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# Gloucester

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**vs London Irish**

Saturday 9th February 2002 kick-off 3.00pm

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29

**Gloucester****VS****London Irish**

22

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i	Terry Fanolua	<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Justin Bishop	i
i	Henry Paul	<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Rob Hoadley	<input type="checkbox"/>
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i	Diego Albanese	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Paul Sackey	<input type="checkbox"/>
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i	Olivier Azam	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Richard Kirke	<input type="checkbox"/>
ic	Phil Vickery	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Rob Hardwick	i
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**[teams correct at 06/02/02]****i** [denotes international]**c** [denotes captain]**[today's officials]****[referee]** Mr Leyshon RFU**[touch judges]** Mr Terhegge RFU, Mr Spong RFU



# Welcome

[from Terry Short]



**"With our strong position in the League and Europe, there has never been a better time to become actively involved in our programme of events."**

**As this is my first article of the 2002, can I start by wishing everyone a belated Happy New Year. January, as always, has flown by but not without leaving its mark on the Gloucester Rugby Club Season Ticket Holders Association.**

As the Chairman of our association, I am pleased to say that this year has started extremely well. We now have the structure in place to liaise closely with the Club's management but at the same time create a strong identity and reason to become a Season Ticket Holder of our fantastic club.

The social side kicked off in January with a very successful 'Evening with the Players.' Encouragingly, over 200 Season Ticket Holders came to Kingsholm to support the first main event of the year. Introduced and Chaired by Charlie Little, the Club's Marketing Manager, questions were put to Club Captain Phil Vickery, testimonial benefactor Andy Deacon and Emerging England 7's star James Forrester.



The audience was made up of supporters of all ages and we were given a lighthearted insight into playing for Gloucester RFC. The choice of players attending the evening also gave us differing points of view on professional rugby, away matches, pre-season tours and pre-match rituals.

Andy Deacon was able to reminisce about the habits of past captains and current players and give his contrasting views of amateur and professional rugby. As one of our rising stars, James Forrester proved to be a modest and ambitious young man whose season's aim is to play well for his club and bring some silverware back to Kingsholm. Meanwhile Phil Vickery was able to give a detailed 'week in the life of an England International' and an insight into the British and Ireland Lions tour of Australia last year.

Not confined purely to Gloucester RFC, other subjects of conversation included the debates on referees and the personalities of Austin Healey and Lawrence Dallaglio. All in all it was a very enjoyable

evening that was very well received by everyone. The next scheduled event is on Tuesday 12th March when professional referee Chris White, England coach Andy Robinson and our Henry Paul are hoping to answer questions from the floor.

With our strong position in the League and Europe, there has never been a better time to become actively involved in our programme of events. For those that have not yet become members I hope that, together with the team's performances on the pitch, our social events and other benefits may sway you to join us next season.

Finally, back to today's game against London Irish. As always we welcome the opposition supporters and members to Kingsholm and wish them an enjoyable day. With England playing Ireland next weekend at Twickenham, this top of the table Premiership clash is a true curtain raiser to that game and it promises to be an enthralling match. Hopefully the wind and rain will not spoil the day and we will be entertained by some exciting rugby.

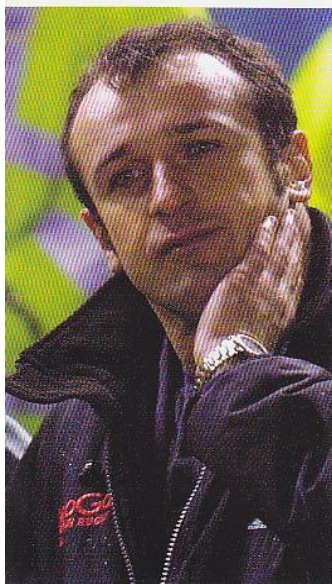


# Coach's Corner

[Philippe Saint-André]

**Today is another key game for us to win if we want to finish in one the top four positions of the Premiership.**

**"We have already played London Irish twice this season and lost two very hard games. Today though, although we must respect them, we must also remember that we have the strength and quality in this squad to beat them".**



We have four league games left at home and we must win all of them.

Playing as we are against London Irish makes today's game even more important. They will also want to finish as high as they can and are also on for a top four finish. They are one place below us and it will be key for us to take as many points off our closest opponents in the run in to the Championship. Of course the best thing will be to win, score four tries, and stop London Irish getting a point, but they are a very strong team. They are the only team, in the top four of the league, that is involved in the semi finals of the Powergen Cup and the Parker Pen Shield. So we must respect this team.

We have already played London Irish twice this season and lost two very hard games. Today though, although we must respect them, we must also remember that we have the strength and quality in this squad to beat them.

In our two previous games against them, London Irish have shown that they have

the ability to score points every time they get into your territory. Every time you make a mistake against a team like this they score; they are very clinical. They also have good organisation and a strong defence that makes them very difficult to beat. They play with a simple game plan but it is very effective for them.

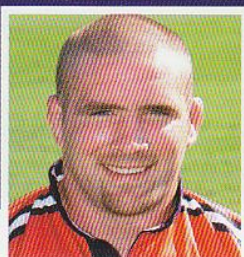
We must ensure that today we also play like this. We have spoken in the team meetings with the players about being so clinical. Each time we have the opportunity we must take three points from a drop goal or a penalty or make sure we score tries when we have the opportunity to do so. We have played very well at home on the last six or seven occasions and we must continue that today. Today we must be disciplined and clinical.

