




GLOUCESTER
V

BEDFORD
RUGBY



Saturday 6
May 2000
Kick-off 3.00pm

 **ERNST & YOUNG**

MATCHBALL SPONSOR

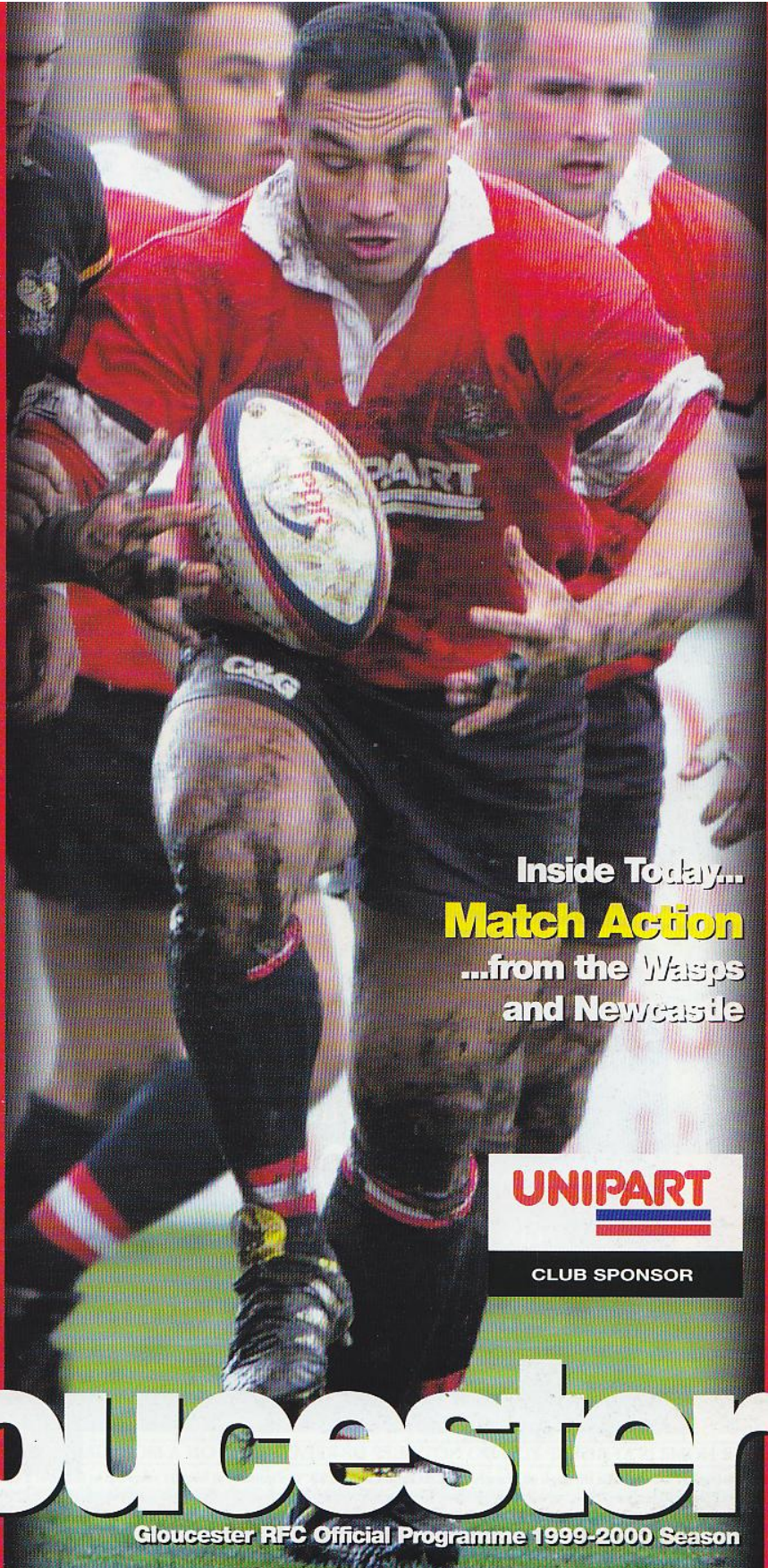
UNIPART

CLUB SPONSOR

Gloucester

Issue 16 - £2.00

Gloucester RFC Official Programme 1999-2000 Season



Inside Today...
Match Action
...from the Wasps
and Newcastle

Welcome from The Editors

A Warm Welcome

So, here we are at the end of another season at Kingsholm. Just one more match – a visit to London Irish at The Stoop (a combination that will take more than a few pints of Ireland's Best to get used to!).

