posts as the pressure mounted.

Bath, through the efforts of their forwards, dragged Gloucester in a contest and an area of the game they didn't want to be and it created a stream of penalties.

While Lamb kicked two second half efforts, Barkley was on target four times – holding his nerve to level the scores with a 74th minute effort that drew the game.



Man of the Match...

Carlos Nieto



Gloucester were thoroughly dominant in the scrum throughout and

Carlos Nieto was at the heart of the effort.

Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



"I am disappointed because that performance was not in the

character of this side and that is the most frustrating thing,"





Peter Arnold

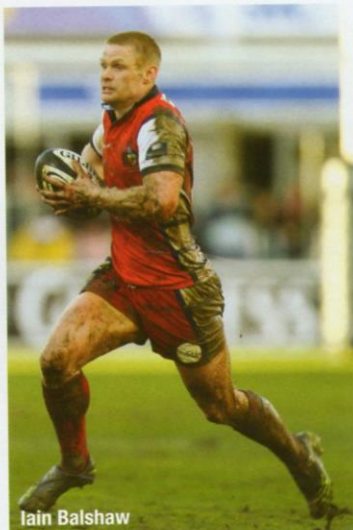
Peter Arnold has once again been a **stand-out read** in the matchday programme this season and he signs off the regular season by tipping his hat at **Bristol**, bemoaning the bad luck of **Mike Tindall** and looking back at the best of the **summer signings**.

THE CRUNCH

SO IT'S all come down to this. Our final Premiership match of the 2006/7 season will have a huge effect on the way the whole thing pans out for Gloucester. Do we have a home semi-final? If so, where will it be played? And who against? All those things should be resolved within the next few hours.

And wouldn't you just know it? The opposition is Bristol: not just a local derby, but *the* local derby, a fixture which goes back far into the mists of time, and which has so many epic stories about it that you could fill several programmes of this size, and still not have enough room to get them all in.

At the beginning of the season, pundits were claiming that today's opponents were prime candidates for relegation



Iain Balshaw

round about now. Thankfully, it hasn't worked out that way, and for a while there it even looked as if Bristol might be topping the table come play-off time. Perhaps they have fallen away a little of recent weeks, but they are still a formidable outfit which needs watching like a hawk.

I'm pleased about that, because no one in Gloucester would have liked to see our neighbours get the drop. A Premiership without a Glos v Bris fixture would be like a chip butty without the chips.

You know, I always knew something like this was going to happen. As soon as I saw the fixture list, way back last summer, and noted that our final Premiership match was to feature Bristol at Kingsholm, I just knew that it would be a crunch game of some description. It's the way the script is written.

Of course, we aren't at Kingsholm, which is a great pity, although Bristol and their support wouldn't agree. Ashton Gate is almost a home game for them, but I suppose there was very little alternative really. By the time Bristol visit Kingsholm again, they'll find a very different venue from the one they've become used to over the decades.

It says a lot for the Premiership that the table is so tight, both at the top and the bottom, meaning that the club season is going out with a bang rather than the proverbial whimper.

And let's spare a thought for Worcester. I'm sure that supporters from both

clubs would agree when I say that we don't want to see Johnny Brain's lads go down, and we wish them all the luck in the world.

UNLUCKY BREAK

I REALLY wasn't a bit surprised when we lost to Newcastle. Only a couple of weeks previously, they had given us all we could handle at Kingsholm and Kingston Park is a notoriously difficult place to visit and come away without coming second.

Then we discovered that injury was depriving us of the services of James Simpson-Daniel and Andy Hazell, probably the two players we would least like to lose from our starting line-up for that particular match.

So the mission was always going to be a difficult one. Then, to lose Mike Tindall and Iain Balshaw half way through the match was a terrible blow. Perhaps I had better not say anything about the change of referee during the game other than to observe that such a change is always unfortunate and unsettling.