Due to the weather conditions over the last two weeks, I suspect that the pitch will not be in the best condition. We must be smart and use these conditions wisely. We must analyse what didn't work well against London Irish the last time we played and find a game plan to win today.

Looking ahead, we have drawn Sale at a neutral 'home' venue in the Semi-Final of the Parker Pen Shield. I said before the draw that I would not try and avoid any of the teams because I think that, if we want to win the Shield, we must be good enough to beat all the teams left in the competition. The grounds are neutral but, of course, it would be best for our supporters if we were to play at Bristol.

We know that Sale are a very good team, with good players, not least Jason Robinson. We also know that we have beaten Sale once and will get another chance to play them here at Kingsholm on March 9th. We know this will be a difficult game but we are just eighty minutes away from a final and one-hundred and sixty minutes away from the Heineken Cup, which is our goal for this season. Last year we got to the Semi final of the Heineken Cup, this year I hope that we have learned how to deal with such big games and we can go one better and reach the final. Today though our focus will be on London Irish.





# Club Captain

[phil vickery]

D.O.B: 14/03/76  
Position: **Tight Head**  
Height: **1.91m**  
Weight: **125kg**  
Former Club: **Bude/Redruth**  
Int'l national Honours:  
**England, British Lions**

**At the time of writing, it looks as though I have been beaten by my hand injury ahead of this game.**

**"We want Heineken Cup rugby next year and we would like some silverware to show for all our hard work this season so we must focus and keep winning".**

I want to make sure that I am right, my hand is right and then concentrate on getting back into the team.

Today is just another in a long line of very important, very tough games. As I have said all along, there are no easy games in the Premiership and London Irish are certainly the in form team at the moment. They are still involved in all competitions, which goes to show how difficult they are to beat, home or away.

We have a very tough run in to the end of the season. Including today's game, we have four left at home and six away against some very good teams. Our aim is to finish

second but to do that we must take as many points out of our remaining home games as possible. We must keep winning and keep gaining momentum, particularly against the teams that are closest to us. We were able to hold on for a win against Newcastle and if we can do the same today against London Irish and then again against Sale, we will right up there.

We have already played our opponents twice this season and on both occasions, for various reasons, we were well beaten. One common element, was that in both games we were ten to fifteen points down in the opening thirty minutes. Once you are that far behind, you have to play catch-up rugby. Against a good team like London Irish that is simply not possible. We must make sure that we keep ourselves within a score of all the top teams.

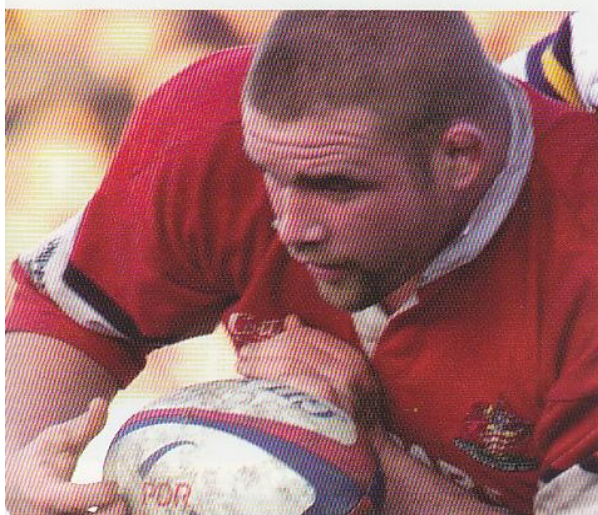
The conditions today are likely to be wet and muddy, and Irish have already shown how effective they can be in similar conditions. They have the ability to score points each time they are in your half as they have a great goal kicker who keeps the scoreboard ticking. That said, we are well equipped in that department

too. We must play to the conditions again as we showed we can against Ebbw Vale.

Before the semi final draw we said that, we would not fear anyone because at this stage they are all good teams. Sale have beaten many good teams, Irish are very strong and Pontypridd surprised everyone by going to Saracens and winning there, something we failed to do. On the whole though, having already beaten Sale earlier this season, this is quite a good draw for us.

Ultimately we want Heineken Cup rugby next year at Kingsholm and we would like some silverware to show for all our hard work this season. Therefore, we must focus and keep winning.

We have received a lot of bad press recently and I cannot comment on what goes on outside of the club. At this time of year many players have their contracts up for renewal, so we must all pull together and remember what we are here for. We are second in the league and in the Semi Final of the Parker Pen Shield. There are certainly a lot of positive things around Gloucester Rugby Club at the moment and we must remember them.





# Gloucester Academy News

[john haines]

## result

**Gloucester U21's**  
**10**  
**Bristol U21's**  
**18**

**Bristol came to Gloucester as U21 league leaders having previously lost only once this season, away to Northampton the previous week.**

Gloucester had narrowly lost to Bristol earlier in the season going down 23:17 and truly felt they should have won, so the determination for this game really set the mood for an exciting encounter.

On a very wet and muddy Oxstalls pitch in blustery conditions Gloucester had first use of the elements. They immediately put pressure on their visitors as the Gloucester forwards put in a good concerted effort to win a penal. In such conditions kicking was extremely difficult and this first attempt was missed.

