

Gloucester

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

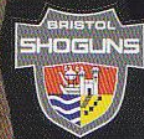


**EXCLUSIVE HENRY
PAUL INTERVIEW**

**UNITED AND
ACADEMY FIXTURES**

**IAN SMITH RESURECTS
THE UNITED TEAM**

VIEW FROM THE SHED



vs Bristol Shoguns

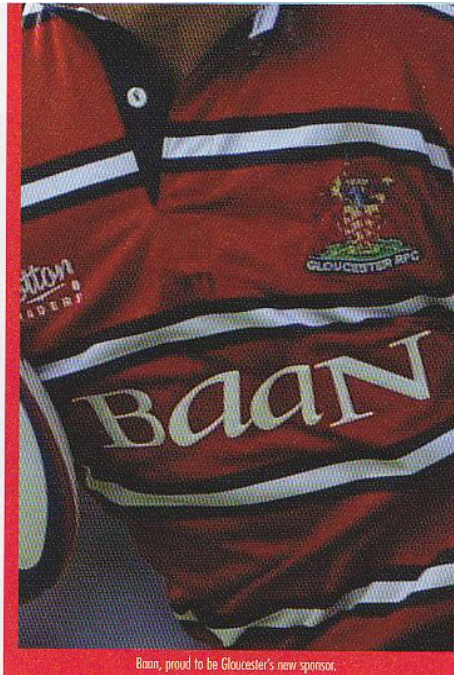
ZURICH PREMIERSHIP FIXTURE
SATURDAY 21ST SEPTEMBER 2002
KICK-OFF 2.00PM

Baan Club Sponsor
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Cotton



Gavin Dadd, Managing Director of Baan



Baan, proud to be Gloucester's new sponsor.

WELCOME FROM...

Baan

Welcome to today's game between Gloucester and Bristol. This promises to be a very keenly contested fixture with all the great traditions one would associate with a West Country derby.

As a successful leader in its field, Baan recognizes that considerable synergies exist between both Gloucester and the Baan company. Both teams enjoy the

"WE UNDERSTAND GLOUCESTER SUPPORTERS ARE THE MOST DEDICATED IN THE LEAGUE."

combination of energy, commitment and the desire to win. We wanted to associate our market leading brand name with one of the top teams in Europe and are absolutely thrilled for everyone involved with the club that, at the time of writing, Gloucester sit proudly on top of the Zurich Premiership.

A key factor in our decision to sponsor Gloucester Rugby Football Club is that rugby is a game where the team is bigger than any individual player, we feel that this ethos within Gloucester Rugby Football Club mirrors the Baan culture and we are looking forward to a long and prosperous partnership together.

So to enlighten you with a little more about Baan then: Baan is a software and services company that provides World Class solutions for the Manufacturing and Service Industries. With 6,900+ customers and some 15,000+ sites over 22 countries with in excess of 1 million users, Baan could be said to have a truly global capability. Baan's diverse customer base includes Boeing (the entire Boeing 757 aircraft is built using Baan), Volvo, TWR, Komatsu, Snecma (Aero Engines), Hewlett Packard and Ferrari. All these successful world leading customers share a common theme, they design, engineer, manufacture, distribute and provide after-sales support.

The thread that binds all these successful companies together, paralleling us with Gloucester Rugby Football Club is our ability to win in an ever increasing competitive environment.

We are confident that the Gloucester Rugby Football Club Team are amongst the best and know success is derived from a complete package which includes the whole of the management team, club infrastructure, coaches and very importantly, you, the supporters. We understand Gloucester supporters are the most dedicated in the league, much like Baan's customers who in turn expect the best possible satisfaction from Baan and its advanced solutions.

In closing we want to wish both sides the best of luck and look forward to an exciting game. ■



NIGEL'S NOTES...

Nigel Melville

Director of Rugby

Welcome to Kingsholm for this afternoon's Zurich Premiership game against our old 'friends' Bristol. I know that everyone in Gloucester enjoys an afternoon's rugby at Kingsholm, but games against Bristol are always special, and this afternoon promises to be no exception.

Having watched Bristol's three opening games of the season, I can assure you that the contest up front will be a fierce affair, Bristol have a powerful pack and some very exciting backs. Their new coach Peter Thorburn's philosophy was built over many successful years working with the All Blacks, I have no doubt that he will bring the best out of his squad this season. I hope he enjoys the experience of his first visit to Kingsholm.

Last weekend we made the long journey north and returned with a valuable four points. It wasn't pretty, but I can't remember any game away to Newcastle standing out as a classic. Newcastle will win plenty of games at home this season, they work hard, they throw the ball around and they keep going for eighty plus minutes. Johnny Wilkinson usually contributes around twenty points with his boot, but the one doubt I have for Newcastle is the pressure he is under. He captains the team, scores most of their points and is their playmaker. He will undoubtedly receive the close attention of visiting back rows each week, and does not always get the protection from his back row he would like.

The game, as a spectacle, was spoilt by the constant interruption of the referee's whistle, this led to a stop-start game where neither team achieved any rhythm. With a minute to go we looked as though we would return home with two points not four, but 'music to our ears' the whistle blew one final time – Henry Paul kicked the penalty, we jumped on the bus and travelled south!

Today's referee is Tony Spreadbury, he was due to

referee Ireland v Russia this weekend, but it was felt that a West Country derby required a West Country referee!

Welcome to 'Spreaders' and his team, I know that they will understand the importance of today's game to both clubs. I believe it is experience not money that makes a good referee, making a referee professional may help him develop more quickly, but an experienced referee develops an empathy for the game and builds a working relationship with the coaches, players and supporters over time.

Today we also have the Dean Ryan factor, this is Dean's first South West derby game since leaving Bristol in the close season. I know that Dean is looking forward to meeting his former colleagues this afternoon – after all he is not the first, and will not be the last person to move Clubs in the West

“HAVING WATCHED BRISTOL'S THREE OPENING GAMES OF THE SEASON, I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE CONTEST UP FRONT WILL BE A FIERCE AFFAIR”

Country. I remember the fuss when Stuart Barnes moved from Bristol to Bath – today Stuart joins us with his Sky TV colleagues – the question everyone at Kingsholm will be asking today is – WHY BATH?!!

Have a great afternoon, enjoy the rugby and we all hope you will join us on our travels South next weekend to Bath! ■



Johnny Wilkinson under pressure as Newcastle's Captain



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Phil Vickery

Club Captain

Yeah it was a close old game, but one I felt we deserved to win after leading for over an hour. We were in control for much of the game and if we had kicked our kicks earlier in the game, then perhaps we wouldn't have been in that situation.

All credit to Newcastle for the way they came back at us but we were able to hold on and HP managed to slot one over at the end.