We are given to believe that Gloucester has set a new record – and this one is nothing to do with players (well, we hope not). It concerns the Gloucester supporters.

You see, when we visited the Stoop back last February, more Guinness was consumed than at any other match at the ground!

Paddy, the London Irish press officer, is determined that the record will be broken on the last day of the season. We'll drink to that!

Those of you who were here for the game against Wasps might be interested to know that £1,050.98 was raised for the St. John Ambulance in their traditional annual collection.

Eric John has asked us to pass on a big "thank you" to our supporters from St. John Ambulance who, as you know, provide medical help for spectators during matches.

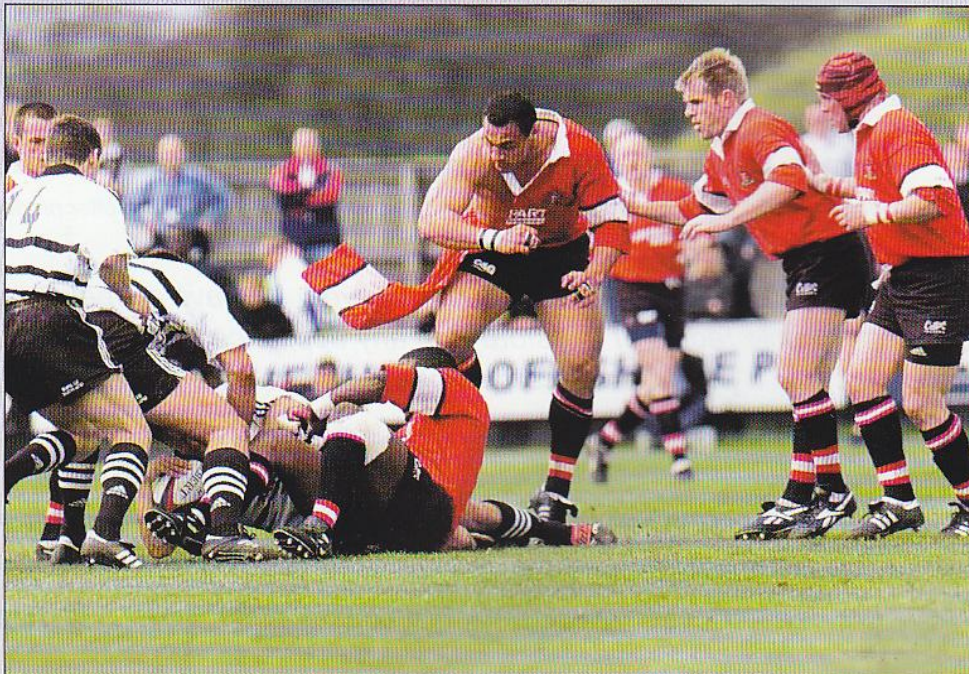
The club shop has a number of "special end of season" offers. Unfortunately, we have been unable

to reflect the reduced prices on items in the merchandise supplement in the centre of this programme.

But if you care to pop into the club shop, Rachel Creed says that you could well have a big surprise.

Finally, it is with regret that we report the recent death of Rex Whitehead, a supporter of many years standing. Our sincere condolences are extended to Rex's family.

Both Philippe and Kingsley have ended their contributions today by using their native tongues. All we can say is: "Have a good summer and see you back at Kingsholm next season".