Gloucester's forwards kept the Bristol pack on the back foot, but it was the visitors who scored first when a simple missed tackle led to a break away and an unconverted Bristol try and a 5 point. This was followed by some poor Gloucester indiscipline as centre Duncan Murray was yellow carded for a technical offence. Bristol extended their lead with a successful kick and extended it further with another penalty to lead 11:nil.

Undeterred and with Murray back in the match, Gloucester continued to put Bristol under pressure, but missed two glorious chances to score tries. Full back Jon Goodridge dropped the ball over the line and Gloucester's profligacy continued as a pass to winger Andy MacRae went astray with the line beckoning.

This typified the difference between the two sides and was very reminiscent of the first match between them earlier in the season. In that game Bristol had one try scoring chance and took it, where as Gloucester had two and missed them both!

Credit must be given to the Gloucester team, their heads never dropped and their forwards continued to dominate their opposition in the scrum. This, at last, resulted in a push over try awarded to scrum half Ollie Sills on the half time whistle.

HT: GRFC 05:11 Bristol.

Bristol started the second half with the wind behind them and immediately forced Gloucester back to their own 22. Some fine defensive work from the home side, denied the Bristol team a score and Gloucester once again began to get on top. Unfortunately, it was the same old story, for all the effort and pressure exerted by Gloucester a score failed to materialise and it was Bristol who scored again with the one opportunity they were given. A well worked move resulted in a further try wide out, which was well converted to give Bristol the lead at 5:18.

On came James Forrester for the last 20 minutes of the match, before flying off to Australia with the England 7's squad and made

his presence felt immediately with a hard fought unconverted try to narrow the lead to 10:18. Still Gloucester had chances to win the match. A tremendous weaving run, again from Forrester, just failed to provide a score and a knock on at the base of the scrum, from Ben Durham, with the try line begging summed up Gloucester's day!

This was a bitterly disappointing day for Gloucester against their West Country rivals. They had enough chances to score tries and win the match, but failed to put the final touches to a great effort. In particular forwards Mark Rimmer, Ryan Gwilliam and Demitri DelValle and threequarters Duncan Murray and Ollie Sills stood out.

This is the main difference between winning and losing, taking chances when they are offered and Bristol gave Gloucester an expensive lesson. Under pressure for most of the match, they had two scoring chances and converted them both, where as Gloucester had several and only took one.

U21 LEAGUE TABLE 2001-2002												
LAST UPDATED 21/01/2002												
TEAM	P	W	L	D	F	A	TRY F	TRY A	T BON	L BON	PTS	
BRISTOL	12	11	1	0	352	208	49	25	7	1	52	
SARACENS	13	9	4	0	399	275	50	35	8	0	44	
LONDON WASPS	12	8	3	1	402	237	60	29	8	1	43	
SALE	12	8	4	0	302	204	37	22	5	1	38	
LEICESTER	11	7	4	0	259	173	35	21	4	1	33	
GLoucester	11	5	5	1	306	252	41	37	4	3	25	
BATH	11	4	7	0	220	244	29	32	2	4	22	
HARLEQUINS	10	4	6	0	187	245	22	34	1	2	19	
LONDON IRISH	12	3	8	1	226	314	26	41	3	1	18	
NORTHAMPTON	10	3	7	0	212	273	27	38	4	0	16	
NEWCASTLE	9	3	6	0	116	187	14	23	2	0	14	
LEEDS	11	0	10	1	129	500	18	71	1	1	4	

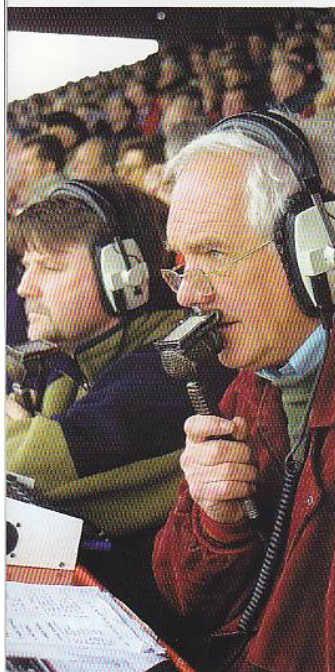


David Reed  
**From the** [commentary box]

**B B C**

**Ever since January 20th, I have been searching through Dictionaries and Thesauri (plural of you-know-what) for a word that means...**

**"let our visitors today be the first victims in the campaign with the phrase that does trip lightly off the tongue that means 'outclassed, dominated, beaten in every department' as in they were Gloucestered".**



..."a group of superbly fit athletes, coached to the highest level as a team to perform their chosen occupation, and prepared in fine detail to do battle against another group of superbly fit athletes, coached to etcetera, etcetera..... who on the day, in front of several thousand of their own vociferous supporters, fail to achieve their mission, because one of the opponents dominates the contest and reduces the said group to mere mortals".

Those present at the Madejski Stadium three weeks ago will know to what and to whom I am referring, but it is hard to imagine how one person can seemingly hypnotise the opposition into making a succession of basic errors, to lull the visitors into such a state that they lose their shape, their game plan, the match.....and their interest in the Powergen Cup for another season. Reducing it to the fundamentals, I suppose that all he did was kick a rugby ball, but he did it with such accuracy that he scored 20 points, and sent our defence scurrying back on so many occasions for a line-out in our '22' that we lost composure. And it was not the first time this has happened, for back in October, this same

person was instrumental in a Premiership defeat for the Cherry and Whites.

Aha, I've found that word, it's "everitt". Gloucester were "everitted" by London Irish on those two occasions.