I don't think it will ever be enough to go away somewhere and not win. I think we showed that, as a team, we are not prepared to give up. We said after Harlequins and again last weekend that in past years we probably would have lost those games. We always talk about winning our ten-all games, on Sunday we won our ten-all game and when we look back at the end of the season, I'm sure we will appreciate just how valuable those points are.

Let us be realistic, we are going to lose at some point this season, and perhaps we will even lose a game that we have deserved to win and another team will do to us what we have just done to Newcastle. Over the season these types of results even themselves out but this week we have been able to look back and enjoy the fact that we have another away win and four points in the bag.

As a squad we have not reached our best form. I think we have still got a lot to show, but the important thing is that we are winning and to be honest I don't think we want to be playing our best rugby at this point in the season. It is a long season and people are still finding their feet and getting used to the pace of the game.

If we can be playing not particularly well and still be grinding out results and getting wins then as we get better we will look back and say, "Hey, we were rubbish but we still won." People underestimate how hard it is to go to Newcastle. A lot of very good teams will go there this season and lose. This season's results have already shown that.

For me, this win was priceless and it is in the bag and gone. You can't spend too much time worrying about

other teams because if you get hooked up on everyone else, you lose your focus. If we keep going out to win every week, like we do, and we win every game, then we won't have any problems. Sunday was a game that we could have lost, but we didn't. We won and we can keep moving forward.

It is fantastic for English rugby that the Premiership is so competitive this season. Leeds are right up at the top of the League and it just shows how much difference a win can make to a team. They have made some good signings.

A local derby is always a tough game, regardless of form or league position. Going back years, when Bath had all their superstars, nine games out of ten when they came here were always very tough. It will always be a very hard fought match and will always be very close.

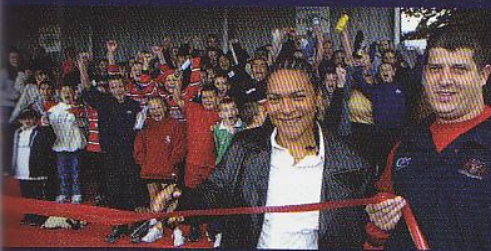
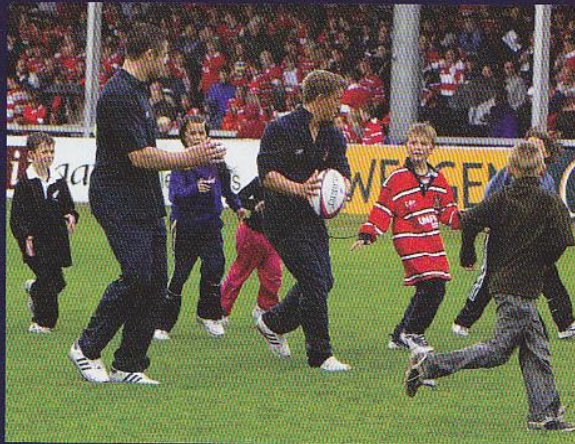
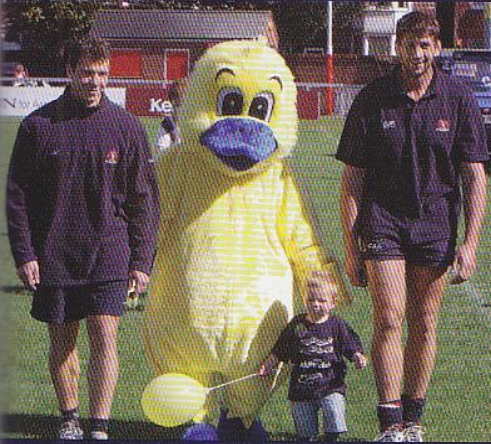
"ALL CREDIT TO NEWCASTLE FOR THE WAY THEY CAME BACK AT US BUT WE WERE ABLE TO HOLD ON AND HP MANAGED TO SLOT ONE OVER AT THE END."

It is the same for fans and players alike. It is a local derby and it is a special game. Even if we took the local rivalry away from this fixture, Bristol would still be a very good side. We know that we are going to have to play well and the pressure is on us again. They won't have any fear about coming here, they have a fantastic pack of forwards and game winners all over the park in Pichot, Contepomi and Christophers. We are going to be on our best guard to get something out of the game.

We made a lot of unforced errors during our last game, which meant we put ourselves under a lot of pressure. If we can cut these basic mistakes out of our game, or keep them to a minimum, then we will take a lot of pressure off us and we can play to our best. ■

Henry Paul in action against Newcastle





(Top Left) Rob Fiddler and Tom Beim with meningitis trust mascot Monty The Duck and toddler Ethan Hadad. The toddlers were there to launch the toddler waddle to raise funds for the Meningitis Trust.

(Top Right) Gloucester's Academy team coaching clinic prior to the match.

(Left) Lorraine Shaw cuts the ribbon to officially open Gloucester's new community area.

Kevin Howie

COMMUNITY NEWS

This weeks visitors to the Community Area are from Longlevens Junior School. The children and staff all enjoyed a visit from 1st team players James Simpson-Daniel, Marcel Garvey and Chris Fortey yesterday afternoon. The players toured the school and signed autographs as well as answering questions from each class.

The Community Department's Match Day Experience has enjoyed a great start to the season so far. The children from Kingsholm School had a terrific time watching the action

from the newly opened Community Area in the Worcester Street Stand End against the Sharks. They also met Commonwealth Games Gold medallist Lorraine Shaw, who officially opened the area. Although the weather let them down a bit during their coaching session with the Academy lads, they still got to experience a run out on the pitch.

The club hosted a Toddler Waddle on Tuesday 10th September to raise money and awareness for the Meningitis Trust, one of the Club's adopted

charities for the season. This event was a sponsored walk for children from the Leapfrog Nursery in Quedgeley, along with other local children, including Junior Paramore's youngsters. The children followed Monty The Duck around the pitch accompanied by Rob Fidler and Tom Beim.

This week the Community Department has welcomed a new member of staff. Sophie Bennett has joined the club as the Community Development Officer.

Enjoy the game.



ALASTAIR DOWNEY, OF THE CITIZEN

I Will start by asking a simple question: When was the last time Gloucester lost an away match in the Premiership? Just have a guess if you don't know or do you give up? It was Saturday, April 13 2002 at Northampton when Gloucester lost 58-21 under the fledgling guidance of Nigel Melville. Since then they have won six times from seven attempts on the road in all matches away from Kingsholm, including the Zurich final at Twickenham.

What is the key to this gradual turn around in form? How have Gloucester gone about curing their travel sickness that has mocked them for seasons?

Melville puts it down to a fear factor. Gloucester don't play at home or away these days - they only play 'games'. The concept of not winning away is being slowly but surely eradicated from the mindset of the squad - a squad that is capable of winning anywhere in the Premiership anyway when they really put their minds to it.