Last Gasp

Peter Arnold

The last match of the Kingsholm season was always a special event. It was a very lighthearted occasion, often tinged with a little nostalgia, because no one really wanted the season to end – and that included the players.

The affair was usually a happy little run around played in brilliant sunshine, as when a half-strength Gloucester side put 17 tries on Exeter. Unfortunately, the selectors, in their wisdom, had neglected to include a kicker, and only one of those tries was converted – by Richard Mogg was it? The Captain, who was Keith Richardson, ended up by handing the ball to the referee and suggesting that he had a go.

However, this is one of those occasions when nostalgia really isn't what it used to be. There is no such thing, nowadays, as a lighthearted match, and during April, at any rate, we've had precious little sunshine. I suppose it might have been worse. Did you see those TV pictures of Murrayfield under three feet of water the other week? Serves them right for staging a rugby league match. Still, we've got quite a lot to look back on. To call this season 'interesting' would be like saying that David Campese was a bit of a winger. Supporting Gloucester has always been a bit of an emotional roller-coaster, but the highs and lows we've had to endure this season have been a bit extreme even by Kingsholm standards. To be basking on the Olympian heights of the top of the Premiership table, only to watch helplessly as Gloucester lost two Kingsholm games in a row does tend to be stress inducing. But it's worth remembering that at around this stage last year we were worrying about avoiding the play-off zone. This time

round, at the time of writing, we're sweating on a European Cup spot, so there's a lot to be satisfied about. Anyway, we don't have very long to wait before hostilities are resumed. If the report leaked to the local press turns out to be accurate, we'll be watching rugby while the cricketers still have two Test Matches to look forward to. Hardly worth going home, really.

Finally, when future researchers investigate England at the turn of the new Millennium, they'll find that, as the fireworks were exploding all over the world, Gloucester was the top club in England. And no one is ever going to be able to take that away from us.

SHEER ENJOYMENT

At this point in the season it's nice to consider which players we have most enjoyed watching over the past seven months or so. That's not the same as specifying a 'Player of the Year': that accolade, in my view, should go to the Skipper, Kingsley Jones. He's still a comparative newcomer to the Kingsholm scene, but his work rate, his dedication, and his ability to get just that little extra out of the players around him have been a revelation, even to people miles away from Gloucester.

As an old flanker myself, I've certainly enjoyed watching him play, but then, I could say that about a whole handful of players. Especially Steve Ojomoh. One of my favourite moments of the season came when the Wasps hooker, Trevor Leotta, having received a lot of TV attention over the previous few weeks, tried his impression of a rabid, blonde-rinded warthog, and attempted to trample right through the middle of everybody. Unfortunately for him, he happened to

come across Steve Ojomoh on the way, and rapidly discovered that he was not, after all, the toughest kid on the block. The look on his face as the back of his neck hit the floor was a sight to behold. Steve has made an impact this season, in every sense of the word, and he'd certainly be on my list of 'most enjoyed' players.

