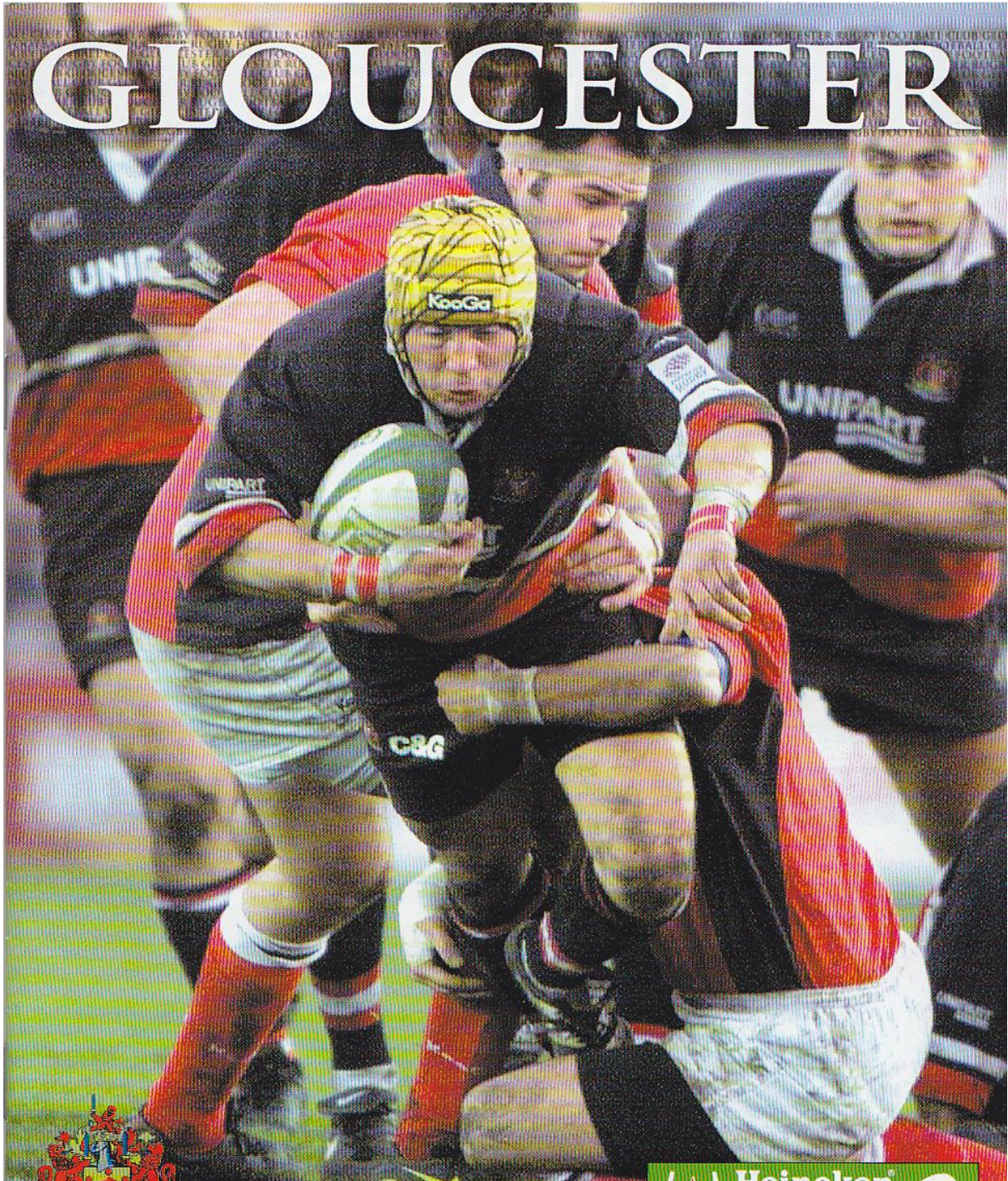


GLOUCESTER



GLOUCESTER V CARDIFF



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HEINEKEN CUP FIXTURE
SATURDAY 27TH JANUARY 2001 KICK-OFF 2.00 PM
GLOUCESTER RFC OFFICIAL PROGRAMME
2000-2001 SEASON
ISSUE 13 - £2.00

TODAY'S TEAMS

SATURDAY JANUARY 27TH, 2001

GLOUCESTER* 21 **CARDIFF*** 15

CHRIS CATLING	15	RHYS WILLIAMS
JOE EWENS	14	NICK WALNE 1T
(I) TERRY FANOLUA	13	JAMIE ROBINSON
(I) JASON LITTLE	12	PIETER MULLER
(I) TOM BEIM	11	GARETH THOMAS 1T
(I) 6PG SIMON MANNIX	10	NEIL JENKINS 1C 1PG
ELTON MONCREIFF	9	ROBERT HOWLEY
(I) TREVOR WOODMAN	1	PETER ROGERS
(I) OLIVIER AZAM	2	JONATHAN HUMPHREYS
(I) PHIL VICKERY	3	DAVID YOUNG (C)
ROB FIDLER	4	CRAIG QUINNELL
(I) IAN JONES	5	JOHN TAIT
JAKE BOER	6	OWAIN WILLIAMS
(I)(C) KINGSLEY JONES	7	MARTYN WILLIAMS
(I) JUNIOR PARAMORE	8	EMYR LEWIS

UNIPART

REPLACEMENTS

LOST BOYS 

(I) ANDY GOMARSALL	16	MIKE RAYER
(I) 1PG BYRON HAYWARD	17	RYAN POWELL
CHRIS YATES	18	ANDREW LEWIS
ANDY HAZELL	19	DAMIEN GERAGHTY
CHRIS FORTEY	20	STEVE MOORE
MARK CORNWELL	21	CRAIG MORGAN
ANDY DEACON	22	SPENCER JOHN

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

REFEREE: JOEL JUDGE
TOUCH JUDGES: DIDIER MENE
JEAN-CHRISTOPHE GASTOU FRU

(I) DENOTES INTERNATIONAL
(C) DENOTES TEAM CAPTAIN
*TEAMS CORRECT AT 24-01-01

In the event of today's quarter-final ending in a tie at full time, 30 minutes (15 minutes each way) of extra time will be played. If the result is still unresolved the winner will be:

- The side who has scored the most tries in the quarter-final
- The side who has scored the most tournament tries
- The side with the highest overall tournament points difference
- The side with the fewest number of players sent off
- Toss of a coin



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RICHARD WARD



MANY OF YOU WILL HAVE SEEN OR HEARD THAT RICHARD WARD HAS OFFICIALLY LEFT KINGSHOLM.

Although not a first team regular, he has enjoyed five seasons with Gloucester making 35 appearances in total. He has been on loan to Bedford since October and he has agreed to sign with them until the end of the season.

"Over the five years I have been involved with Gloucester I have made some very good friends which I hope to keep for a very long time. The local fans have been very warm and welcoming to me as an outsider, and I hope that in my new career as a

fire-fighter I can remain a part of the Gloucestershire community".

Wardy's departure could, it seems, not have come at a more opportune moment. "The whole aspect of my leaving has been conducted very amicably. I had planned to leave at the end of the season anyway to pursue my new career path. When Bedford came in with an offer things all fell into place very nicely".