Melville ensured the preparation for last weekend's trip to Newcastle was rigorous and well thought out. There is nothing left to chance these days. Gloucester travelled a day early to the north east and stayed an extra night - tiny but crucial details that aided their chances of victory.

A year ago it is almost inevitable Gloucester would have lost against the Falcons. Last Sunday, although there was a wobble to-wards the end, Gloucester always had control and thoroughly deserved their victory.

"It is getting over that hurdle and fear of not winning away - I can-not remember when we last did lose away from Kingsholm," Melville said this week.

"What we do on Monday's now is switch immediately onto the next game because it gets us away from what we did on the last Saturday. The focus changes." It is down to patience and devising a plan that will win us certain games.

"Leicester have been winning games like the one at Newcastle for years, when they are not playing well but still grinding out results, and in that respect it was priceless. Not many teams will win up there."

The significance of last weekend's results will not be fully known for some time, but Gloucester are already eight points ahead of Leicester - two away wins - so it is understandable to appreciate Melville's delight.

Last season Gloucester won away from Kingsholm four times - twice towards the end of the season when Melville was already in charge - and they look well on course to better that this campaign. There was a time when Gloucester, for whatever reason, would have lost to Tewkesbury if it had been outside the city limits, but not any more.

Times are changing and Gloucester are using their brains - whatever next.

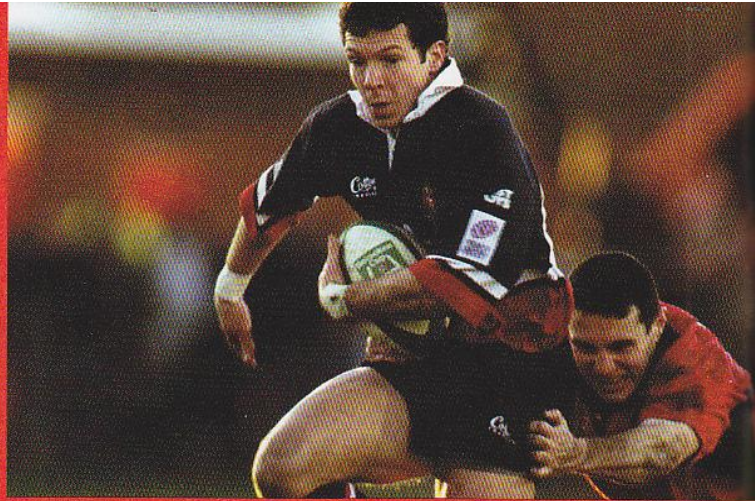
You can read Alastair Downey everyday in the Citizen

The head to head this week again focuses on two of the game's speed merchants.

After a strong season for the Shoguns, Phil Christophers emerged as a real contender for the wing berth in the international side. He made his full England debut on the recent summer tour to Argentina and capped off another good performance with a try.

Meanwhile Tom Beim, Gloucester's own quicksilver wingman, seems to have been around forever. He is one of the old breed of wingers, wispy, sleek and glides when in full flight.

Both will be desperate for a chance to show what they are capable of and one thing is for sure, given the opportunity, either could make a big impact today.



Tom Beim - Gloucester

Position Wing

Height 1.85m

Weight 188lbs

Date of Birth 11-12-75

Int Hons England

Previous Club Sharks



Tom Beim

Strengths

Although traditionally found hugging the touchline to keep the pitch as wide as possible Beim has worked with the coaching staff at the Club to increase his work rate and involvement in the team's play. Aligned to this high work ethic Beim has all the other attributes that he describes as a given fact these days, one would want from a winger. He is extremely fleet of foot with a tremendous turn of pace. He can change direction in a single step and knows where the try line is.

Weaknesses

"Your shoulder is your main tackling tool and so after my operations I have spent a lot of time working with Dave Ellis on my defence. I also work a lot on my kicking in training and general all round game", says Beim.

High Points

"Winning my first cap (for England), in 1998 in New Zealand was a very special moment in my career and then obviously winning the Zurich Championship Final against Bristol at Twickenham was another high point", says Beim

Low Points.

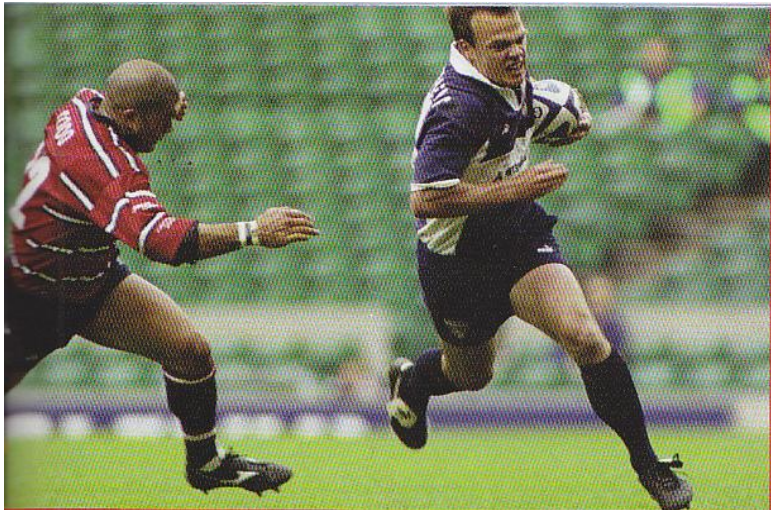
For any sportsmen, amateur or professional any time they are away from their sport is a low point. Beim has missed much of the last two seasons through a recurring shoulder injury, an obvious low time for him, thankfully though after two operations, he is over the injury and back on the field.

Beim on Bristol

We have had a fairly indifferent start to the season, although we have won the games, at least two performances weren't that great. Bristol are yet to win but they have scored a lot of points so it will be a tough game and I'm sure that they will want to come to Kingsholm and be the first team to beat us here this season.

Beim on Christophers

"He is right up there in Clive Woodward's thinking. He had a good game in Argentina, scored the try and did very well throughout the tour and he must be pushing very hard for a place in the Autumn internationals", says Beim.



Phil Christophers -
Bristol Shoguns
Position Wing
Height 1.82m
Weight 194lbs
Date of Birth 16-06-80

HEAD TO HEAD

Phil Christophers

Strengths

Like Beim, Christophers has emerged over the last twelve months as a try finisher of some repute he bagged eleven in thirty-four appearances last season. he is quick, strong and works very hard for the team. All round good player.

Weaknesses

"I try working hard on my defence and also my kicking. I want to improve that aspect of my game and be able to kick equally well off both feet", says the Bristol man

High Points

Like Beim, Christophers made his England debut on a summer tour. His chance came against Argentina in Buenos Aires.

"Playing against Argentina was a high point and to score the try in Buenos Aires was definitely special", says Christophers.

Low Point

"I was out of the game for a year ill, when I was eighteen", admits Christophers. "It was hard to sustain things during that period. Touch wood in my pro career, I haven't had any serious injuries so other than that I have been ok", he added.