Tindall's broken leg was an awful blow, for the chap himself and for the side at such a crucial point in the season and with a South African tour and a World Cup in the offing. Mike's participation in both of those events is now a severe doubt. Perhaps he might consider forgetting all that and just concentrate on being fit for next pre-season.

Anyway, we all sympathise with him and look forward to seeing him back at his influential best as soon as may be.





Mike Tindall v Newcastle

END OF TERM REPORT

AT THE beginning of the season, as always, we welcomed a sizeable clutch of new players to Kingsholm, and if we're honest, it included some names that very few, if any, of us had ever heard of.

Willie Walker, for example, coming to us from Japan, was so unknown to the alleged wits sending messages to the fans website that they, very unkindly I thought, called him 'Willie Wonka'.

Well, he has been a decided asset ever since he got into the senior squad. He's been consistently cool under pressure and his goal kicking has got us out of trouble on more than one occasion.

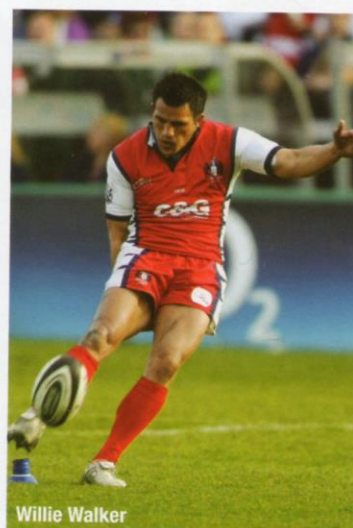
Right at the other end of the awareness scale was the mercurial Balshaw. We all knew about him, of course, even if some

doubts remained over his fitness. His incisive running from deep could have been a potent threat, but unfortunately, his old injury bugbear has returned to haunt him, so the poor chap hasn't had a real chance to string a set of good performances together. Let's not be too hard on him, however, or write him off just yet. Given a fair rub of the green, a player of his proven class is bound to come good sooner or later.

Rory Lawson was a different kettle of fish altogether. Again, we didn't know much about him other than that in his native Scotland he was third in the international pecking order behind Messrs. Cussiter and Blair. He's now put in some good international performances, and has done well for us too. Chap with a bright future I would have thought.

I could go on, and probably will next week,

given the chance. I haven't mentioned the Cornish Pirate or the Italian Job yet. Watch this space.



Willie Walker

Hall of Fame

with Dave King



Philippe Saint-Andre

Nicknamed **'The Piglet'**, Philippe Saint-Andre was one of the **greatest ever French players**. After a successful spell as a player at Kingsholm, he took over as head coach and guided the club in the Heineken Cup. He joins the Hall of Fame today.

PHILIPPE SAINT-ANDRE'S status as an outstanding player, captain and leader is not solely confined to Kingsholm.

He is one of the greatest French players of all time, won 69 caps for Les Blues, 34 of them as captain.

Saint-Andre was born on 19th April 1967 at Romans-sur-Isere. He forged his career with Romans and then Clermont Montferrand at club level as a winger or centre with a prolific strike-rate. His reputation as a winger with a prolific try scoring record eventually attracted

the attentions of the French selectors.

After appearances for the French 'A' and 'B' teams, he eventually made his debut for the senior team in 1990 – although it was an inauspicious debut for it ended in a 12-6 defeat and was the first time that the Romanians had triumphed on French soil.

However, Saint-Andre became a regular in the French team as the seasons progressed and his consistent form and his obvious leadership qualities led to the wing being appointed as the French captain

in succession to Olivier Roumat for the 1994 Five Nations finale against Scotland at Murrayfield where he led his team to a 20-12 victory.

The French team that Saint-Andre led on that Spring day was: - J-L. Sadourmy (Colomiers); P. Saint-Andre (Montferrand, Captain), P. Sella (Agen), Y. Delaigue (Toulon), W. Techoueyres (S.B.U.C.); T. Lacroix (Dax), A. Macabiau (Perpignan); L. Benezech (Racing Club), J.M. Gonzales (Bayonne), L. Seigne (Merigrae), A. Benazzi (Agen), O. Merle (Greenoble), O. Brouzet (Greenoble), L.