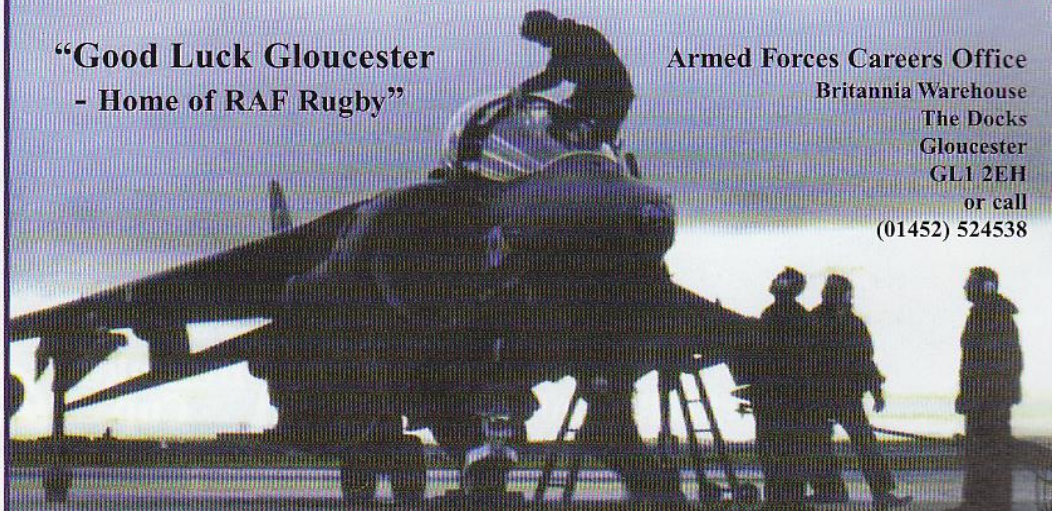
And when asked if he would still monitor the Cherry and Whites results, he said, "I will still follow Gloucester keenly, and go to as many games as possible. I wish the club and all the supporters every success, starting with a win today over Cardiff".

LEFT: RICHARD WARD IN ACTION FOR GLOUCESTER

ROYAL AIR FORCE RISE ABOVE THE REST

"Good Luck Gloucester
- Home of RAF Rugby"

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WE ARE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYERS UNDER THE RACE RELATIONS ACT AND WELCOME ENQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS FROM ALL ETHNIC GROUPS

HOW THEY GOT HERE

IT WAS POSSIBLY THE UGLIEST DROPPED GOAL IN RUGBY HISTORY, BUT IT GOT GLOUCESTER THROUGH TO THE HEINEKEN CUP QUARTER-FINALS AT THEIR FIRST ATTEMPT.

Trailing Llanelli 25-27 in the dying seconds at Kingsholm, Gloucester's New Zealand-born scrum-half Elton Moncrieff tried a desperate dropped-goal only metres from the posts. The ball was never going over ... until, that is, it hit Scarlets flanker Daffyd Jones on the shoulder and ricocheted over the cross-bar.

Another New Zealander, fly-half Simon Mannix, chimed in with 20 points that day, and last weekend bagged 28 points in a deadly display of goal-kicking as the Cherry and Whites got past Italian side Roma, 38-29, to confirm a home berth.

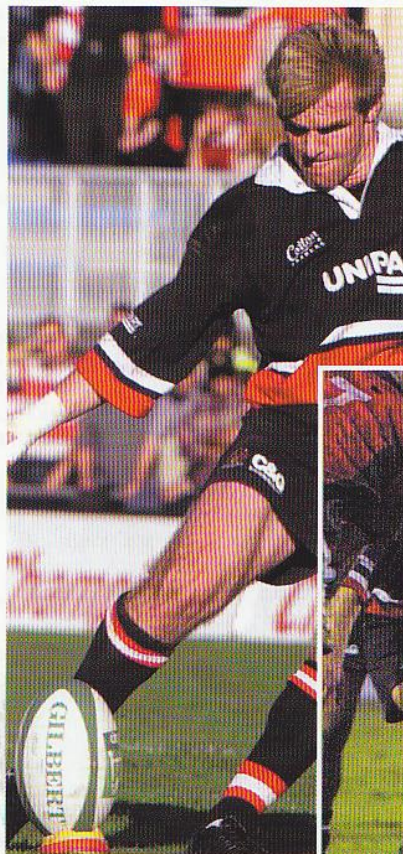
Cardiff were the first club to make the final eight, but needed a win at Toulouse last weekend to earn a home quarter-final. The famous French club were already out of contention but put the visiting Welshmen to the sword, winning 38-27 to push the Blue and Blacks into an away game.

Cardiff have again progressed on the back of some impeccable goal-kicking and superb all-round play from veteran Wales fly-half Neil Jenkins. The "Ginger Monster" is one of only two players in the tournament to win three Heineken man-of-the-match awards in the pool round, and his 119 Cup points so far this season is second only to the 126 scored by Stade Francais fly-half Diego Dominguez.

Players to watch: For the home team, Mannix is in great form, and on his day can convert any penalty opportunity within 50m of the posts. Lock Ian Jones and centre Jason Little share more than 150 Test caps between them, and their experience will be vital if the game comes down to the wire. For Cardiff, Jenkins is obviously the dangerman, but the Cherry and Whites would be wise not to ignore the visitors' powerful pack and the burgeoning talent of young wing Nick Walne.

Key factor: The Kingsholm crowd. It's not the biggest stadium in Britain, but Gloucester fans are known for their passion and their decibel levels! The visitors from the Welsh capital have more than 15 players to beat - they have the Shed! Also, the Cardiff lineout has struggled this season, and Gloucester have the class in that area to capitalise.

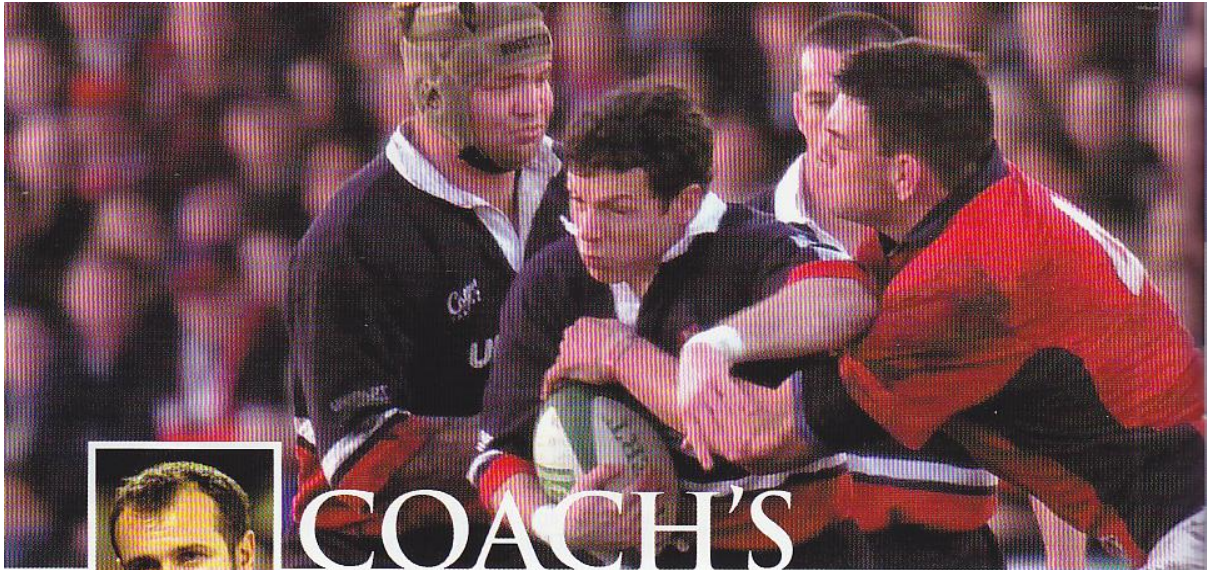
Cup history: While it's Gloucester first season in the Heineken Cup, Cardiff are veterans at this level and have one of the finest records in Cup history. They were finalists in the inaugural tournament in 1995-96, semi-finalists in 1996-97, quarter-finalists in 1997-98, they didn't compete in 1998-99 and reached the quarter-finals last season.



RIGHT: SIMON MANNIX IN ACTION AGAINST COLOMIERS

BELOW: ELTON MONCRIEFF WITH HIS AMAZING DROP GOAL





COACH'S CORNER

WITH PHILIPPE ST ANDRE

IT IS THE FIRST TIME GLOUCESTER RUGBY CLUB HAS PLAYED IN THE HEINEKEN CUP AND WE HAVE QUALIFIED FOR THE QUARTERFINALS.

ABOVE: TOM BEIM TACKLED BY LLANELLI'S VERNON COOPER.