Christophers on Gloucester

"It's obviously hard to play Gloucester at Kingsholm. They have crowds of nearly 10,000 people at most games. The crowds are not hostile but certainly partisan and of course today is a West Country derby, which adds the extra edge", says Christophers.

"We have got off to a bad start so we have something to prove. Playing in an atmosphere like the one at Kingsholm should inspire us. To play in front of crowds like this is why we play the game; that is what it is all about. If you don't like it, stop playing".

B B C

Experiencing Kingsholm from on and around the ground has made me well aware of the expectation of the Gloucester crowd. Anyone in the vicinity can hear it, visiting supporters can see it, and players in the opposition can feel it! Expectation is now huge at Kingsholm, and though it's more tempered away from home, it's definitely a project with a "work in progress" tag.

The foundation for all this has traditionally been the highly regarded Gloucester pack. Great delight has been gleaned on the terraces watching the life being squeezed out of the "opposition eight". An opposing team that can't get their hands on the ball has to tackle not only the Cherry and White onslaught, but also the seemingly physical pressure of

him the envied element of success. Richard in turn opens the door for Philippe Saint Andre, an enigmatic talent spotter who turns the city into an arrivals lounge for rugby talent from around the globe. An expansion of the catchment area is mirrored on the field, as the team is expected to use their skills away from the rough and tumble of scrum and lineout.

Changing times means changing targets too. Europe beckons and the hard nosed professional approach really takes root. Supporters now analyse the quality of the team as it appears "on paper". The backbone of forward power rumbles on, but with supporters looking for a variety of attacking options, Chris Yates impales defenders in midfield like the



the Shed's roar. The likes of Voyce, Ford, Nicholls and Teague have been prominent characters, all doing things the Kingsholm way. Dare I suggest that the fair minded Shed has even given grudging respect to other teams that have earned victory by bettering their beloved ball winners - particularly if that triumph occurred at Castle Grim - but times are changing.

The amateur / professional divide was crossed, and players such as Tombs or the mercurial Mapletoft embellished things with some improvisation. The once unthinkable happens and Gloucester welcome Richard Hill from the arch enemy, surely with the expectation that that he will carry with

ingredients of a kebab, creating gaps to be exploited by the electric support of Kingsley Jones and Elton Moncrieff.

The days of "the Committee" seem a world away as Gloucester of old takes on a new dimension. The travelling Shed has a more genuine expectation of winning points "on tour", to a point where fans update their passports in order to urge on victories after a journey by plane, never mind by coach, to a point where a respectable league position and a couple of enjoyable European weekend adventures is no longer enough, certainly for the management! Development is a continuous process, you never reach the finished article. The new tutor, Nigel

Melville, tempts us with his appreciation of the work of the Academy, bolstered by astute international experience to steer the ship. So here we are, still in September and expectation, surely, has never been greater. But what are we expecting? We can't yet be sure. We've certainly seen different patterns. The "must have" rampaging pack seems to be in place, but Todd and Fanolua are running new lines in midfield. These have already been these supported by a dynamic back row, providing opportunities out wide for a crop of both new and experienced strike runners.

A resurgent Gomarsall adds the thrill of the unexpected, but as yet we can't honestly say we can predict the choice

or the sustained quality of the team play. Paul or Mercier? Hazell or Forrester? Beim or.....etc etc. Now selection provides genuine debate in the bars of the Diocese. So say the magic word, 'Alic-Azam', fire up the pack and hang on for the ride.

Today, we welcome Bristol, whose start to the season has been less than impressive; three defeats compared to Gloucester's three victories. Dean Ryan's inside knowledge will be useful today, and though his Gloucester team must be looking to maintain their 100% record, form has often meant nothing in games between these clubs down the years.

Old foes, but new expectation of a very different shape



ANDY WYMAN

OF BBC RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE

(Left) The Gloucester faithful.

RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE

104.7 FM & 1413 AM

B B C

FIRST FOR COVERAGE OF THE CHERRY & WHITES



"Paul is still being judged on past performances in a game that he grew up with, and where he enjoyed a settled position."

WOULD THE REAL HENRY PAUL PLEASE STAND UP

He arrived from Rugby League amidst a fanfare of hype and expectation. Following his unparalleled exploits in Rugby league and aligned with the impact that his former Wigan Rugby League team mate, Jason Robinson, had on Rugby Union in his first season in the game, the fans and pundits alike felt sure that Henry Paul was a ready-made world beater. As Club Chairman, Tom Walkinshaw, officially unveiled his latest signing, in a plush Park Lane hotel in the summer of 2001, the talk was already of Paul's choice of international allegiance, when, and not if, he made the step up. Would he try his luck with his native New Zealand and attempt to become a cross-code All Black, or would his future lie with the country of his Grandfather's birth, a seaman from Liverpool, and see him wear the red rose of England.

Such hype, even for a man who claims to have been under the media spot light since he first started playing first grade rugby as a teenager, is hard to bare and with little or no experience of the union game, despite his attempts to play down his role in the fifteen-a side code, Henry Paul, without kicking a ball in anger, was already the biggest story in the European game. The comparisons with Jason Robinson are a particular thorn in the side of Paul, who admits that he cares little for them. Nor does the former Bradford Bull care for peoples hankering for his past exploits in the league code.

"I don't care about Jason Robinson, he's nothing to do with me; he's not on my team. I am proud that I played with him, and a lot of other great players, but that is all about comparisons and I don't care much for that. I just want to play games for Gloucester".

"I don't care about what I did in Rugby League, it has nothing to do with Rugby Union. I don't care what other people say; as long as I know within myself that I am playing to my best ability. That is all I care about. That, and what the coach says. If he is still picking me that is all I care about", says Paul.

The problem that seems to have hindered Paul is that no-one is still quite sure of what he is capable of in the Union game. Without affording him the time to learn all the nuances that separate the two, quite different codes, supporters and pundits have expected him to replicate his wizardry that he conjured week in, week out in League. The different basic structure between the two codes has also left supporters, and possibly coaches, still wondering where Paul's best position will be. He started his Gloucester career at fly-half, has since been moved to the centres, both inside and out and more recently he has staked a claim to be considered as a full-back. With little time to learn one position Paul is still being judged on past performances in a game that he grew up with, and where he enjoyed a settled position. >>

PLAYER PROFILE

Paul will happily admit to wanting to play anywhere in order to help the Gloucester cause, but under Philippe Saint-Andre, who could not decide on the best way to utilise Paul's obvious qualities, he suffered from his versatility. Under Nigel Melville, who has brought more organisation and structure, Paul is beginning to flourish as his skills being used to the side's advantage. Playing at full-back, a position he feels is more akin to the League game as his counter-attacking and kicking skills are paramount, Paul offers the side more options as he comes into the line at first, second or latter stage phase play. By having both himself and Ludovic Mercier as first receiver options, defences are unsure where to focus.