Philippe as a Gloucester player



Philippe as a Gloucester Coach

“Within a year of signing for Gloucester, **Saint-Andre** was promoted to **head coach** in place of **Richard Hill** – now the coach of **Bristol**. The **effervescent Frenchman** was to lead the **Kingsholm** club to a **Heineken Cup** spot for the first time as he began a series of alterations that changed **Gloucester forever.**”

Cabannes (Racing Club), P. Benetton (Agen).

P. Moutlaur (Agen) was a replacement for Lacroix after 52 minutes.

Laurent Seigne, the French tighthead prop, later became a coach at Kingsholm. Also of note that afternoon was the fact that Ian Smith our former openside flanker was included in the Scotland team.

While Saint-Andre is now at Sale Sharks as Director of Rugby, Seigne has recently been dismissed as coach by French club Castres and Smith is with Moseley in a coaching position.

Saint-Andre, who was nicknamed 'Le Goret' (the piglet), became the first winger to be appointed captain since Christain Darray in 1967, and on that eventful day

in Edinburgh that he scored a try.

Notable tries were at the forefront of a brilliant career. Probably his finest moment came at Twickenham on 16th January 1991 when he scored 'the try from nowhere' against England in a thrilling Grand Slam decider.

He claimed a Championship high with three tries – two against England and one against Ireland – as France won the 1993 Five Nations Championship.

He was also the architect of one of the games most remarkable tries when he led France on a tour of New Zealand. It occurred in Auckland in the deciding Test of the series and secured France's first series win against the All Blacks.

After fielding a ball in his own 22,

he looked up to see four All Blacks converging on him. Acknowledging afterwards that he 'could only kick as far as a sparrow' he set off on a remarkable run, creating the move that went through eight pairs of hands before Jean-Luc Sadourney touched down one of the truly great international tries.

Any player who led his French team to their first win in Scotland for the first time in 16 years and inflict the first ever 2-0 series victory in New Zealand in 1994 is a remarkable player.

When he signed for Gloucester in 1997 he was one of the best players in the world and marked his Kingsholm debut with two tries in a 35-13 victory over today's opponents Bristol.

Hall of Fame...

Rob Fidler and Tony Windo were the other try scorers with the ever reliable place kicking of Mark Mapletoft adding a trio of conversions and penalties.

Within a year of signing for Gloucester, Saint-Andre was promoted to head coach in place of Richard Hill – now the coach of Bristol. The effervescent Frenchman was to lead the Kingsholm club to a Heineken Cup spot for the first time as he began a series of alterations that changed Gloucester forever. This, coupled with the fact that he was the club's first overseas player in the professional

era, endeared him to the Kingsholm faithful. In two seasons he made 31 Premiership appearances scoring 14 tries.

Saint-Andre won the last four of his international caps while at Kingsholm and scored 33 tries in 69 appearances. After his appointment as director of rugby at Gloucester, he made only more appearances – the final one in the Tetley's Bitter Cup semi-final defeat against Wasps.

The 35-21 defeat, with six Mapletoft penalties and an Ian Sanders drop-goal, ended

Gloucester's hopes for honours but there were exciting times with the signings of the influential Ian Jones and Junior Paramore who linked up with his cousin, Terry Fanolua at Kingsholm.

With Kingsley Jones as captain and with the arrival of Andy Gomarsall, Jake Boer and Robert Todd, Gloucester finished in third position after finishing 10th the previous year during Saint-Andre's first season in charge.

Subsequent seasons saw a massive turn around in players and coaches with John Brain, Laurent Seigne, Andy Keast and Paul Turner arriving and departing from coaching positions within the club. Further signings of Henry Paul, Ludovic Mercier, Olivier Azam and Patrice Collazo added spice to those turbulent years.