It is good to feel that we are amongst the eight best teams in Europe.

In Rome, we had a great start but after thirty minutes we thought we had already won the game, we made some mistakes defensively, and Rome scored four tries. That is of course a negative point. On the positive side, we had to win the game against Rome and that is what we did. We even have the chance to play the quarter final at home.

"EVEN IF THE CHANCES ARE SMALL, WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO STAY IN THE COMPETITION AS LONG AS POSSIBLE."

Today, we are playing Cardiff but I do not consider us the favourites. Cardiff is a big team in European with very experienced players and with the Welsh halfbacks. We are still growing, but have a big appetite so the game should be very interesting.

I personally think the best teams left in the Heineken Cup are Stade Francais, Leicester and Cardiff, but we can be proud of our team which has given a lot for the Gloucester cause.

Even though it may bother some people, we have progressed a long way in two years, last year we were third in the championship and this year we are in the quarter final of the Heineken Cup. We have moved forward and the

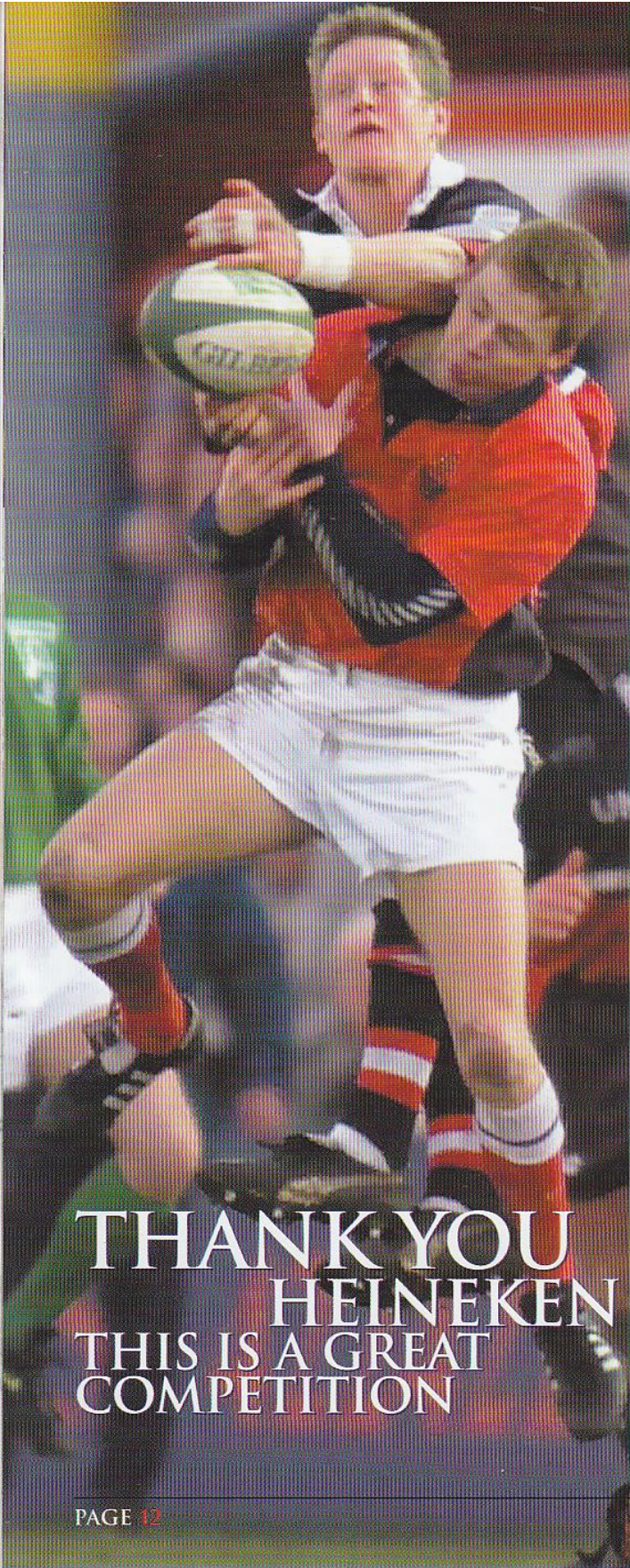
percentage of victories at home and away have improved.

Today, we will play to our own strength, The twenty-two players will give everything they have got for the Cherry and Whites. We will be on the BBC and this again is something huge for the players, the club, the town and the supporters.

We must remember that big teams like Toulouse, Saracens, Colomiers or Northampton are no longer in the Heineken Cup, but we are still here and even if the chances are small, we will do our best to stay in the competition as long as possible.

At the moment we are not playing our best rugby but we were in a Pool with Llanelli, who were semi finalists in the European cup last year, and Colomiers who were Heineken Cup finalists two years ago. Even if all the big analysts and pundits consider us lucky to be where we are now, the players, the club and the supporters can all be very proud and Cardiff will have to be very strong to beat us.

We have to stay humble and modest, we know where we came from. Two years ago we were loosing at Bedford and at West Hartlepool who now play in the second division. Our rugby is not incredible but we cannot go from relegation to the best in the league in only two years. I hope everybody will be behind the team on today. Playing in front of the shed will be like having sixteen men on the pitch.



THANK YOU
HEINEKEN
THIS IS A GREAT
COMPETITION

PAGE 12



WHOOEVER THOUGHT UP
THE FORMAT OF THE
HEINEKEN CUP
DESERVES A BONUS.

Creating six small preliminary rounds with the winner of each group, plus the best two runners-up, qualifying for the final knockout stage has ensured that every game has been meaningful. Every game has had its own drama, its own significance and its own chemistry.

Whoever you are, well done, and when can you start work with the RFU?

Thanks to the Heineken Cup, we are also able today to witness the return to British rugby of another of the immense Anglo/Welsh club confrontations that were once the cornerstone of our domestic season. These visceral games were virtually abandoned when rugby went professional and the new national leagues remoulded traditional fixture lists that had hardly changed for decades.

The fierce nature of these Anglo-Welsh encounters is now even more intense as they are no longer 'friendly's' (ho, ho, ho). The results are important, the financial stakes are high, club players compete for international recognition and our non-European players prove their class. Where there was once a couple of international players on the pitch for a club game like this, there are now often twenty or more fighting it out, up-close and personal.

And how the fans love these shoot-outs! Two weeks ago, a sold-out Kingsholm hosted a Heineken Cup match against legendary Llanelli. The Shed was full-up and closed 30 minutes before kick-off and the game attracted nearly 3,500,000 BBC Grandstand viewers, which is a record for this season and it was larger than the TV audience for last years Heineken Cup final itself.

So, Cardiff RFC, welcome back to Kingsholm. The eyes of European rugby are upon you.

LEFT: CHRIS
CATLING IN ACTION
AGAINST LLANELLI



CLUB

CAPTAIN

WITH KINGSLEY JONES

I WENT ON RECORD AS SAYING THAT THE LLANELLI GAME WAS GOING TO BE THE BIGGEST GAME I HAD PLAYED IN AT CLUB LEVEL.

In terms of what it meant to our season, it was everything. To finish in the quarterfinals was the goal we had set ourselves at the start of the season and to not achieve it would have been a massive blow. We went into the game low on confidence, we hadn't managed to string a couple of wins together, and we needed that game, we needed to win that game. It was said that it was the biggest game of our lives, not just because it was Llanelli v Gloucester but because of what it meant. The emotions at the end of the game were ones of relief, and obviously elation. When Elton's drop goal went over it was a dramatic end to an emotional day.

When I saw he was trying a drop goal and then it went over I was very pleased. There has been a lot of talk surrounding the kick, "What if it hadn't hit his arm and gone over", and things like that. Well it's been debated whether the referee had his arm up for a penalty or not but what is certain is that if the kick had missed, there were still six minutes to play, and we would have had the ball.