Will it creep its way into everyday language? It could, certainly in the pubs around Kingsholm, and maybe a few other towns around the country if the Exiles' fly half continues to exercise his magic that makes him currently the top points scorer in the Zurich Premiership.

It wouldn't be the first time that the name of a Rugby player had become a household word, and a few former Gloucester heroes can claim that distinction, particularly in a Rugby sense. "Visitors sent for a Burton", "All Blacks fa-teague-d by Lions back row", "By Gadd, they've done it!" could all have been headlines in Press reports more national than the Citizen. Even my BBC colleague Peter Butler has featured in "Bristol Bootlered out of Cup".

Whether Barry Everitt could reach such National fame is doubtful. After all, "Gloucester Everitted out of Cup" doesn't

trip lightly off the tongue, and being the modest Irishman that I am told he is, he would be the first (I feel sure) to acknowledge that it was a team success, not down to one individual. So perhaps the elusive word I was searching for is "Irish". Gloucester were "Irished" at the Madejski in October, and again last month. England were Irished at Lansdowne Road when they lost last season's Grand Slam, even though they won the Six Nations Championship.

It may not quite have reached Roget or the editors of the Oxford English Dictionary just yet, but given the "wrong" results this afternoon, and then again at Twickenham next Saturday (and who would say otherwise?), there would certainly be changes in the next editions of those two Works of Reference.

So let's get the revenge in first! We have a couple of scores to settle with our (otherwise welcome) visitors this afternoon. Remember we are at home.... at Fortress Kingsholm, and the Shed.....stock the bars with elvers, double Gloucester and scrumpy... throw out the black stuff, well perhaps not, but charge £2.50 a pint in paper



cups, just to make sure they don't feel too much at home. Challenge them to eat us out of sausages and break the record for Cider consumption. Remember how we fell for the Guinness challenge a couple of years ago, not once, but twice! And we won it!!!

But the headlines will be made on the field. Let the new words finding their way into the English language in 2002 be: gomarsall (definition: to deceive the opposition legally by sleight of hand or foot.), mercier (defn: action of opponents as kicks from all points on the field land on target, as in "praying for mercier"), hazell (defn: the nut that tightens the bolt through the middle - of the field).

On second thoughts, it might take more than a year or two for these words to become universally accepted, so perhaps, for quicker acceptability, and remembering that we could yet be meeting them twice more this season, let our visitors today be the first victims in the campaign with the phrase that does trip lightly off the tongue that means "outclassed, dominated, beaten in every department" as in

**...they were Gloucestered!**

Barry Everitt





# Head2Head

This week's head to head focuses on two players who, by using their skills to the maximum, really could have the final say in the direction of this match...

Both have paramount importance to their teams because of their ability to keep the scoreboard ticking over at every opportunity. Their goal-kicking may be the deciding factor in this otherwise even contest.

Ludovic Mercier has become an instant crowd favourite as he has become the dependable goal kicker that can turn games with his high

ratio of successful kicks. Also, his nuclear powered left foot has turned defence into attack on many occasions.

For London Irish, Barry Everitt has become a phenomenal success with his own style of goalkicking. The Irish have built a game plan around stopping their opponents from scoring and then through Everitt clinically finishing them off at every opportunity.



## Ludovic Mercier

### Strengths

Like Everitt, Mercier's is recognised by his trademark fusion powered left foot and his kicking ability has already served Gloucester well this season. His record points haul remains 24 points in the club's game against Sale scoring three conversions, three penalties and three drop-goals. Mercier though is far from one-dimensional. By his own admission he likes to play wide and has the ability to adapt to different games plans to unlock defences.

### Weaknesses

Before joining Gloucester, Mercier himself admitted that his defence was not one of his strong points. He has worked hard on this aspect of his game and Gloucester are reaping the benefits at close quarters.

### Mercier On the Season So Far

I think it has gone well. We are second in the league and in the semi final of the Parker Pen Shield. Our goals at the start of the season were to win the Shield and finish in the top four of the League, now it is to finish second. Personally I am enjoying myself. I am happy to play in a semi final and play for a team full of internationals that is second in the league. This is the first time my team has been so high. The premiership is so strong, stronger than the other European leagues but I like playing against these types of teams.

### Mercier on London Irish

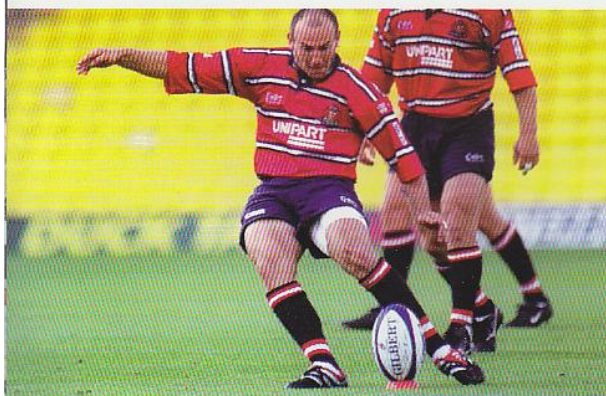
They have a big defence and a simple but effective game plan. They also have a strong kicker. When we played them last time we were behind by a lot of points. We must make sure that we stay in touch with them here.

### Mercier v Everitt

He is a very good player. He plays to a simple game plan and doesn't make any mistakes. He can score points from anywhere and we must be disciplined and not give away any penalties.