However, consistency was the major issue and it all came to end for Saint-Andre when Azam, one of his French signings, scored the last try in his turbulent reign as director of rugby in his final match at The Stoop, home of Harlequins.

The last team he fielded on Gloucester Rugby Clubs behalf was: -

Daren O'Leary; Terry Fanolua, Henry Paul, Robert Todd, Diego Albanese; Ludovic Mercier, Andy Gomarsall; Federico Pucciarello, Olivier Azam, Phil Vickery, Rob Fidler, Mark Cornwell, Jake Boer, James Forrester and Junior Paramore.

Point scorers were Diego Albanese and Olivier Azam recording tries with Ludovic Mercier adding 2 penalties and a conversion.

Any doubts surrounding Philippe's ability to guide a club to the highest honours were dispelled last season when along with former Gloucester Rugby captain Kingsley Jones as coach he led Sale Sharks to the Guinness Premiership title.

David King

Philippe's overall record at the helm of Gloucester Rugby Club read as follows in all competitions: -

	Played	Won	Drew	Lost	Points For	Points Against
Home	35	30	0	5	1261	614
Away	32	14	1	17	820	730
Overall	67	44	1	22	2081	1344

Philippe's International appearances were: -

	Opposition
1990	Romania, Australia, New Zealand 1 & 2
1991	Ireland ©, Wales, England, United States 1 & 2, Wales, Romania, Fiji, Canada, England
1992	Wales, England, Scotland, Ireland, Romania, Argentina 1 & 2, South Africa 1 & 2.
1993	England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, South Africa 1 & 2, Australia 1 & 2.
1994	Ireland, Wales, England, Scotland, Canada, New Zealand 1 & 2, Canada
1995	Wales, England, Scotland, Ireland*, Romania, Tonga, Ivory Coast, Scotland, Ireland, South Africa, England, Italy, Romania, Argentina, New Zealand 1 & 2.
1996	England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Romania, Argentina 1 & 2, Wales
1997	Italy 1 & 2, Romania, Argentina, South Africa 1 & 2.



Philippe as a French player*

Fan Zone

with Bob Fenton

Bob Fenton will give up his usual position in the Shed today for a nice, shiny seat at **Ashton Gate** for Gloucester's final **Guinness Premiership** match of the season against **Bristol** and his hoping for a **classic send-off**.

SO HERE we are then, the end of the regular season and playing our last Premiership game in some very odd surroundings. Not many of us thought that we would ever play a home game against Bristol in err Bristol, but there we are – we're here now, so let's get on with it and try to bring a bit of Kingsholm fervour to this footie ground.

I think this has been a really good season. On the pitch the Premiership has produced the best competition for years, last game of the season and we still don't know who is going to finish where. The play-off places are still up for grabs, as is the shakedown of who will be the lucky recipients of an all important home tie.

I'm not a great fan of the play-off system – find me a Gloucester supporter who is and I'll be amazed – but you can't deny that they give an extra something to the end of the season. This year three teams are within a few points of each other, so each has the possibility of getting into the top four – not least our opponents today.

And just to give it a bit more spice there is a real possibility that Wasps – our nemesis on so many occasions – may just miss out on a place in the end of season bun fight. Now wouldn't that be a shame...!

Down at the other end Worcester and Northampton are destined to strain their supporters' nerves as the battle to stay up goes down to the wire. It's amazing that it has come down to the last game, in the past few years the relegation issue has been done and dusted by this stage and it's impossibly tight.

Good luck to whichever of them drops down, the standard of rugby in the first division is improving, but you have to back whichever club who goes down to bounce straight back.

And we should say hurrah for Leeds, proving many critics wrong with their immediate bounce back, despite losing their coach and a handful of key players at the start of the season – including our own Iain Balshaw. I'm already looking forward to the trip to the new-look Headingley.