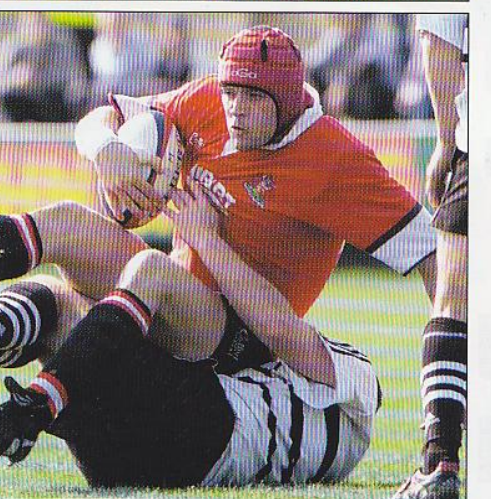
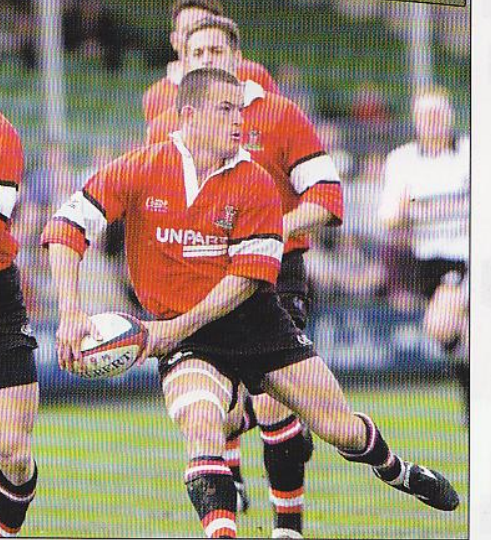
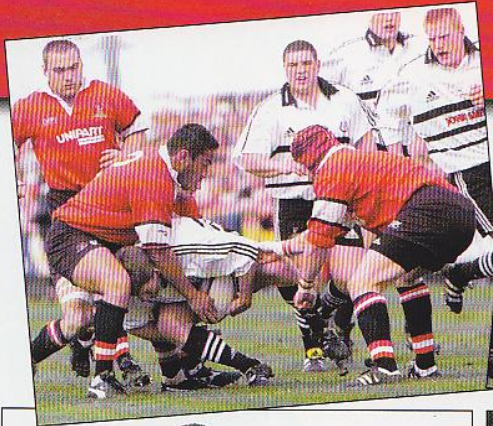
Another, for purely personal, I – told – you – so reasons is Simon Mannix. For most of last season he was suffering from comparison with Mark Mapletoft, and as he would probably readily admit, wasn't really playing very well. Many supporters were writing him off, and I seemed to be constantly saying to people, "Wait a minute. We've seen him before, in his Sale days. He's a better player than this. Everyone has an off season... and so on. I'm sure you'll agree that he's justified my faith this time round. Cool, clinical, inventive, and usually reliable with the boot, (even if he did miss that conversion at Newcastle last week) he seems to have been at the heart of everything. Others I have particularly enjoyed have included Ian Jones, for his sheer knowledge and professionalism, Trevor Woodman, who has been improving steadily with every match, it seems and Chris Catling who has been a handful whether he plays at full-back or on the wing. You'll have your own list of players you've most enjoyed watching, and good luck to you. It will give you something to think about while you get out your cricket kit, your bucket and spade, or whatever else you use to while away the time between rugby matches.

Summer well! And – would you believe – that's the 20th time I've written that in these pages.

See you next season.

Match Action

Newcastle 36 - 28 Gloucester



Read The News And Air Your Views on the Official Gloucester RFC Website
www.kingsholm-chronicle.org.uk



Captain's Comment

Kingsley Jones

“We know just how important today’s match against Bedford is in terms of both regaining our pride and of reaching our target.”

After two disappointing home defeats against Northampton and Bath, we came back with a win against Wasps in a great performance.

We really enjoyed that win two weeks ago and we felt that we had made up for some of the disappointment felt by the supporters.

Then we go to Newcastle and let everyone down - ourselves and the supporters, especially all those who made the long journey to the North East.

There are no excuses. We simply didn't play well. We have to be more ruthless when you are in the top three of the Premiership.

Believe me, it was a bad day. And all the players know it. We know just how important today's match against Bedford is in terms of both regaining our pride and of reaching our target.

If anything positive is to come out about our defeat at Newcastle last weekend is it that it has given us a real kick up the backside and

made us realise that we have to keep our feet firmly on the floor.

It has also brought home the fact that any team in the Premiership is capable of a win on the day.

The bottom line is that you cannot afford to play at 70 per cent of your potential and expect to come away with a win, particularly away from home.