"Having Ludo and me on the field at the same time, brings the team options, but Nigel is trying to bring everyone into the game. Nigel wants everyone to be a ball player and tough enough to take the ball into contact. We are trying to get a team thing going and not just rely on one person. Teams will recognise our ball players and take them out. We want to be different and have different angles and different parts from the pitch that we can attack from", explains Paul.

It was at full-back, against the Sharks, that many people felt Henry Paul made his real break through in the Union game. He scored the teams opening try and was instrumental in the teams other scores. It has not been lost on many judges that this performance came on the weekend after he had been omitted from Clive Woodward's first England training squad. Paul though has other ideas about his Club v Country role.

"It's always Club first. I always want to try to be the best and be man-of-the-match. Saturday was good, I got back to full-back, had a bit more room but it was no different than normal. I strive to be consistent and just because I was omitted from the England team, didn't mean that I tried any harder than any other time. I always want to do my best and things will come from that".

"Plus it's all about opinions. I can be outstanding for the next three years, but unless I fit into the plans that Clive (Woodward), or any other manager have about the team, and how I fit into that balance or where they want me, it wont make any difference. I will just try to keep playing well for Gloucester".

One coach who certainly has a first-rate opinion of Henry Paul is Joe Lydon, another former Rugby League star and current England Sevens Coach. Paul was the pivotal player in England's recent Sevens exploits at the Commonwealth Games as he was given the space and authority to express himself to the full.

"It was great for fitness and great for reactions as the games were so much quicker, that gave me more experience. We didn't go as far as we all hoped but we leave the negatives alone. It was a great experience and so many positives came out of the tournament", says Paul.

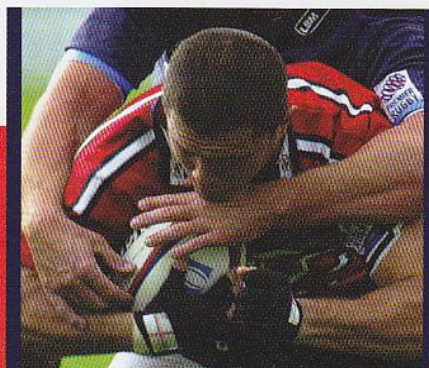
His involvement with the Sevens team were a massive part of Paul's pre-season commitments. His exposure to the shortened version of the game though has just added to his experience and helped this become a very successful pre-season.

"The preseason this year has been good. It was hard to come in mid-season last year. This year we have had a good start, a good trip to Durban and I played a good game against Natal, which was another good experience", admits Paul. "It is a lot more organised this year. Under Philippe, we still enjoyed great wins but it was a bit more hit and miss. This year, it is early days, but we are trying to build momentum and have more of an understanding of what we are doing", he added.

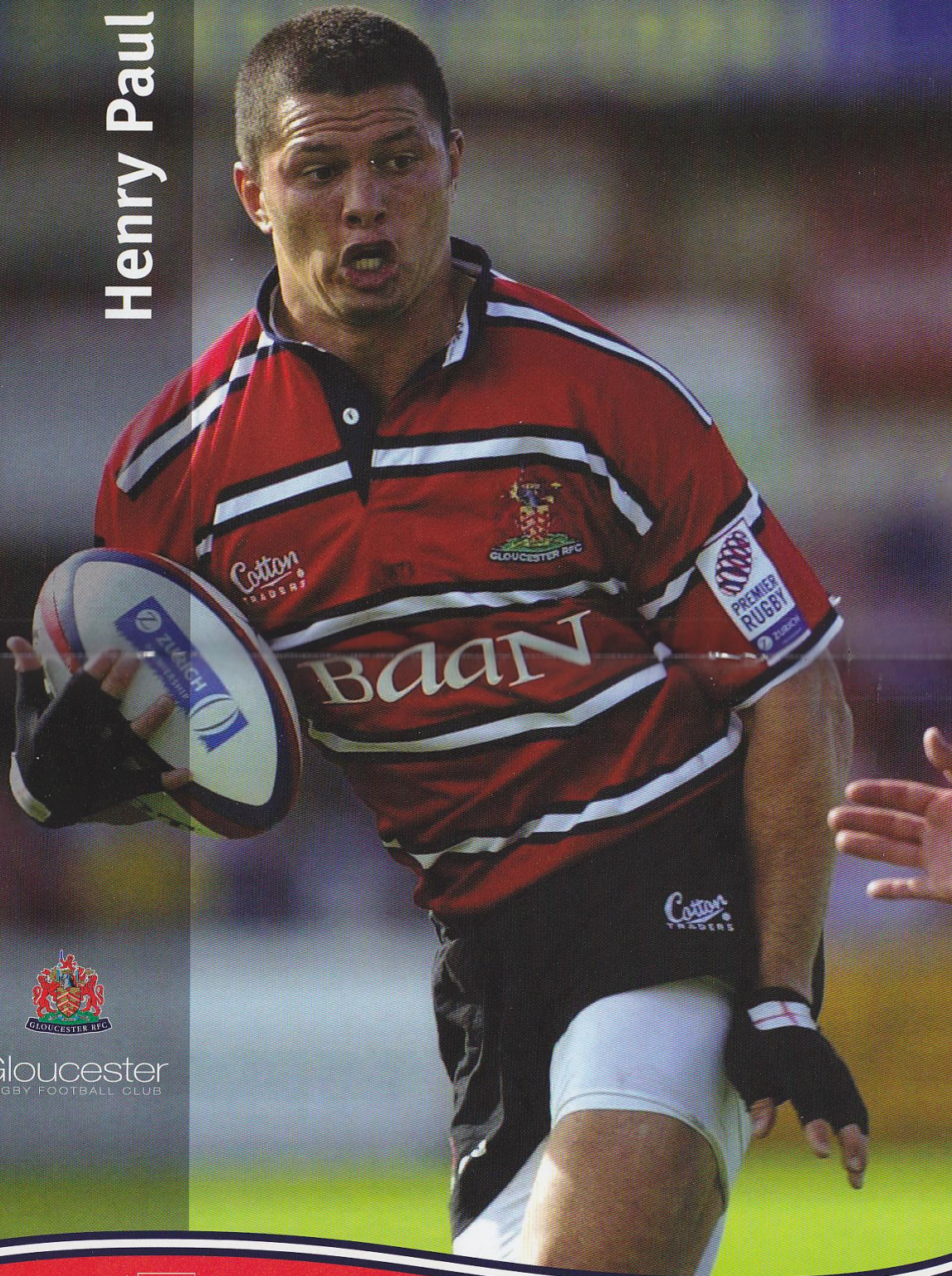
Paul, it seems this year, has become more integral to the team's design. He says he is more experienced this time around but still has much to learn. He has occupied the fly-half and full-back positions this year and one would expect that he may even be used in other positions as the season moves on to suit Nigel Melville's plans. Whilst Austin Healy hates the 'versatile' tag and refuses to use the 'V' word, Paul is far more relaxed about his situation.