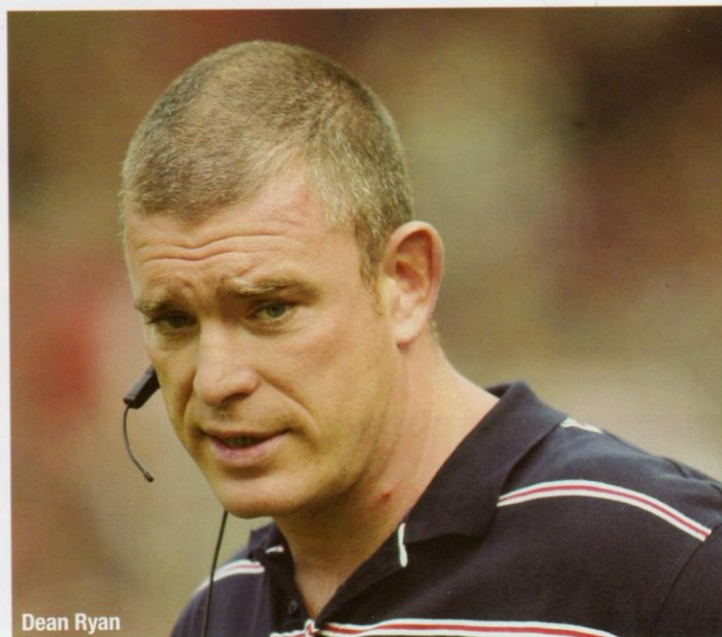
Closer to home we have been treated to a revelation in the form of Marco Bortolami – what a signing he proved to be. From Padova to Narbonne to captain of Gloucester in three easy steps: a great player, a great captain and a really nice bloke too. And, according to my other half, a bit of a dream boat to boot. He's got it all, hasn't he...

Peter Buxton is another player who can look back on the season with a real sense

of pride – he has been immense. I'll be honest and say that I had my doubts about him a few years back, he seemed to struggle in the second row and the rumour mill was constantly moving him out of Castle Grim. Well pass that humble pie, I'll take a large slice. I voted for him for player of the season, so that should be the kiss of death as far as his chances go there.

We say goodbye to a number of players, Adam Eustace heads west to Wales after almost 10 years at the club. A good man who lost out on a regular starting spot when other big name players came to the club, but never one to moan he just got on with it. Good luck to him and all the others who will be leaving us this season.

Some things never seem to change



Dean Ryan



Marco Bortolami

“Closer to home we have been treated to a **revelation** in the form of **Marco Bortolami** – what a signing he proved to be. From **Padova to Narbonne to captain of Gloucester** in three easy steps: a **great player**, a **great captain** and a **really nice bloke** too.

though. We played Wasps at Adams Park on Boxing Day – and lost, and we failed to win at the Rec again. I think Boudica was on the throne when we last won down there.

Talking of some things never changing, it's sad to say the interminable row between clubs and country rumbled on throughout the season. You wonder how much longer this can carry on for, does the FA tell players how to run their affairs or what to do with their players? I don't think so.

Thomas Castaignede wrote in the Guardian a few weeks ago that it was time the blazers stopped sitting back smoking cigars and became cigar salesmen. I don't think he meant that it was time that certain people stopped living off other people's efforts and got a proper job (though many would not argue with that interpretation), I think what he meant was that it was time to stop taking and start putting something back.

But being from the land that gave us Eric Cantona and his now infamous quote about seagulls following trawlers he couldn't put it quite as simply as that.

I'd love to think that we won't see it all played out over and over again next season, but even I'm not that naïve, especially as at the time of writing the Heineken Cup has become the latest bargaining chip and no one seems to know whether we will be off on our travels across Europe or left kicking our heels.

The laughable idea of first division clubs that was put out from Twickenham just confirms to me that there is something in the air at OF Towers that disengages the thought process from the muscles that move the mouth.