Today however, is a different game all together. As far as I am concerned Cardiff will come here the favourites and quite rightly so. We have achieved our pre season goal of the quarterfinals, and so today the pressure is not on us so much. It's a one off game today, and as I have said all along, on the day anyone we play will be a very good team but anything can happen. Cardiff are the form team going in to the last eight and will be a formidable opposition.

Cardiff have not got too far to travel today and I'm sure, this would be their first choice of away venue. They will play it down this week but they must be very confident. Coming to Kingsholm will suit them much more than going to Munster or France. They will bring a great support and both the English and Welsh press have written them up as favourites.

People might think it strange us playing in front of a packed Kingsholm as underdogs but I quite like it. We were the surprise package of the league last year and the surprise package of the Heineken Cup this season.

This competition has also managed to refresh the playing squad. It is a good shop window with all the media attention and it is the next best thing to international rugby there is in the Northern Hemisphere.

Gloucester and Leicester are flying the flag for English rugby and people don't realise how difficult it is to achieve anything first time round. I have been so disappointed with all the comments made in the press about Gloucester since the Roma game. I think the English Media should be behind the club 100% at this point.

People are looking at the English league and seeing only two European qualifiers and saying the Premiership is weak. People should be thankful we are still in the fight. It's obviously a shame that there isn't more English representatives but this game, one week before the Six Nations, is being billed as an England v Wales prelude. All of Wales are behind Cardiff and we are getting loads of flack. Rest assured though, this sort of publicity gives the boys all the extra motivation they need.

"THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF TALK SURROUNDING THE KICK, 'WHAT IF IT HADN'T HIT HIS ARM AND GONE OVER', AND THINGS LIKE THAT."

ELTON MONCRIEFF IN ACTION DURING THE LLANELLI MATCH



FROM THE COMMENTARY BOX

"IF YOU WERE IN ROME, YOU'LL KNOW JUST HOW MUCH OF AN IMPROVEMENT WILL BE NEEDED TO MAKE FURTHER PROGRESS IN THE COMPETITION."

BELOW: JUNIOR PARAMORE IN ACTION AGAINST LEICESTER.



BY IAN RANDALL

SO, HERE WE ARE AGAIN. NOT THAT I EXPECTED YOU TO BE READING THIS AT ABOUT 4.30 A FORTNIGHT AGO TODAY, BUT THEN AS PHILIPPE KEEPS REMINDING US, MATCHES DON'T LAST FOR 80 MINUTES ANY MORE.

It's often 85 these days, sometimes longer, and the club will have been grateful not only for Elton's dropped goal against Llanelli, but also the penalty try that salvaged the home draw with Colomiers. That, as it turned out, was the key result in setting up today's thunderous encounter. A second visit from the BBC cameras and another full house will be a considerable bonus with just three home Premiership games left.

If you were in Rome, you'll know just how much of an improvement will be needed to make further progress in the competition. If Gloucester truly did switch off at 25-3 in the first half, then there should be a bit in reserve to unleash on Cardiff today, but we shouldn't kid ourselves that Gloucester have looked like semi-finalists so far. They have not. That said, I'm sure you can name teams who time and again in tournaments like this have started slowly and peaked at the right time. I sense that time for Gloucester needs to be today.

Cardiff's loss of home advantage makes this game even more fascinating. With a 100% record in Europe this season at the Arms Park, I'm not sure I'd have fancied Gloucester's chances down there, but with Toulouse determined to win despite their earlier elimination, it's the Cherry & Whites who have the help of being on their own patch. Messrs Jenkins, Howley and Co. will take some knocking out, but being at Kingsholm could be a key factor.

Looking at the other ties, you wonder if any of the away teams will make it into the last four. Certainly Pau will know all about Stade Francais, but who can stop them? They've looked in fearsome form in Pool 2, and are now coached by one of the men who helped destroy Gloucester in the Shield back in 1997, Christophe Juillet. On their performances so far, they are rightly favourites. Pau's spirit in scoring the five tries they needed against Pontypridd to squeeze out Saracens, Llanelli and Bath to reach this stage was stirring stuff,

but the Stade Jean Bouin must surely see their exit.

Along with the game here, there's another Anglo-Welsh tussle at Welford Road, where Leicester and Swansea lock horns in front of what will be the biggest crowd of the day. Suspension rules out Tigers' England skipper Martin Johnson, but they've rolled over everyone at home in the past 12 months (including ourselves, of course), so Swansea's bruising battle in Paris last week may have been a useful dress rehearsal. Where's my money? With Leicester...but it's likely to be an afternoon for connoisseurs of rumbling mauls rather than flamboyant back play.

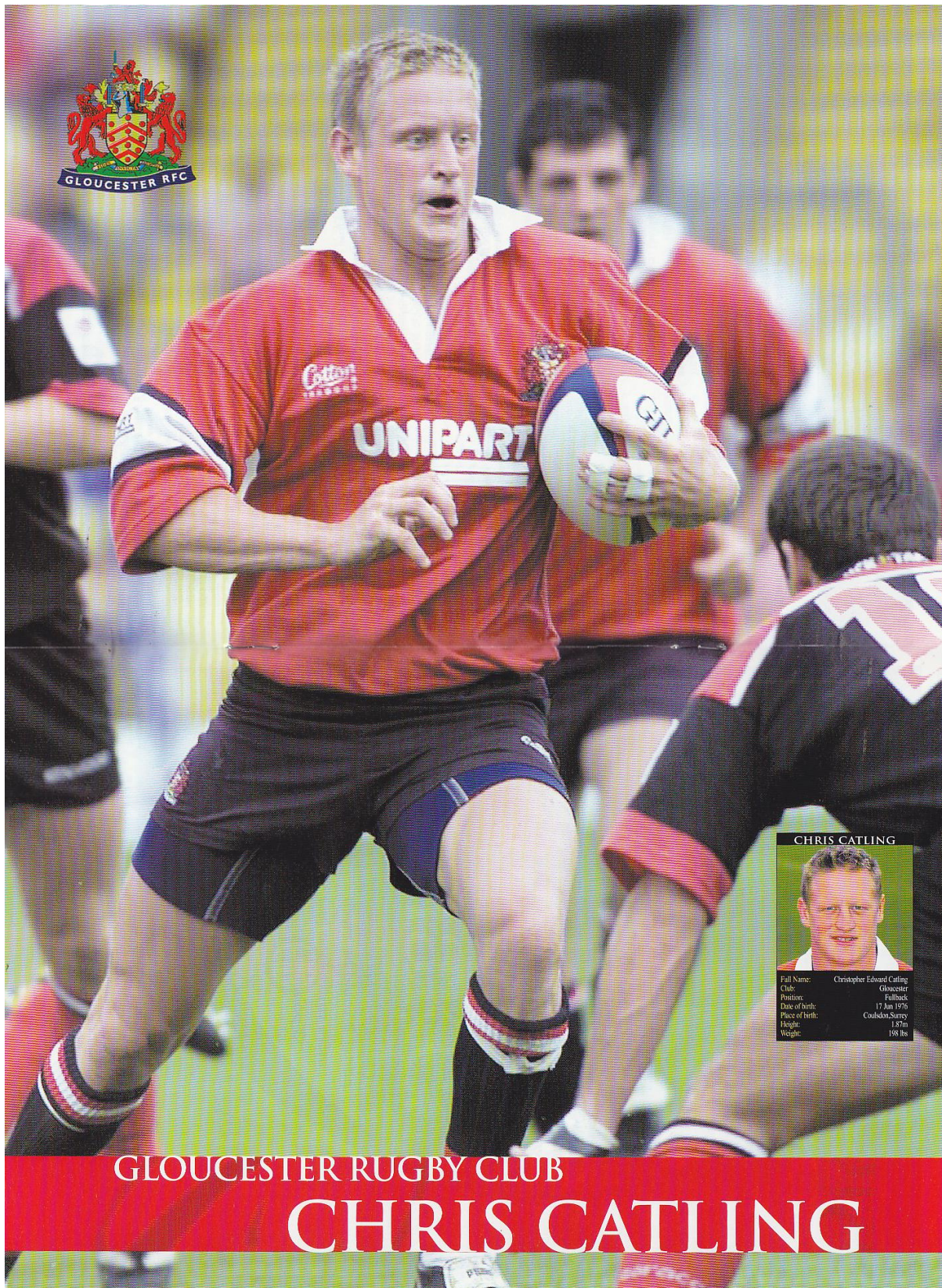
Finally, to Thomond Park, a venue Gloucester can't now visit this year, which from an experience point of view is a great shame. The Cork cauldron has spurred Munster into the quarter finals again, and this time it's Biarritz with the short straw. The wonderfully named Dominic Crotty scored the key try that beat Castres last weekend, and it will take some considerable magic from Philippe Bernat-Salles (remember him?) to end Irish interest at this stage.