"I don't mind where I play, I'll play anywhere. It can back fire because you are not playing one position all the time, but I just want to help Gloucester, so I'll go wherever I'm needed for us to win" he says. ■

Henry Paul in action against
The Sharks this season

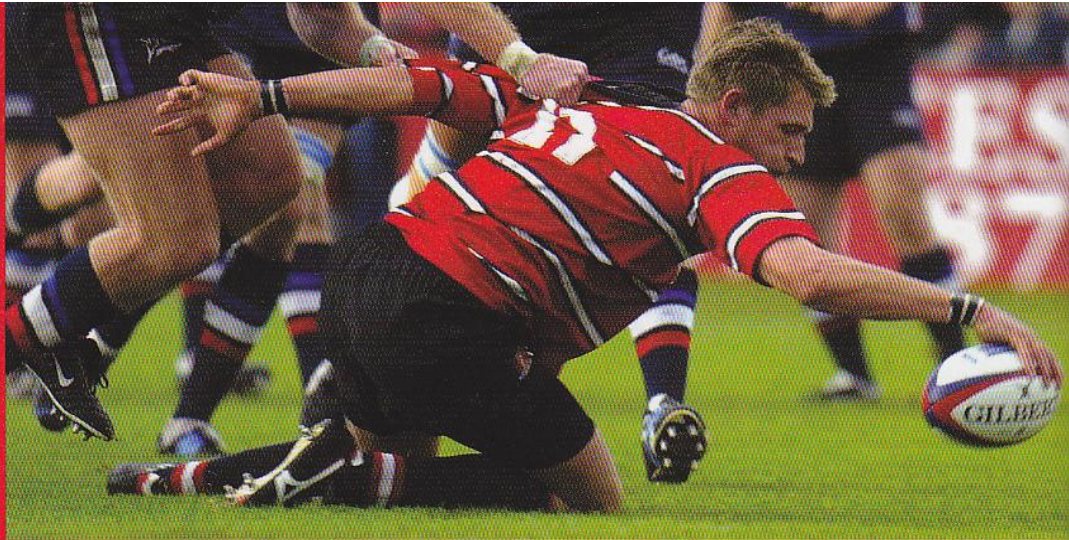


Henry Paul



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KINGSHOLM SATURDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2002



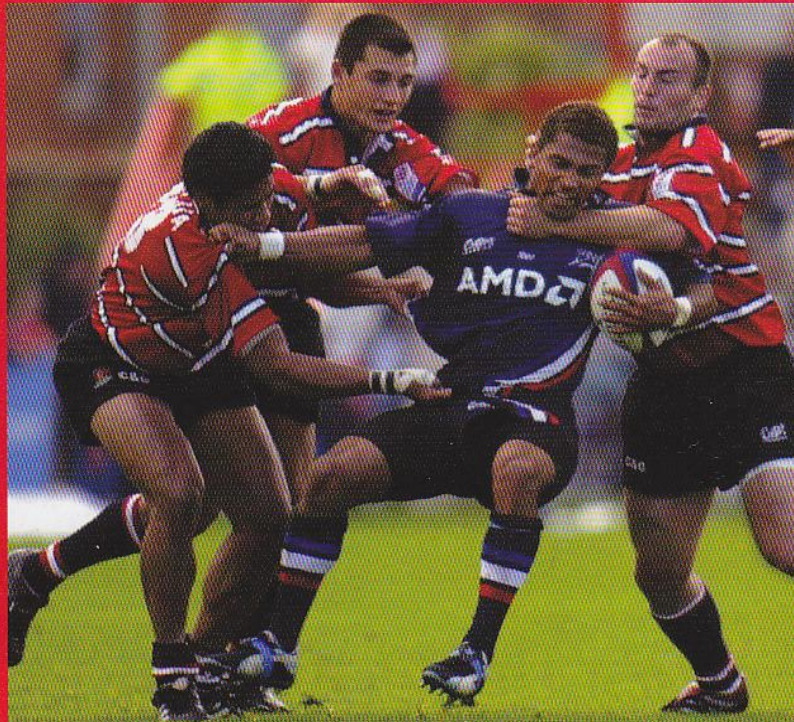
GLOUCESTER 44

TRIES: PAUL, FORRESTER (2), BEIM, BOER, DELPORT
CONVERSIONS: MERCIER (4) PENALTIES: MERCIER (2)



THE SHARKS 8

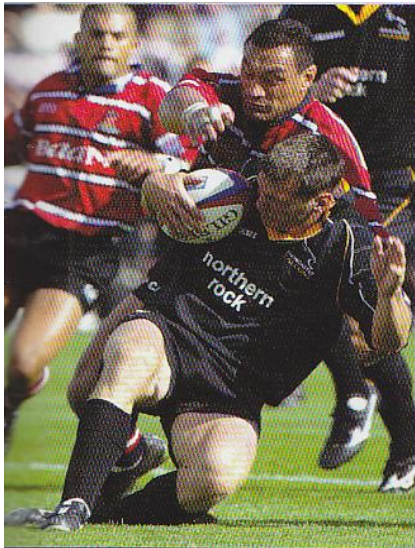
TRIES: CUETO PENALTIES: HODGSON



(Top) Sharks Peter Anglesea cannot stop James Forrester scoring his second try.

(Above) Andy Gomarsall gets the ball away.

(Left) Jason Robinson is halted by Terry Fanolua, Thinus Delpport and Ludovic Mercier.



KINGSTON PARK SATURDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2002



NEWCASTLE 19

TRIES: **TAIONE** CONVERSIONS: **WILKINSON**
PENALTIES: **WILKINSON (4)**



GLOUCESTER 22

TRIES: **PARAMORE** CONVERSIONS: **MERCIER**
PENALTIES: **MERCIER (2), PAUL (3)**



(Top Left) Junior Paramore tackles Liam Botham.

(Top Right) Jake Boer is tackled by Joe Shaw.

(Above) Junior Paramore wins another line out.

(Left) Marcel Garvey escapes from a tackle from Hall Charlton.

SHED HEAD

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT A sideways squint at the pre-match fayre...Bob Fenton

Well it was good to be back for the big kick off, wasn't it. Standing in the queue, shuffling your way along, a sense of anticipation as the time grew near, nervous shaking and chewing of nails... Then I got to the bar and got served and was able to think about the rugby and take up position in the middle of the Shed.

Mind you I nearly missed it all - my better half drove us down and dropped us off in town before heading off to do whatever it is she does on a Saturday afternoon. (Actually that's a thought... I wonder what she does do?

Probably follows the results of Ipswich Town on teletext.