## Mercierstats

Nick Name **Ludo**  
Position **Fly Half**  
Born **01/11/76**  
Height **1.79m**  
Weight **85kg**  
Int Hons -





# Mark Cornwell

[player focus]



**When Ian Jones joined Gloucester after the 1999 World Cup it was seen as a landmark signing. He was, at the time, one of the most famous players in World Rugby.**

His signing showed that Gloucester Rugby Club could compete on a truly international stage for the signatures of the best players.

In his time with Gloucester he imparted much knowledge and experience to the younger charges and has left an indelible print on the Cherry and Whites. There were however, some who were not so keen to see the former All Black in a Cherry and White shirt.

For Mark Cornwell, the former Old Richian and Gloucester stalwart, Jones's arrival meant two seasons in the wilderness as the great Kiwi embedded himself into the Gloucester pack and struck up a rock solid partnership with Rob Fidler. Jones's departure, which prompted Cornwell's decision to stay at Gloucester "That took all of two seconds to make", has meant a re-emergence for the lad they call Pasty.

"When Ian Jones arrived it certainly set back my career", says

Cornwell. "He played a lot of rugby and I couldn't get a look in. On the flip side though I learnt a lot from him. I watched every aspect of his game and have tried to put a lot of what he did into my own game".

Time away from regular first team rugby is never easy for any player at the top of his game but Cornwell is philosophical about his change in fortunes. When Jones arrived, Cornwell a regular in the England A set up and was on the verge of a trip to South Africa with the senior England squad. By the time Jones left Cornwell describes his position as in the wilderness.

However, as Cornwell is about to turn twenty-nine next month, he realises that a season or so without continual rugby may just have added a bit more longevity to his already lengthy career. This silver lining though remains distinctly thin.

"I might go on a bit longer because of that time out but you

never know what could happen next week or next month".

This season Gloucester have a more youthful appearance to their squad and seasoned professionals such as Cornwell and Chris Fortey are being encouraged to take the added weight of responsibility within the team set up, particularly in their specialist field.

'Any young player' has to spend a good couple of seasons keeping his head down, listening, learning and taking on information to try and establish himself in the side. I did that a long time ago and it's a natural progression that, the longer you are at a club and the more experienced you get, you do find yourself taking in more responsibility for certain things in training and on the pitch", said Cornwell.

As a senior member of the squad Cornwell says he is comfortable with the mantle of senior pro. He reflects on how Ian Jones's influence and then departure taught him how to accept greater

## [Mark Cornwell] Lock

**"You need luck at international level. Look at Nick Duncombe, who made his debut last weekend. He has played three times at premiership level and has a cap".**





responsibility within the team. In the line out especially Cornwell's influence is beginning to be recognised.

"Sometimes you have to take responsibility yourself. I learnt that from Ian. We have had problems in the line out, as most teams do, and had we not done anything about it we would have continued to have problems. It wasn't just me but collectively we decided to do something about it. I spoke to Laurent, to Vicks, to Fids, Chris and Olivier. We got it together, I hope, because otherwise we will be made to look foolish this weekend".

It seems the area of the line out has turned almost full circle in the last five years. Before lifting was legalised, the throw-ins were very evenly contested. As lifting was introduced a hooker and his locks enjoyed a relative comfort zone. Now as teams realise they can't allow their opposition that luxury, the line outs have once again become a highly skilled aspect of the game.

"Sometimes the line out goes to plan and sometimes against good opposition, as we try to do, they contest all the throw-ins. Three

years ago you would have one option and eighty percent of the time it would work throughout the game. Now you have to have two options at each line out and the hooker has to make a split decision as to where the ball is going. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. When it goes wrong, you have to come together as a pack and find ways to make it work".

At the end of last season, there was much speculation that in pursuit of regular first team rugby, Cornwell might end his lifelong relationship with the Kingsholm club. After protracted talks with the management however, Cornwell decided to stay put and feels sustained in his decision.

"I think I made the right choice", admits Cornwell "I looked elsewhere because I had spent two seasons not going anywhere and there is only so much of that someone can take. Philippe couldn't guarantee that I would play all the time but guaranteed that I would play more rugby. I had to decide whether I could take over from Ian Jones. I knew what I could do and it was a case of either running away from Gloucester and establishing

myself somewhere else, or staying here and proving a point that I can and want to play for Gloucester. It took me a second to decide and I am pleased I stayed".

Perhaps the best demonstration of Cornwell's re-emergence from Ian Jones's shadow came at the Wasps game before Christmas. Cornwell came off the bench to steal Ian Jones's ball and began to provide the Gloucester pack with the possession that eventually lead to them controlling the game.

"From the side lines I could see where our problems were and where we could win some ball", says Cornwell. "I spoke to Chris (Fortey) who was also on the bench, we discussed the problem and when we got on we started to win some ball that provided the platform for the forwards. The ball I stole of Ian though was very sweet. I can't describe how but I knew from the way he was stood what he was intending to do. I gambled and won the ball".

Cornwell relied on his instincts on that occasion but describes it as 'naïve' in the modern era not to do some sort of preparation or

video analysis before a match. It is another sign that the older, wiser Cornwell has developed a strong mental approach to the game.

Two seasons ago Cornwell was a regular in the England A set up and remains slightly embittered by his lack of opportunities to progress.

You need luck at international level. Look at Nick Duncombe, who made his debut last weekend. He has played three times at premiership level and has a cap. There are many more who have played one hundred games without the recognition.