There's a long break between today and the semi-finals for the winners, with a sprinkling of League matches and the Six Nations as the filling in the middle. BBC Radio Gloucestershire's commitment of Gloucester's games will continue of course, but I feel an explanation is due to the fans who called us expressing their disappointment at the lack of full commentary from Rome last weekend.


I lost count of the number of phone calls we made and e-mails we sent trying to put the technical arrangements in place for the match, which as most of you will know, was moved from the well-equipped Stadio Flaminio to the tiny Stadio Tre Fontane. A Press room with no view of the pitch, and a ground with no seating or cover made it difficult to say the least. We tried every avenue we could to link up with our Italian colleagues once it became clear we could not safely install a commentary facility of our own, but even THEY were using mobiles phones. What we were left with was not ideal, but the situation was not of our making.

Here's hoping for a famous victory today.

C'mon Glaws!



CHRIS CATLING



Full Name: Christopher Edward Catling
Club: Gloucester
Position: Fullback
Date of birth: 17 Jun 1976
Place of birth: Coudston, Surrey
Height: 1.87m
Weight: 158 lbs

GLOUCESTER RUGBY CLUB

CHRIS CATLING

PLAYER SPOTLIGHT

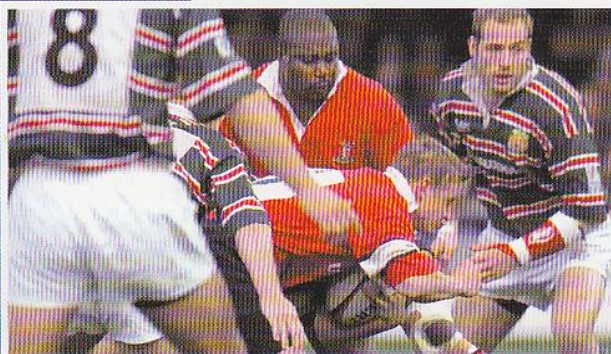
CHRIS



CHRIS CATLING

Full Name Chris Edward Catling
Place of Birth Surrey
Date of Birth 17 Jun 1976
Height (m) 1.87
Weight (lbs) 198
Position Fullback

**BELOW CHRIS
CELEBRATING
END OF PRESSURE
AGAINST LEICESTER**



YOU CAME HERE AS ONE OF RICHARD HILLS LAST ACQUISITIONS STRAIGHT FROM UNIVERSITY, I IMAGINE THAT THE TRANSITION FROM A STUDENT TO A PROFESSIONAL RUGBY PLAYER MUST BE A DREAM COME TRUE FOR MANY YOUNG SPORTS MEN AND WOMEN?

I couldn't have asked for better timing really. When I joined the club it was semi-professional with 8 full time professionals. I could do my studies and come and train in the evenings, then the year I left university the club went full time. For me it was just unbelievable timing. I didn't miss any rugby and with a lot of travelling in between, I did about 50 thousand miles that year, I was able to finish my studies.

Was this a career path you had seriously considered before joining Gloucester?

Because Rugby was not professional when I started university, this was not really an option I was thinking off. Then it became clearer that it would be something I could do and obviously something I would love to do. But when I started out at university it was not really in the front of my mind.

Are your peers very jealous?

Well, yes most of them went back to London and have reasonably high powered jobs in the city, but quite often I'll ring them having just

finished training mid afternoon and they are all working hard with a many hours still in front of them. It's just a perk of the job I guess.

Were you keen on other sports at school or was rugby the only one?

No, not at all. When I was in school rugby was one of many sports, as it was for a lot of guys in the team. To make it in a professional sport you have to be quite co-ordinated and that lends you to a number of activities. I played quite a lot football up-front when I was younger and cricket and hockey at county level. It wasn't until I was seventeen that I started playing a lot better rugby and improving. I started to fill out a bit and then rugby became the more dominant sport. I do miss playing football on Sunday and still have a few friends involved, just rubbish standard Sunday morning. But I'd love to do again. When rugby finishes professionally I will probably go back to play some low standard football.

Have you always been a full back? You have played a bit on the wing but would you consider full back your best position?

Well I'd only really played full back until last season. I'd played a bit on the wing at university but defensively I was poor. Last season on the wing I really had to concentrate hard. My favourite position is fifteen and that's where I feel I am most effective. Philippe has gone on record saying that the positional change has helped my game and I agree. My timing is better I hit the line at better angles, and my understanding of the game and positioning is much better.

There are many quality full backs around both domestically and internationally, do you watch others and try to copy things they do to enhance your game?

Yes, there are a lot of good young full backs in the premiership at the moment. Such as Sampson and Lewsey, both at Wasps. Stimpson at Leicester is a goal kicker second to none. Lee Best is at Bristol, and Matt Perry, who is

CATLING



in pole position at the moment and really hasn't had a bad game for England, it's very frustrating to watch.

And internationally?

Well, both Matt Burke and Christian Cullen are superb. For his all round ability, Matt Burke is probably second to none and with his running ability Cullen is just awesome.

It's said that Matt Burke wears his boots a size too small, to get a better purchase on the ball, any thoughts on that?

Perhaps that's where my kicking game is going wrong.

Do you think that as a full back and generally the last line of defence, or first line of attack you must always concentrate 100%, and that all your skills must be that much sharper?

Not really. I think whichever position you play in your skills must be as good as they can. I targeted my kicking and have worked very hard on it. I think the work done with Dave Allred is paying off. I try to spend time after each training session just working on kicking, especially with Gomars who strikes the ball very well.

Is it a great benefit having specialist coaches?

Oh definitely

What about catching the high balls?

Honestly it's something I don't practice that much. I think it is strength of my game. I worked on it a lot when I was on the wing, particularly chasing them and getting the timing right.

What do you think about when you are under the 'Garry Owen'? The crowd takes a deep breath and the opposing pack bears down on you.

It's a cliché but really all you concentrate on is

the ball. As soon as you focus on anything else you will drop it. I've analysed the times when I have dropped a ball and I've found out I was thinking about something else, like what I was going to do with it next.

We play Cardiff today. Is this the biggest game of your career so far?

Definitely, without a doubt. The Llanelli game at home was huge. The week building up to it and the media interest and full house at Kingsholm. I didn't sleep that well the night before and I'm sure this game will be no different. But these are the games you relish. These are what you want to be involved in.

Would you say it is the bridge to International rugby it was designed to be?

It's funny but last season when we played in the shield I didn't appreciate the step up that was necessary. It's a competition that Gloucester must be in because it is such a cut above the premiership. I would put it on a par with the high intensity England 'A' games I have played in. So I can only imagine it is the stepping stone the Northern Hemisphere was crying out for.

The club set the target of reaching the quarterfinals have you any personal goals you would like to achieve?

I would like to win something with Gloucester. Some silverware would be nice. Last season we finished third which was great but you don't get anything for third. And personally being capped still remains the ultimate ambition.

The last three or four years I have been disappointed to have missed out on summer tours. Before all of them people have been saying "You must not be making plans for the summer" but the call hasn't come. Mark Mapletoft, the clubs fly half at the time, went to Argentina as a full back, which produced a bit of banter between us. So I won't hold my breath this year but I will try my damned hardest to get a selection.