Yes I know they're a football club

but there's no helping some people.) Anyway we jumped out in the early afternoon sun - soon to be replaced with early afternoon downpour - and made our way up to the ground.


As we approached the gate the terrible realisation struck me - I'd left the season tickets in the car! Minor panic ensued, would she be home and more importantly would she come back out again! Fortunately for us the answer to both questions was yes, and she duly turned up with the tickets. My nerves were shot to bits before we even got into the ground.

Still we made it in by 2:15 and already the place was rocking, I can tell you that after years of being outside until the last minute, it made quite a change to be in early. You forget, or perhaps take for granted, the way the atmosphere builds up as it the clock ticks round to game time.

By 2:30 we were already packed in and the PA system was busy informing us "... the shed is now full...". How do they know that - does someone stand and count everyone in? How many are allowed in? Is it a random guess? I suspect the latter, anyway it doesn't matter - we all know the sneaky routes to get around the stewards!

By now I was beginning to wonder





what had happened to the pre-match entertainment that we were promised some time back. OK we had a band who played whatever it was they were playing and the traditional tug war was rained off, but that was that - not too much to occupy the mind - not that I am really that bothered.

There are, though, some who yearn for Saracens-style dancing girls. This time last year up at Watford I distinctly remember an official of the GRSa spending far too long gazing at them - with the aid of binoculars, mind - than was healthy for him. You know who you are, don't you.... Money (or Guinness) will secure my silence.

Mind you, back in the dark ages of pre-professionalism we were leading the way with a dance troupe of our own - The Cherryettes as I recall. For some reason they only performed in front of the grandstand and never ventured over to our side of the pitch so most of us never knew what they looked like other than from the back. On reflection, and judging by some of the comments from my more err... unreconstructed comrades, they were probably safer over there...

Without doubt though, the worst 'entertainers' - and I use the word in the loosest possible sense - inflicted upon us was those terrible samba drummers (aka The Drummers From Hell) who turned up for about two seasons. The noise was terrible, I remember thinking that I was fortunate not to have to be in the ground to listen to them close up. They were so loud that you could barely hear people in the back of the shed asking them - very politely - to move on.

But that wasn't the worst of it though - not only were they guilty of making a terrible, migraine-inducing row, they once turned up at Bath and wandered around wearing their colours!

Okay, inflicting pain and suffering on the average Bath supporter is more than okay in my book, and they were welcome to them, but for them to then

come back to Kingsholm and walk on our grass wearing our shirts after that act of treason was too much. They had to go - and fortunately they did.

In the run-up to the Zurich Championship Final the prospect of a Gloucester mascot - one of those stupid furry things, not the little people who run out with Phil Vickery before kick-off - was mooted. Fortunately common sense prevailed and we didn't go down that route, though the prospect did give rise to one some pretty wild suggestions, not least a giant foam Shed that just sat there doing nothing all game. Heaven help us if we go down that route, Sale have a Shark, Leicester's got a Tiger and Wasps have their err... Wasp. What would we have ended up with - Gloucester's Gnu?

No, we don't need that kind of plastic artificial nonsense at Kingsholm. We're a real rugby team in a real rugby ground with real rugby people inside it, and we can create enough excitement and atmosphere all on our own. Unlike a lot of the 'reinvented' Premiership sides, we don't need foam mascots, dancing girls or stupid overly loud music to tell us we're having a good time. And today, more than any, will prove it.

Bristol against Gloucester is the real West Country derby - long before Bath became the best amateur team that money could (allegedly) buy the real crowds and the real atmosphere was to be found at these games. Inside the ground and outside in the bars it's been the same over the years - the banter and the spirit has always been good, and long may it continue. Maybe it's because we share a common bond - both sets of supporters can't stand Bath!

Of course Bristol are probably sick of the site of Gloucester. Not only did we beat them four times last season - including, of course, at Twickenham - we also took their coach away from them in the summer. Just remember, Dean, this time when you come out onto the pitch at 2pm you turn left and sit in the dugout marked 'Home Team'!

Peter Arnold

WILL YOU PLEASE STOP DOING THIS TO ME!

Like many other people, I found myself following last Sunday's Newcastle match on BBC Radio Gloucestershire, and I'm bound to say that the coverage offered by the station's Newcastle counterparts to be excellent. Kevin Davis's commentary was about the best I've heard on local radio, graphic word pictures, a great deal of ancillary information, and an overall portrayal of the urgency of the whole occasion. I also thought that our own James Bennett's contribution provided added value to the programme in a quite exemplary fashion, and I'd like to hear more of him doing that sort of job. Having said all that, there are times when I wonder if listening to Gloucester's away games on the radio shouldn't be accompanied by a health warning, especially for those of us who measure the time since we hung up our boots in decades rather than years. These last-gasp wins can be very hard on the old heart muscles.

Both of our away wins so far this season have been achieved with the referee's watch running down at an indecent rate, and you can't get much closer than Henry Paul's penalty with last Sunday's final kick of the match. The good thing to come out of this is that Gloucester teams, in the past few years, would probably have folded when confronted by having a winning position cruelly snatched away in the last few minutes. Not this lot. Twice now they have come storming back to retake the lead when all seemed lost.

But it's a bit hard when you're sitting

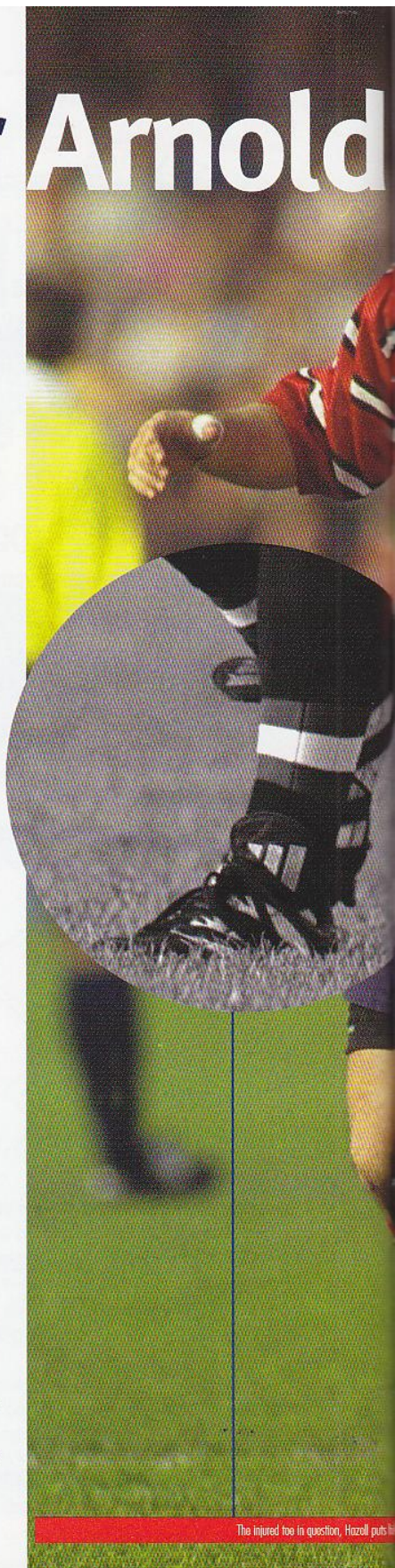
at home, knuckles whitening around your beer can. They were two very valuable victories, but both of them made me look around for the nearest defibrillator.