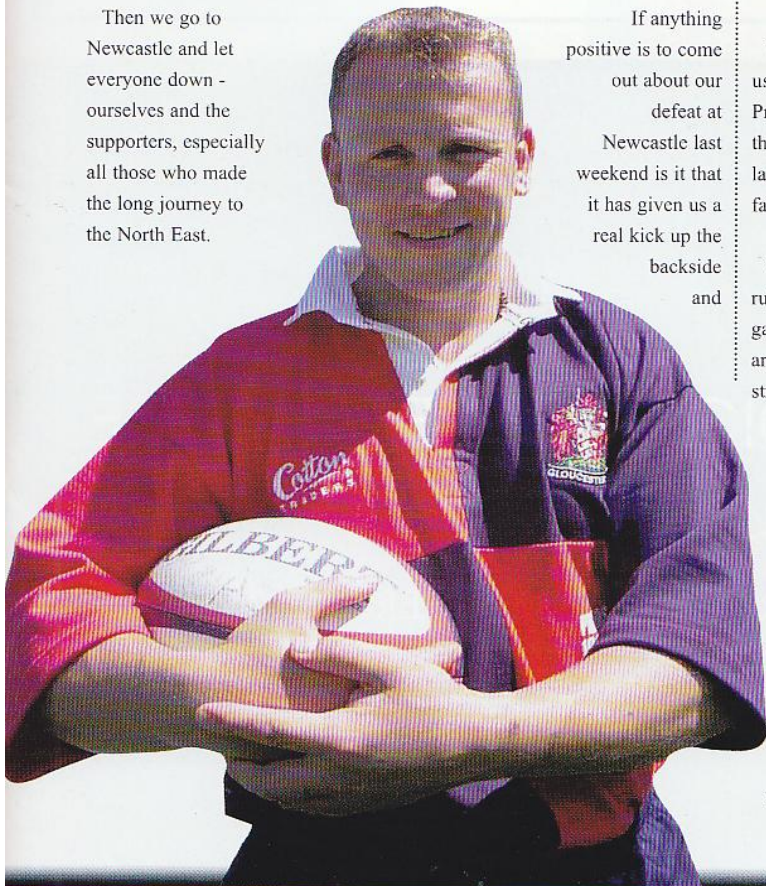
This has been brought home to us on a couple of occasions. Previously, we have tended to put things right in the second half, but last weekend against Newcastle we failed to make the adjustment.

We have to learn to be more ruthless in the first 25 minutes of games, especially against sides who are lower down the table and are struggling on confidence.

It is a little early for me to speak on the season and we still don't know our destiny! Hopefully we will be playing in the Heineken Cup - that was the target we set at the beginning of the season.

I am still confident that we can achieve our aim.

Diolch yn fawr iawn, ac mwynhau ti'n egwyl haf!





From The Commentary Booth

by Graham Day

Bedford arrive at Kingsholm with a former Gloucester favourite in their squad – and if Dave Sims features in the team today, as he has in Bedford’s last couple of outings, I’m sure there’ll be genuine warmth in his welcome.

He may have left the club under a little cloud, and under-performing to be fair, but there can be no question about his massive contribution to this club.

A Gloucester win can’t be seen as a foregone conclusion, given the couple of wobbly results of late, but surely a side with just one win from twenty games which has conceded almost seven hundred points can be no match for Gloucester this afternoon. The three points would virtually seal entry into the European Cup, and for the achievement of reaching his pre-season goal, much credit should be given to Philippe and his players. The heady days of topping the table shouldn’t be allowed to obscure a season of solid performances and glitches which, I’m sure, the canny Frenchman has learnt from and will iron out during the summer.

Yet even in looking forward to next season, I can’t rid myself of a sense of fore-boding that this great sport still doesn’t know where it’s going or who’s leading it! At the end of this season, there’ll be a sense of déjà vu in the Premiership play-off, as today’s visitors go head to head with Rotherham. Last season, as you’ll no doubt remember, Rotherham had to settle for the play offs, despite finishing at the top of the table with the same points as Bristol. Then despite scoring and conceding the same amount of points over the two legs, it was Bedford who clung onto their Premiership status.

This season, the big clubs decided it wouldn’t be fair to have automatic promotion because the World Cup might throw up some freak results with weakened sides and, Heaven forbid, some of the bigger boys might have been battling relegation.