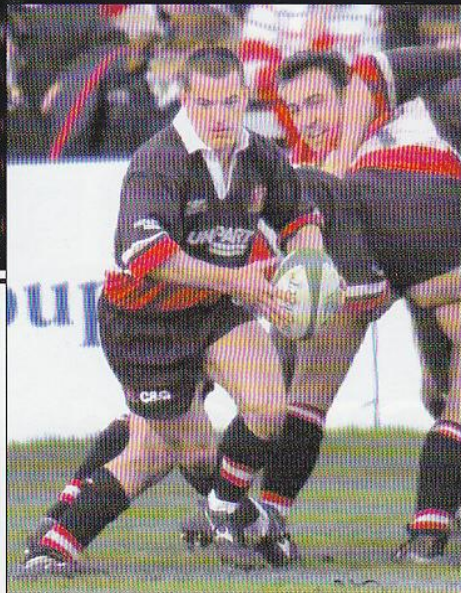
"IT'S A COMPETITION THAT GLOUCESTER MUST BE IN BECAUSE IT IS SUCH A CUT ABOVE THE PREMIERSHIP"

BELOW: CHRIS CELEBRATING AFTER THE LLANELLI VICTORY



MATCH ACTION

GLOUCESTER 28-27 LLANELLI

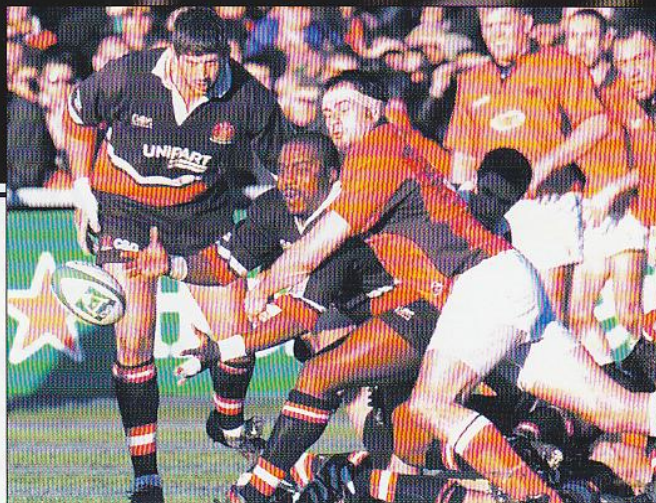
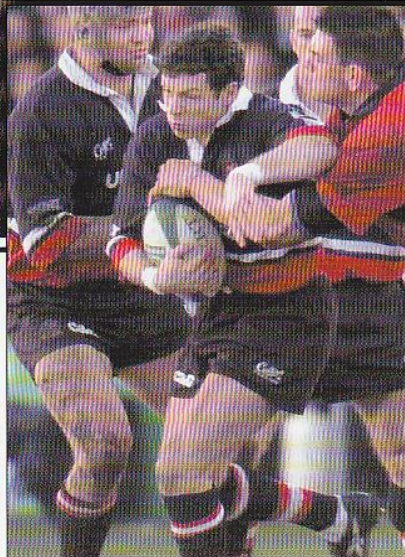
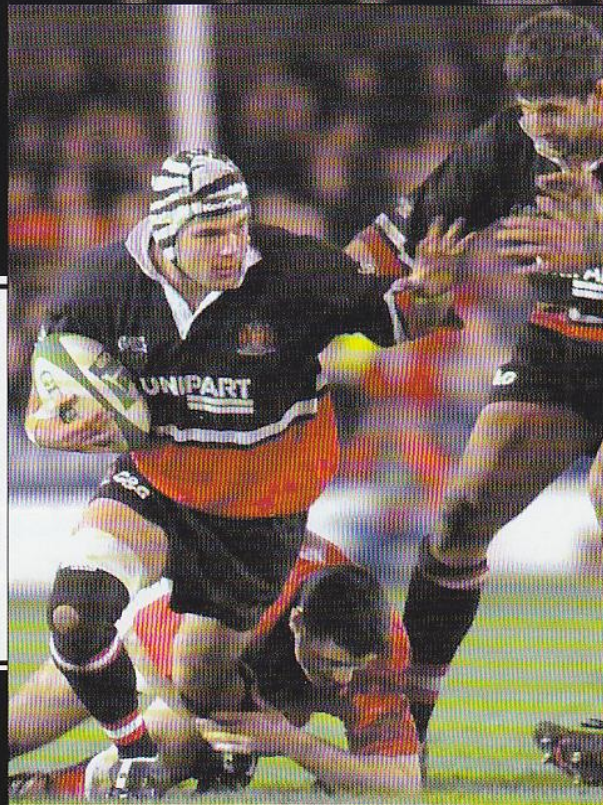


TOP LEFT: Elton Moncrieff takes the ball out of the scrum.

TOP RIGHT: Andy Hazell breaks out of a leg tackle from Llanelli's Stephen Jones.

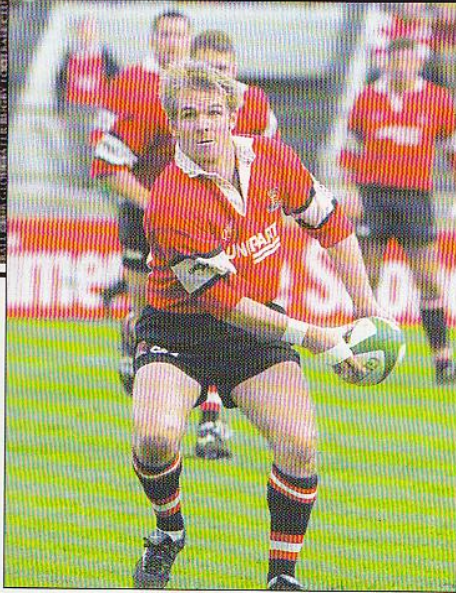
BOTTOM RIGHT: Steve Ojomoh passes the ball out as Llanelli's Craig Gillies tackles.

BOTTOM LEFT: Tom Beim under pressure



MATCH ACTION

ROMA 29-38 GLOUCESTER

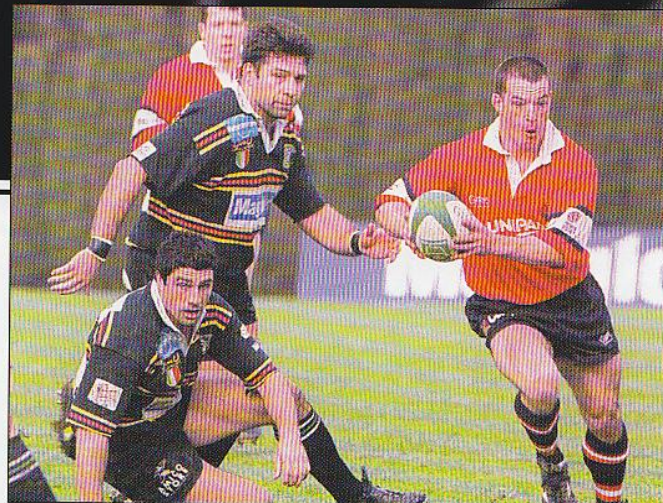
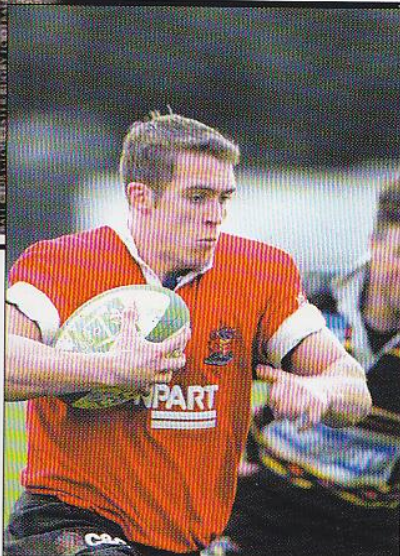
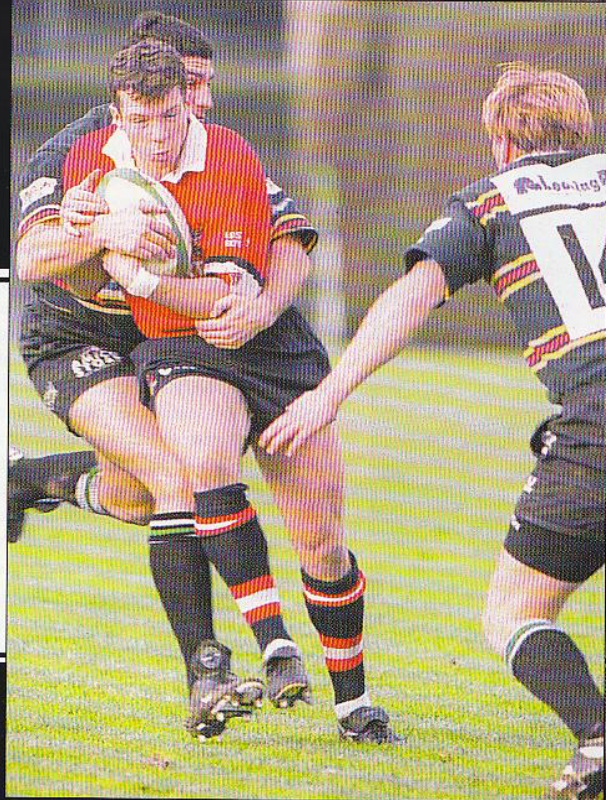