Cornwell is not resigned to the fact that his international aspirations may never be realised but is philosophical about the future.

"If it comes great, but I won't lose sleep over it. I want to concentrate on Gloucester and try to win some silverware as reward for all the hard work we have done this season".

So for Gloucester fans, the end of one regime has brought the chance for another. The King is dead long live the King!



Gloucester



# Mark Cornwell

playerstats

D.O.B: 22/03/73   **Position:** Lock   **Height:** 2.01m   **Weight:** 110kg  
**Former Club:** Old Richians   **Int'l national Honours:** England A



# Ed Archer

[the long haul back]

Away from the crowds and the excitement of match days there are always a small band of players who must battle on their own to regain fitness.

**"...on April 21st 2001, when his team mates ran out against Leicester in the biggest game of the club's history, to fight for a final berth in the Heineken Cup, Tom was being wheeled into theatre."**



They are the players with long-term injuries who, without the weekly injection of enthusiasm from the supporters that a big match appearance can bring, must still keep a positive attitude in training everyday.

It is a side of the sport unseen by most and the effort it takes to return from a serious injury and perform on the pitch again goes unappreciated. Robert Todd is one such player who has done just that and by his performances this season proved to have done it very well. Recently, Chris Catling and Adam Eustace were added to the injury list but these two will be back soon - Cats a matter of weeks and Adam just a few months.

In 1998 on the England 'tour of hell' down under, Tom Beim dislocated his shoulder. Despite turning in some memorable performances the following season his shoulder still bothered him constantly and he was forced into surgery after eighteen months. The operation and his five-month rehabilitation period seemed to have paid off. Who can forget the electric try that saw Bath blown out of the Tetley Bitter Cup, or the record breaking five tries against Roma in the Heineken Cup?

However, rugby is an unforgiving sport and towards the end of last season Tom had to decide between continuing playing and risking a career ending injury or once more going under the knife. So on April 21st 2001, when his team mates ran out against Leicester in the biggest game of the club's history, to fight for a final berth in the Heineken Cup, Tom was being wheeled into theatre.

The surgeon laid down very adamantly a twelve-month suspension from play if Tom hoped to resume playing at Premiership level and so began a long haul back to playing fitness.

The shoulder is the most mobile joint in the body, but with superior mobility comes inferior stability and the process of regaining full joint function is a vital one. After surgery this process has three major elements:

- 1) Restoring mobility (range of movement) and improving function of stabilising muscles.
- 2) Increasing strength.
- 3) Sports specific conditioning – returning to the contact situation.

As well as the hours each day spent on his shoulder rehabilitation work we had to ensure that Tom maintained and developed his cardio-respiratory fitness and initially he spent many hours pedalling furiously on a stationary bike with his arm in a sling.

Tom has handled this massive psychological blow of re-injuring his shoulder, that had already been subject to intense treatment and conditioning, like a true professional.

He has also had fantastic support from his wife Jo and the rest of his family.

As soon as the shoulder had regained enough strength and range of movement, he was able to begin running again and start a more advanced and intense strength-training regime. He can now look forward to coming back fitter, stronger and faster than ever before.

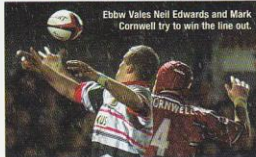
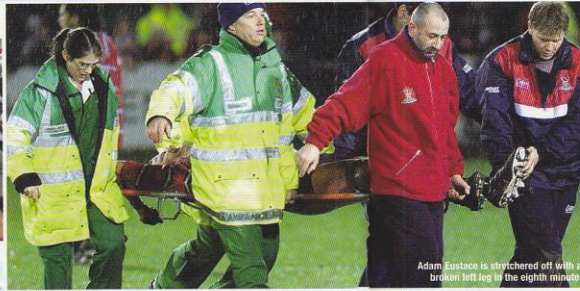
It is great to see Tom involved now in more specific training, joining in skills sessions and hitting tackle shields. We look forward to his full return to rugby and the selection problems for Philippe.



# Match Action vs

# Ebbw Vale [home]

Parker Pen Shield Quarter Final  
25-01-02



Photography Supplied by Bruce Seabrook GPA



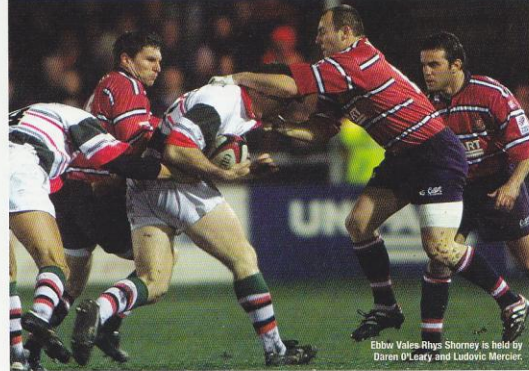
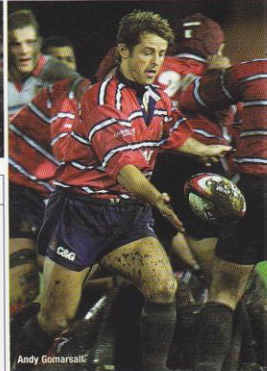
matchstats	
Attendance 6816	
Gloucester: 46 points	
Tries: O'Leary, Simpson-Daniel, Boer, Forrester	
Conversions: Mercer 4	
Penalties: Mercer 6	
Ebbw Vale: 11 points	
Tries: Wagstaff	
Conversions: Oult 2	

Parker Pen Shield

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[match action]

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[match action]

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# Peter Arnold

[contributor]

## BACK TO BASICS

About time too. After weeks of sitting happily at No.2 in the Premiership table, and speculating on what the rest of the season might hold, we're back to League action again.