But where’s the fairness for a club a club which has once again topped the next division, scoring over a thousand points whilst conceding fewer than two hundred and fifty, having to play off against a side who have sadly so far proved the top division’s whipping boys?

We’re told we’ll prefer a British competition to a Tetley’s Bitter Cup; that we’ll prefer a season run the

Rob Andrew way; that we’ll flock to watch the growing sport of rugby. But has anyone actually asked the supporters what they want?

I still catch my trousers on the same nail which has stuck up through the seat since it was nailed into position because the “tip-up” broke eight years ago. I still go through the same “Wild West saloon”-style gates to the toilet as on my first visit to Kingsholm.

It’s now eight years since I did a series of interviews about the future vision for Kingsholm which even got to the point of what kind of equipment would be needed to go into a new state of the art commentary box.

Let’s celebrate some terrific work by the players and coaches, this season and cross our fingers that by the start of next, those with the power to shape this game are all pulling in the same direction and not pulling it apart.

Graham Day is a former “voice of Gloucester Rugby”. He provided the commentary for BBC Radio Gloucestershire for many years and remains a fervent supporter. Graham has moved from the sports department and is now a “broadcast journalist”. He still manages to keep his hand in at rugby commentary at least once a season.

Gloucester Rugby Supporters Association

An Independent Voice for the Supporter

Biting My Fingernails

It is obviously "end of season" time again, as my fingernails are bitten back farther than the kids'. I do ask myself why because Glaws are at the right end of the table and not fighting relegation like the recent few years?

I and many of my compatriots are a fickle bunch, seemingly never happier than when we have something to grumble about. Is our glass half full or half empty? With that reference to an earlier article here we go with a review of the last year (well, it is the last home match).

Things I have enjoyed this season: Winning away from home, beating Bath in the cup, "Jones the Tall" ascending through the stratosphere to catch a penalty attempt at Sale, the Northampton crowd, being top of the league (if only occasionally), Tai Glassie and Jawad Djoudi "calming down the opposition", the GRSA referees evening and debate on "The Future of English Rugby" and feeling privileged to see a person named Serge.

Things I did not enjoy this season: Losing home matches, losing in the cup, cynicism in playing the game, not knowing the format for next season, not knowing the format for rugby as a game, feeling that the administrators have forgotten that supporters are now "customers" and a frustration that few people recognise supporters as a major sponsor of rugby.



As an individual, I can do nothing about my frustrations with the game; joining GRSA has allowed me a wider voice to the club, which is just starting to blossom (Spain trip, Bedford away, free coaches to London Irish away...); it does not allow a voice on the wider issues. Until now.

You dear reader, will be among the privileged few to know that tomorrow (Sunday 7 May 2000) GRSA will join all other Premier 1 & 2 Supporters Associations to meet with a view of forming a National Supporters Association.

This has been instigated by GRSA (credit to John for his sterling work), so whereas the old game found its roots in Rugby, has the modern game found its true roots - Gloucester?

Have a good summer break Everyone!!

GRSA: We're there for you.

The Gloucester Rugby Supporters Association (GRSA) was formed to provide a focal point for all Supporters with the club on important issues - by arranging events, increasing our knowledge and understanding of the game and giving all supporters a voice.

An Independent Voice, Run by Supporters - For Supporters.

For more information or stories for inclusion, please phone Trevor on 01452 857077 or write to: PO Box 95, Stroud, Glos GL6 0YH

Mannix and the past 12 months

SAFETY NOTICE

We take this opportunity to welcome you to Kingsholm. The club and the Police, along with the safety team, have done their part in the match preparation. Late arrivals place unnecessary pressure on stewards and Police alike – and also cause inconvenience to other spectators.

PLEASE DO NOT OBSTRUCT GANGWAYS OR STAND/SIT ON STAIRS IN THE GRANDSTAND.

At the end of the match, it is most important that all spectators leaving the ground do so in an orderly fashion and heed any instructions given by the Police, Stewards, or over the public address system.

Please do not congregate in the walkways, stairways or similar areas.