TOP LEFT: Simon Mannix looks to make a clean pass.

TOP RIGHT: Tom Beim finds himself surrounded.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Elton Moncrieff makes another break passed the Roma forwards.

BOTTOM LEFT: Joe Ewens finds space to run in the centre.



PICTURES SUPPLIED BY THE GLOUCESTER CITIZEN

SPARE A THOUGHT FOR THE SCARLETS

"LET'S HOWEVER, SPARE JUST A THOUGHT OR TWO FOR LLANELLI WHOSE FRUSTRATION MUST KNOW NO BOUNDS."

**BELOW:
CHRIS YATES IN
TOP GEAR
AGAINST LLANELLI.**

WHATEVER THE OCCASION, IT'S GREAT TO SEE CARDIFF BACK HERE AFTER SO LONG AN ABSENCE.

They are, of course, one of Gloucester's most long-standing opponents with fixtures going back well before 1900. And some of us recall, with affection, the days when their visit was one of the most eagerly awaited features of the Kingsholm season.

Let's, however, spare just a thought or two for Llanelli whose frustration must know no bounds. Last season it was only a last-gasp score that kept them out of the European semi-finals. This year, lightning struck twice to the extent that it was a highly original drop goal in the last few minutes, right here at Kingsholm, which put Gloucester through at their expense.

Even then, they might have made it. They disposed of Colomiers in fine style, and only

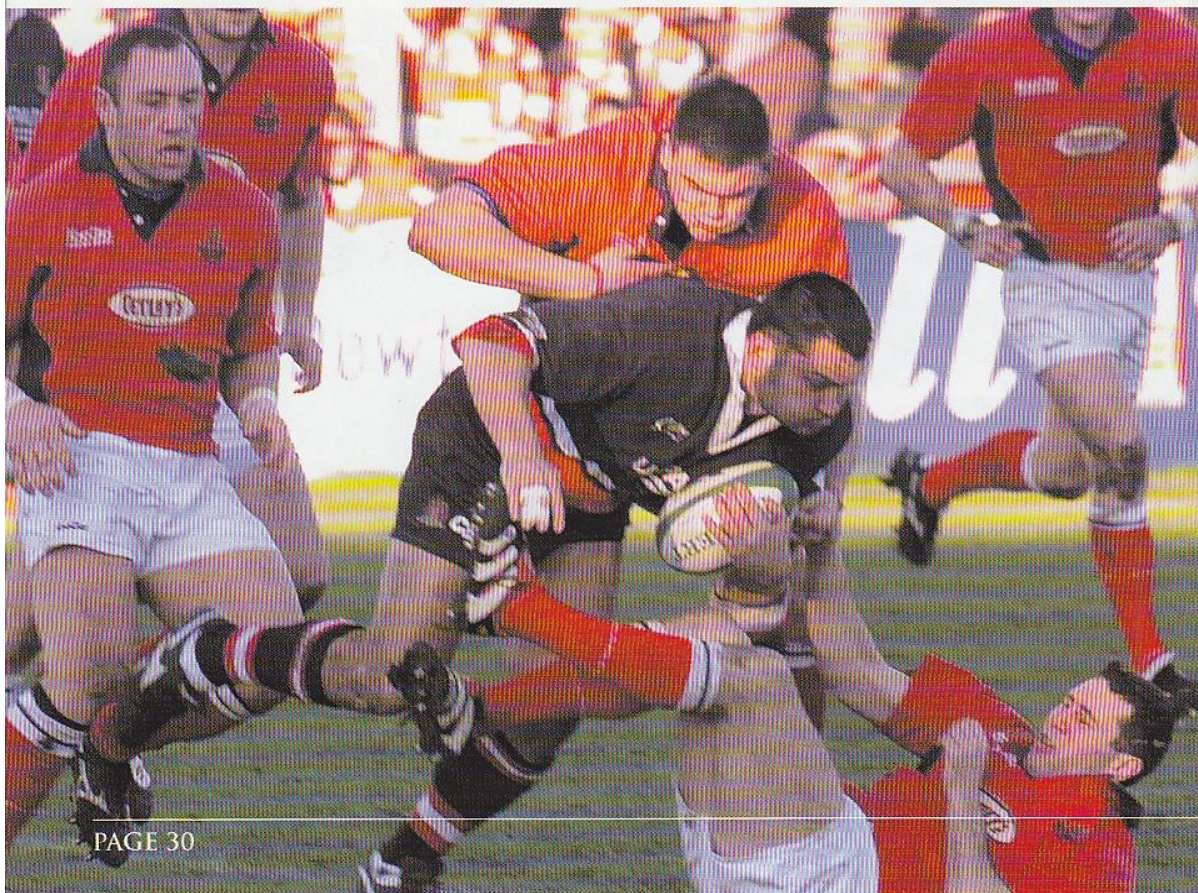
defeat of Pontypridd by Pau, who had to score five tries in the process, could deny Llanelli further progress.

With less than ten minutes to go, Pontypridd were in the lead and Pau had scored three tries. Then they went and scored two more, won the game, and took the Scarlets' spot in the quarter finals.

That must have been a bitter cup indeed. At least the players at Kingsholm could try to do something about the situation. Last Saturday, all they could do was jump up and down and gnash their teeth. How frustrating is that ?

All we can do is offer our sympathy and best wishes for the rest of their season.

Incidentally, can anyone from our bevy of historians and statisticians out there tell me the last time we had two successive home games against Welsh opposition ? Must be quite a while.



THE DROP THAT CHEERS

ELTON-MONCRIEFF'S DROP GOAL AT THE CLIMAX OF THE LLANELLI GAME HAS NOW PASSED INTO THE REALMS OF HISTORY, MYTHOLOGY, AND PERHAPS EVEN GEOMETRY IF YOU CONSIDER THE INITIAL UNLIKELIHOOD OF THE BALL GOING OVER WHEN HE FIRST STRUCK IT.

That's the game of rugby, though, and we've all seen improbable things happen here at Kingsholm.

However, that was by no means the first time that a drop goal has played a vital role in Gloucester's Cup campaigns over the years. Older supporters will remember the very first RFU knock-out competition of them all, before the affair even had a sponsor. As you know, Gloucester duly won that one, and everyone always talks about the famous victory over the Lions-ridden London Welsh side. That was in the quarter-final, and it's worth recalling that Gloucester beat Coventry in the semi, courtesy of an outrageous and very late Eric Stephens drop goal, virtually from the touchline and the halfway line on a dry and dusty day.

That was a hard game if you've ever seen one, and I recall that Peter West's report on the encounter started with the immortal line: "They don't play rugby like this in West Wittering". (How are you Peter? Fit, well and in your seat in the Stand I hope.)