You might say that we've finished with the champagne of Cup and Shield action for a while, and can now savour the honest pints of bitter at the business end of the fixture list.

Or, bearing in mind today's formidable opposition, perhaps

Guinness would supply a better metaphor. Having shot ourselves in the collective foot in two away matches against London Irish, we certainly owe them one, but it ain't going to be that simple. It's probably one of the most important, and fascinating, encounters of the season.

While on the subject, I expect you noticed that our old friends from Newcastle had the chance to overtake us in the table, a couple of weeks ago, but then went down to Wasps by a single point, thanks to a very late try and conversion from the touchline.

Oh dear. What a pity. Never mind.



## BAD LUCK, ADAM

What a terrible stroke of bad luck Adam Eustace's broken leg was.

What a terrible stroke of bad luck Adam Eustace's broken leg was. Bad for the club, of course, because young Adam has certainly been one of the huge successes of the season, strong, lively and a revelation in the line-out. Even worse for the lad himself, because he was a stone-cold certainty to play in England 'A' side against Scotland last weekend. His promotion was richly deserved, too, but the problem is that, if someone else comes along and does the business, he has no guarantee that his chance will be there for the taking next year,

so fierce is the competition in all positions in the England set-up these days.

There are a lot of good, young players, all over the country, busting a gut for the available chances, and they're not going to give an inch just because Adam Eustace has broken his leg.

Perhaps the recent miserable weather has given me a gloomy streak, but there's another factor which worries me a bit, too. Bumps and bruises are one thing, but you can never be sure of the long-term effects of more

serious injuries. I can think of two examples of Gloucester forwards who suffered that way.

That trenchant prop forward, and later Gloucester coach, Keith Richardson, and the fiery and inventive flanker, Viv Woolley, both had to endure long layoffs through nasty fractures just when they had England Caps well in their sights. I'm sure that both of them would forgive me for observing that, while both of them returned to action, neither was quite the same player afterwards, and neither got near to the International scene again.

Of course, there are two important differences between Adam's misfortune and those suffered by Keith and Viv. One is that Mr. Eustace is younger than either of the others were when they got injured. You tend to be indestructible when you're Adam's age.

The other is that medical, surgical and training methods have advanced by leaps and bounds since the elder two suffered, so perhaps it is just a matter of the winter weather getting to me. We all fervently hope so, anyway.



## DOUBLE BARRELLED

Just off the top of my head, I can't recall any regular Gloucester players who sported double-barrelled names until very recently, although I suspect that Tony Windo may have originally been named Tony Carrington-Windo.

Just off the top of my head, I can't recall any regular Gloucester players who sported double-barrelled names until very recently, although I suspect that Tony Windo may have originally been named Tony Carrington-Windo.

Be that as it may, our two young hyphenated players certainly distinguished themselves last weekend. My spies tell me that Clive Stuart-Smith was highly impressive both as Captain and as scrum-half in the England U19s' victory over

their Welsh counterparts, the first for around a decade, while young James Simpson-Daniel scored a try at a crucial moment one step further up the ladder as the England U21s put it across the Scots. And, while on the subject, did you notice that James Forester scored for England against Australia in the Quarter Final of the Brisbane Sevens?

In fact, a quick tot-up will show you that over a dozen Gloucester players featured in the four England squads selected for last weekend,

and there would surely have been one more if Forester hadn't been on Sevens duty. Pity the number got reduced by injury and suspension.

I'm told that only Leicester had stronger representation in the squads, and that was largely accounted for by the number they had in the Senior squad. So the teams standing at Nos. 1 and 2 in the Premiership had their representation exactly mirrored by squad selection for the international scene, which seems fair enough to me.

While we're at it, can we now

have an end to the jibes about Gloucester being a 'League of Nations' side? Even if you discount Henry Paul, you can't have that many players selected in this way if you're just a bunch of nomadic mercenaries, can you?

We could be seeing the start of some worthwhile England careers here - and you can probably think of one or two other young Gloucester hopefuls whose chance may yet come.

Can't be bad.

## HAIL AND FAREWELL

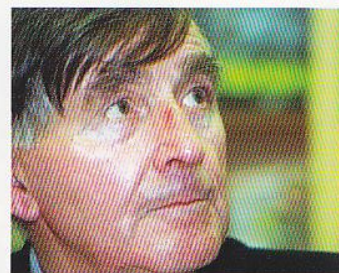
I can only think of three radio and TV commentators who justly earned the title of 'the voice of' whichever sport they specialised in.

Tennis had Dan Maskell, Cricket had John Arlott, and rugby union has Bill McLaren. Now, Bill has, sadly, decided to hang up his microphone. We shall miss him a lot. That distinctive Scottish voice has enlightened and entertained us for so long that most of us can't remember a time without

him. I particularly like the way that, though never less than scrupulously fair in his comments, he never could quite disguise his allegiance to Scotland. And none the worse for that.