Leinster against Rotherham, Munster at Exeter – nice for the few dozen fans that get along to those grounds but as a spectacle, let alone an even contest, you're having a laugh. Watch the sponsors disappear over the hill if that ever looks like becoming a reality.

We can but hope that some common sense prevails and that there can be a meeting of minds somewhere along the way. Or at least they can get it all sorted – so we don't have to go through it all again next season.

That's enough politics for now, let's just concentrate on getting the right result here today, then a home semi-final is almost a certainty. Only question is, where will home be?

Watching the redevelopment of Kingsholm through a web-cam has been an interesting experience, the old Grandstand came down very quickly and it seems the place is now being levelled ready for the building work to begin. I'm not sure whether the health and safety people will let us play there, but no doubt the back room boys have got it all in hand.

If we do get stuck though, I don't think Hucclecote or Coney Hill have a fixtures, so we could always scoot up there.

Match Action

Time line

 4 min	
Lamb PEN	0-3
 7 min	
Wilkinson PEN	3-3
 12 mins	
Lamb PEN	3-6
 17 mins	
Flood TRY, Wilkinson CON	10-6
 34 mins	
Wilkinson PEN	13-6
 37 mins	
Lamb PEN	13-9
 60 mins	
Flood PEN	16-9
 67 mins	
Flood PEN	19-9
 73 mins	
Walker PEN	19-12

Gloucester Line-up

15	Balshaw	
14	Bailey	
13	Tindall	
12	Allen	
11	Foster	
10	Lamb	(3 pens)
9	Lawson	
1	Wood	
2	Azam	
3	Nieto	
4	James	
5	Bortolami	(capt)
6	Buxton	
7	Boer	
8	Forrester	
REPS		
16	M. Davies	(Azam)
17	Forster	
18	Narraway	(Bailey)
19	Brown	(James)
20	Richards	(Lawson)
21	Keil	(Tindall)
22	Walker	(1 pen) (Lamb)

Newcastle Falcons
Gloucester Rugby

19
12



Fabulous Flood

Friday, April 13

Referee: Tony Spreadbury, Attendance: 7,091

MIKE TINDALL'S broken leg and injuries to Iain Balshaw and James Bailey compounded Gloucester's misery on a disappointing night at Kingston Park a fortnight ago.

The England centre underwent surgery in Gloucester the following day after a second half collision with Toby Flood resulted in a fracture to his tibia in his right leg. He will be out of action for the rest of the season.

It was a poor night for Gloucester, who

lacked shape, direction and cutting edge, and the only try came in the first-half through Flood – arguably the game's most impressive player.

Gloucester did lead when Ryan Lamb's attempted drop-goal was charged down by Jonny Wilkinson, who gathered possession and sent Flood on his way.

Although Jake Boer got back to make a cover tackle, the Newcastle star had enough power to stretch over the line.





The mere fact it was the only score of the game emphasised just how disjointed and lacking in threat both teams were – despite Gloucester’s set-piece excellence through the power of Nick Wood, Olivier Azam and Carlos Nieto – Newcastle were very competitive at the breakdown and defended excellently in the second half.

Even when Wilkinson went off in the second half, Flood continued to pull the strings – landing two expert penalties

after 60 and 67 minutes to take Newcastle well clear.

Gloucester needed a late effort from Willie Walker to salvage a bonus point and send them, temporarily at least, back to the top of the Guinness Premiership but this was a performance they will want to forget quickly at Kingsholm.

It was Gloucester’s first defeat in six matches and on the plus side, Alex Brown returned from injury in the second half.



Man of the Match...

Nick Wood



For the second game in succession, Gloucester dominated the set-piece and Nick Wood was at the heart of the effort.

Coaches Comment...

Dean Ryan



“We looked rushed and lacked composure at key moments. It is a very disappointing defeat but I am positive we can bounce back from it.”