WELL DONE TREVOR, ANDY

IT'S NICE TO SEE ANDREW HAZELL AND TREVOR WOODMAN DRAFTED INTO THE ENGLAND TRAINING SQUAD.

It's no more than either of them deserves.

I suppose Andy Hazell had it coming. He obviously caught the eye of the important people during the Cup win over Bath, although, if anyone had asked us, we could have told them of the qualities of the young dynamo long before that. It's unfortunate that he has come to the fore in a period when England is blessed with a whole string of excellent back-row forwards, so he'll have very stiff competition if he is to progress further.

Years later, Gloucester won a Cup Semi Final, also at Coundon Road, through the kind attentions of Brian Russell's left boot. My old friend the late Cliff Harris was sitting beside me, quite unworried by the indecent rate at which the clock was ticking down. "Don't worry," he said, "They're going for a drop. Look where Russell's standing."

He was dead right. The ball came back, right in front of the posts, and Brian hit it. Unfortunately, that's where the scenario came unstuck. He didn't catch the ball at all well. It wobbled, slithered, eventually managed to bounce off both uprights and then wearily crawled over the bar.

"It's over!" screamed Cliff, swinging his arm at such a velocity that he managed to left-hook the chap sitting on his other side straight over the back of his seat, in a welter of spectacles, match programme and hip flask. Not that he minded, thinking it a small price to pay for the privilege of going to Twickenham for the Final, which we tied with Moseley.

Elton's heroics must have raised mixed feelings for two members of the Gloucester squad, though. Andy Gommersall and Tom Beim had to be removed from the England Sevens squad, due to visit Argentina, because of their continued involvement in the Heineken. I don't suppose they're too worried, though. A visit to Rome is, perhaps, ample consolation.

Trevor, of course, has already made his mark at international level, and would probably have been a full member of the national squad from the word 'go', if he hadn't sustained that nasty neck injury before the England tour had even got started.

My mole around the Cardiff camp tells me that Trevor impressed Graham Henry when he was here for the Llanelli game, and that he hasn't done his chances of a surprise Lions spot any harm at all. It's not so silly when you remember that it's a Lions tradition to blood one or two young players on such tours.

Stranger things have happened. Look at Elty's drop goal!

BELOW: CHRIS YATES IN ACTION AGAINST LLANELLI.



BY PETER
ARNOLD

GLOUCESTER RUGBY CLUB ACADEMY



E. KENWORTHY

"THE ACADEMY PLAYERS ARE SET TRAINING PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP NOT ONLY THEIR BODY STRENGTH BUT ALSO THEIR FLEXIBILITY, CORE STABILITY AND INDIVIDUAL SKILLS."

RIGHT: ACADEMY IN PRE-SEASON TRAINING.

PROFESSIONAL RUGBY HAS NOW BECOME AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR RUGBY LIVES.

We all accept it as the way forward to develop the world rugby scene. The Southern hemisphere teams have for a long time been run on a professional basis and this can be clearly seen in their deep rooted professional approach to "The Job", Gloucester's southern hemisphere import, Ian Jones in particular, is a perfect example of this!

But what of the younger players, those who are invited to join the Gloucester Academy and gain their first step on the ladder to a professional rugby career? We at Gloucester like many other Premiership Clubs, have recognised the need to attract these talented players as young as possible and introduce them to the rigours and disciplines of the professional game! It is not a case of just turning up for training nights and playing on a Saturday, the game has moved on so rapidly that they need to be aware of all their body's needs, whether it be nutritional, physical or mental.

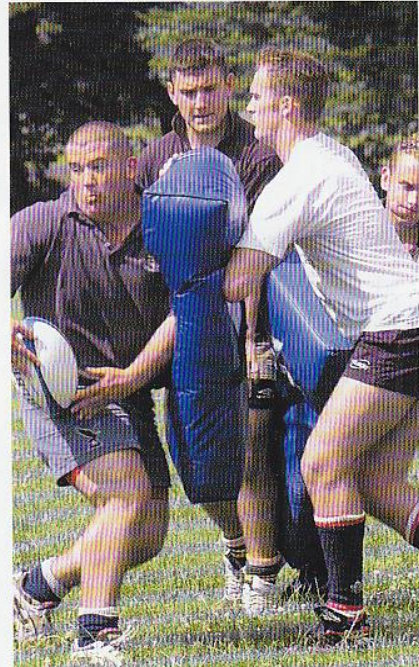
The Academy players are set training programs to develop not only their body strength but also their flexibility, core stability and individual skills. They have nutritional input to their everyday lives and regular fitness testing to assess if they are keeping to their programs and improving their overall body health. This coupled with an assessment of their progress will enable them to address the areas lacking and concentrate on them in their training schedules. All this of course is down to the individual and the saying of "If things get tough, only the tough will survive", is very appropriate as their mental strength is something they will have to develop if they are to continue in the professional game.

The educational needs of all young academy players is of the utmost importance to the club and GRFC always promotes to the players the need to address and continue with their education even if they are offered a full-time playing contract! We now have strong links with several educational institutions where we can offer places to players wanting to continue with their academic career. These players are regularly monitored to judge their educational progress and their pastoral care. The young players especially

find it difficult to juggle their educational requirements with their desire to play rugby all of the time and the club ensures that both areas are well monitored to suit the needs of the individual player!

Unlike football, where young talented players seem more able to progress onto the professional stage unhindered by the physical challenge, young rugby players have to develop their physical side as a priority. This is vital for him to progress into the top level! Therefore the younger a player can be introduced to the requirements and disciplines of the professional game the better!

Last season one of the Premiership Clubs had already approached James Simpson-Daniel's two younger brothers regarding placement for their education. On the premise that as Chris, James older brother, and James himself have undoubted talent and have represented England at U18 level, then the two younger brothers will follow in their footsteps! I am pleased to announce that after a visit to Kingsholm last season with James, they have committed themselves to "Glawster" and the "Shed"!



VIEW

This is all so different from the old scenario I have such fond memories of. The rugby scene on a Saturday night after a match, with the two Fowkes Roy and Jack singing their old army songs, followed by Jim Jarrett and that "Old rugged cross". Alan Brinn as usual, would do his own rendition of "Silent Night" in typical quiet fashion and followed faithfully by "We are the Glawsters" by all of the Gloucester team. As travelling away meant staying away we did not arrive back at Kingshom until well after midnight!

If we were at Leicester we would actually stop on the way up and demolish starters, steak & chips followed by pudding and a coffee before travelling on to play rugby! The after match discussions whether we had won or lost, would be washed down with copious amounts of beer, before going down the road to the local roller skating ring and returning to the Tigers Club for a regularly held discotheque!

This is one of the aspects of the modern professional game that has changed completely. Players are educated not to drink alcohol for at least two hours after matches, not to eat the traditional curry rice and chips, but advised to replace them with the nutritional benefits of pasta, brown rice and boiled fish or chicken. All of which will aid their recovery period after a hard match!

After all, if you turned up at work with a hangover, you would not be able to perform to your full capability and such is the case for these professional players and their job of work!

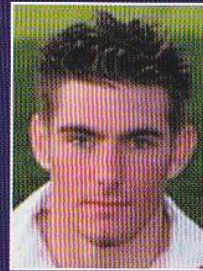
I admire the discipline and dedication of the professional player, but I do not envy them or their salaries. They work extremely hard to maintain their consistent level of fitness and playing ability! I thoroughly enjoyed my playing days at Gloucester and considered that we worked very hard for the rugby of our time. But that was our time and this is their's and the very best of luck to anyone prepared to put in the extremely hard work and discipline required to make it at the highest level!

**Report by John Haines,
Academy Team Manager.**



**"THEY WORK
EXTREMELY HARD
TO MAINTAIN
THEIR CONSISTENT
LEVEL OF FITNESS
AND PLAYING
ABILITY!"**

**LEFT: DUNCAN
MURRAY IN ACTION
FOR THE ACADEMY.**



R PEACEY

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