He's also a staunch Gloucester supporter, having contributed to

several GRFC publications over the years, and rarely missing a chance to say something good about Gloucester or its players. Ave atque vale, Bill. Hail and farewell. We hope you'll have many, many games to watch yet, even if you're not giving us the benefit of your wisdom any more.





# The Minister of De

**It is representative of the way professional rugby is played today that one of the new vogue positions on the coaching staff is a defensive coach. The man who fills this role for Gloucester is Dave Ellis.**

In rugby union circles, Ellis is perhaps best known for his work with the French National team. Under Bernard Laporte, Ellis is charged with taking a historically undisciplined group of players and tightening them up into a well organised, well drilled, disciplined collective.

"The change of focus has been brought by professional rugby over the last five years", says Ellis. "It has become virtually impossible for one coach to do the whole job, or even for one coach to coach forwards and one coach to coach backs. The game is so complex now, and there are so many different aspects of the game".

"In the past, a lot of emphasis was put on attack, winning lineouts and scrums, dominating territory and kicking your goals or scoring tries. What people are starting to realise is that for about half the game, you haven't got the ball and you have to defend".

"The philosophy used to be that if we score more tries than them, we will win the game. With the introduction of people like Phil Larder with England, Clive Griffiths with Wales and Alan Tait to

Scotland, the philosophy has changed to if you stop the opposition from scoring tries, then you will always be in the game".

Ellis feels that it is possible to trace the roots of this philosophy back to Australia in the early 1970's. It was at this time that a Great Britain Rugby League team last won a series against the Australians. The visionary Australian coach at the time was Jack Gibson, and he took it upon himself to ensure that a similar fate would not befall his successors. He focused his attention on American Football and, in particular, the efforts of Vince Lombardi at the Green Bay Packers. Gibson was able to draw parallels between the two sports and adopted many of Lombardi's attitudes and particular his thoughts on defence. Stop the other team from scoring and you will do well.

Gibson took this new philosophy to Rugby League, developed it, and then over time it has moved into rugby union.

As rugby union was the last sport to develop a professional structure, coaches have found

it necessary to cut corners by enlisting the help of experts who already know the intricacies of defence. Dave Ellis has certainly got the pedigree to regard himself as such an expert.

His rugby career began in league where he played professionally for over twenty years. Traditionally, league players in the North of England supplemented their income by working down the mines. The miners strike in 1984-85 forced Ellis to reassess his position, and when he was offered a playing contract in Australia in 1987, Ellis chose to leave these shores.

He spent four years in Australia, winning four Grand Finals with four different teams as a player and then player coach. He then returned to Europe to coach the Battalion de Genville, the French Army side, where through National Service the best French sportsmen aged between 18 and 24 are drafted in to one Battalion. He was then asked to work with French League team Villeneuve, who were in somewhat of a slump at the time.

Ellis was charged with winning the Championship in three years with this underachieving team. In fact, the club won the title that year and then again for the next two. In his final season with the club they won the Championship, the Cup and the European Cup. In 1996 he coached Paris St Germain in the first season of British Super League and it was here that he first worked for Jaque Ferrou, the former French Rugby Union Captain.

With little else to achieve in league, Ellis changed tact and began a career in rugby union. He started at Harrogate and enjoyed a relatively successful time with the Yorkshire club. He helped them to stave off relegation and indeed propelled them up the league. News reached Ferrou who called Dave to work with himself and Franc Mesnel at Racing Club De France. The coaching team were successful and attracted the attention of Bernard La Porte. Ellis subsequently moved to Begles Bordeaux and split his time between club and the French National team.

"I started almost from scratch at the bottom rung of the ladder with Harrogate trying to



# fence

[dave ellis]

learn all I could about the game before I was able to bring my ideas in to it", said Ellis.

Ellis's ideas are simple to begin with, focused around discipline, and then as the player's proficiency in defence improves he will look at individual techniques to get the most out of individual players.

Said Ellis, "I bought a lot of discipline to the French National team. It was a problem that they had as they were either giving away penalties at the tackle, or they were off side or playing on the floor. They were giving a lot of penalties away, often in excess of fifteen per match. Now it is down to one or two per game. Also, defensively France would miss 20-30 tackles a game but now it is fewer than ten. With Gloucester I looked to bring a defensive organisation to the team before going into individual aspects of tackling techniques of players. The overall plan for the first season was to get the players in the right place at the right time defensively."

Ellis is already achieving tangible results. Where certain

players were missing eight tackles a game at the start of the season, now it is down to just one. As a team, Gloucester are eradicating missed tackles from their game.

"The objective in any game is that if you miss less than ten tackles a game you will never be far away. If you miss sixteen or seventeen against a good team then you will certainly get beaten", says Ellis.

Not missing tackles is the basic philosophy that Gloucester have adopted to ensure they win more games than they lose. Ellis though, is only part of the way through his doctrine of defence. Offensively teams are becoming better at ball retention, so defensive teams have to work harder at their offensive tackling with the intention of putting pressure on the ball in tackle situations.

"We need to bring everyone up to the same defensive standard. Players like Andy Hazell, Henry Paul and Phil Vickery are excellent defenders, others are not so good. We are only as good as our weakest link so we need everyone to be at the same

high level and then we can step on together", said Ellis, adding, "the next step on from that is then to stop giving away penalties, particularly kickable ones, in tackle situations".

The last point will be very relevant today as Gloucester face one of the most prolific kickers in the league. Gloucester's defence and discipline will need to be on top form.