POLICE EMERGENCY MESSAGES

Police emergency messages will be broadcast over the public address system. Please listen carefully, the message will be important.

Please follow any instructions given by the Police or stewards – these instructions will be in YOUR interests.

Thank you.

Gloucestershire Constabulary
Gloucester Rugby
Football Club Ltd

In the Press conference following the Wasps match two weeks ago, Simon Mannix was asked by Steve Bale of the Express what, from the players' perspective, the changes had been in the last 12 months.

"I think that the raw material of the side was here to start with, though Philippe has brought-in a few new players," Mannix replied.

"The main thing is the intangibles – the things that Philippe has managed to instil in the guys.

"There is a willingness to learn and the desire to improve each week. And most importantly the belief."

"Working with the players we have, we came up with a game plan that was very effective for most of the season."

"Philippe got all the guys on the same wavelength and believing that the game plan will work."

"It's more the small things that have made the big changes. We had the players here.

"It's all very well having very good players, but without the right

direction and the right leadership – and the guys having belief in each other, then it's not going to work.

"We've got that this year, though we have stumbled on occasions. "Today (against Wasps), you can count the bad decisions we made on one hand but you would have needed everyone's hands and feet to count the errors in some other matches."

Saint-André had previously told the press conference that he felt he had to take a fair proportion of the blame for some of the bad results -

and he put this down to a lack of coaching experience.

But Mannix did not agree. "He (Philippe Saint-André) is taking far too much of the blame," he said. "It's got to stop with the

players. We haven't proved an awful lot this season as individual players or collectively.

"We've got enough good footballers in the team to make the right decisions and to sort it out.

But we sort of lost our way a bit and the senior players in the team have got to stand up and be accountable."





Today's Officials

Referee:

Steve Lander (RFU)

Touch Judges:

Tim Miller (RFU)

Ashley Reay (RFU)

Fourth Official:

John Watkins
(Glos Society)



**HAYDEN JOHN
MONCRIEFF**

Yes, that is "Moncrieff" as in "Elton". Five-years-old Hayden John is the son of our scrum half. And Hayden, along with his brother Matthew (age 2), is no stranger at Kingsholm! The Moncrieffs live in Cheltenham and Hayden is a pupil at Leckhampton Primary School. Quite naturally, Hayden loves rugby! He also likes Playstation (when dad lets him have a go, we are reliably informed!), riding his bike and watching dad playing. And Hayden has the distinction of having his photograph in the programme three times - he can also be seen twice in the Gloucester Merchandise section in the centre of the programme.

the Official Gloucester
Matchday Programme is
brought to you by

PIA SPORT

tel: 01635 35546

the views expressed in the GRFC
Matchday Programme are not
necessarily the views of PIA SPORT
or Gloucester Rugby Football Club.
©1999

Saturday May 6, 2000

Today's Line-Ups

Gloucester 60-16 Bedford Rugby

15	Chris Catling	Chris Richards	15
14	Joe Ewens	Ryan O'Neil	14
13	Terry Fanolua	George Truelove	13
12	Chris Yates	Dan Harris	12
11	Rob Jewell	Alistair McLean	11
10	Byron Hayward	Andrew Thompson	10
9	Ian Sanders	Charlie Harrison	9
1	Trevor Woodman	Adrian Olver	1
2	Jawad Djoudi	Aaron Davis	2
3	Phil Vickery	Paul Beal	3
4	Rob Fidler	Dave Sims	4
5	Ian Jones	Keith Stewart	5
6	Junior Paramore	Nick Broughton	6
7	Andrew Hazell	Florent Rossigneux	7
8	Ed Pearce	Ryan Banks (C)	8

Replacements

16	Laurie Beck	James Hinkins	16
17	Audley Lumsden	Justin Abrahams	17
18	Andy Deacon	Richie Elliott	18
19	Neil McCarthy	Marek Kwisiuk	19
20	To Be Announced	Rob Faiers	20
21	To Be Announced	Chad Eagle	21
22	Adam Eustace	Jamie Cockle	22