PUTTING HIS FOOT IN IT

I've heard of dipping one's toe in the water before taking the plunge, but Andy Hazell's version of that custom does seem to be taking things to extremes.

For the benefit of today's visitors, and others who may not have heard, Andy managed to get his studs caught in the matting covering the concrete between the tunnel and the pitch, and thereby strained his big toe very severely. He managed to play for the first twenty minutes or so, but then had to yield his place to 'Jango' Forrester, who promptly scored two tries in the spectacular demolition of Sale Sharks. It's wretchedly bad luck for the young flanker, who was sidelined for injury most of last season and was therefore unable to continue his progress having established himself as one of the most promising young back-row prospects in the country. The new injury is particularly galling for Andy, bearing in mind the enormous competition we have for back-row places here at Kingsholm. And it was all so plain silly!

Of course, we do hear of these stupid injuries from time to time. A couple of years ago, a player in a local game dropped a rather neat goal, and turned to give a 'high five' to one of his colleagues. Unfortunately, because the other guy was still moving at the time,



The injured toe in question, Hazell puts his



they managed to miss the hand-slap, and the recipient of the gesture ended up with a broken nose. Ouch ! Then there was the Stan Pritchett story. Stan, a noted local lock forward, raconteur, deadly pub quizzer and all-round Good Egg, was skipping Gloucester Old Boys at Swindon. As they ran on to the field, the opposing captain gave him the customary handshake. And managed to break his finger. Unfortunately, this was in the days before replacements, and because they had already just crossed the touchline before the incident, poor old Stan could not be substituted, and the Old Boys were condemned to play the whole game with fourteen men. It was Stan's drinking hand, too.

So you see, Andy, you're not the first player to put your foot in it. Let's hope you can get back to your firecracker best in short order.

RAY DAVIS

Regretfully, I must, for the second time in just two programmes, record the passing of one of Gloucester's true rugby stalwarts. Ray Davis died, around ten days ago, at his Stroud Road home. He was just a few weeks short of his 80th birthday. Ray was a nice man. He was always willing to stop and chat about rugby - or anything else for that matter - and was one of those people who made the world seem a little more pleasant just because he was in it. On the rugby scene, he is probably best known as a player and life member of Gloucester Old Boys. Indeed, having been in the building trade just about all his life (he joined Halls and Keck when it was still W.J.B.Halls, based where B&Q are now), he was an ideal man to take a lead role in that happy band of pilgrims who, famously, built the Old Boys Clubhouse, off Horton Road, with their own fair hands. Ray was also a keen swimmer, and when he died, was still involved in a battle to get the

authorities to open our new GL1 pools early on a Sunday morning so that he, and many other like-minded people, can have a swim before going off to church. In his case, that was St.Barnabas, where I remember him when I was (would you believe it) an angelic choirboy. The local rugby scene will miss Ray Davis, as indeed, will many other people who have never had any interest in the game at all.

Our sincere condolences go to Ray's wife, Cis, and to all his family.

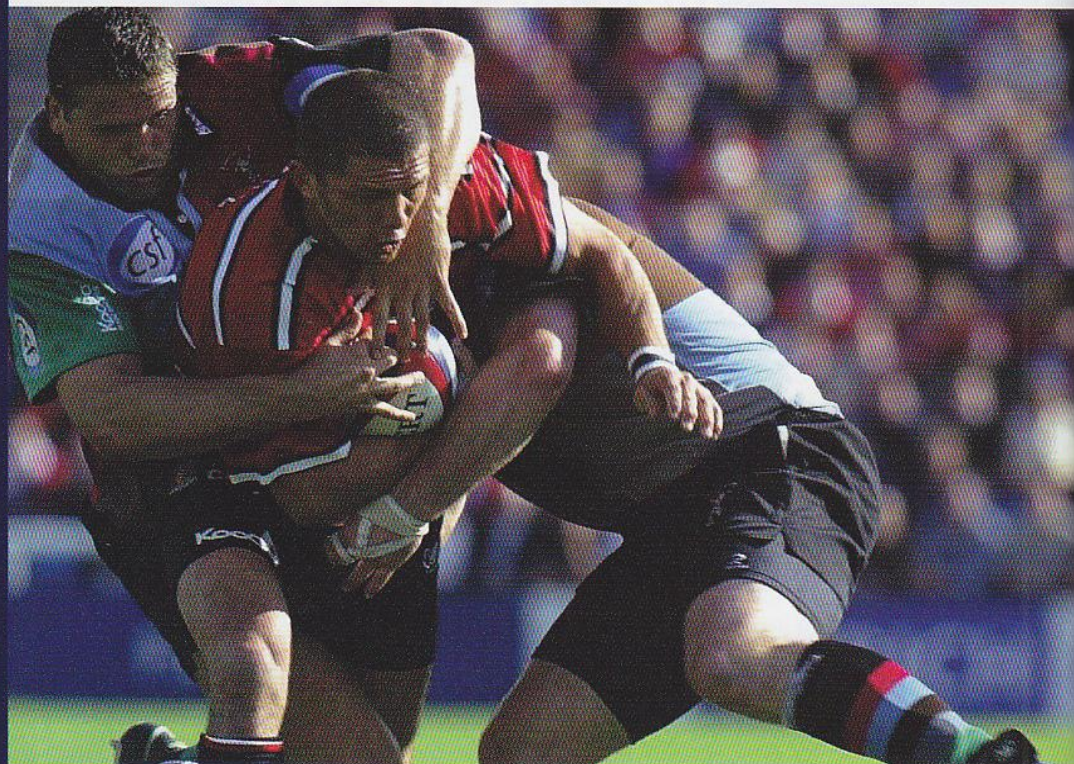
WELCOME MR.MEAN

We should welcome the arrival in Gloucester of Ian Mean, who takes over as Editor of the Citizen newspaper on September 30th. He steps into the shoes of Spencer Feeney, who has absconded to Swansea after seven years at the helm of the St.John's Lane paper.

Mr. Mean comes to us with a formidable journalistic reputation, but confesses to one serious shortcoming. He doesn't know much about rugby. "I am acutely aware of the importance of rugby in Gloucester, and I'm going to need intensive training in this field." he says. I can't help feeling he might be acting a little bit modestly. After all he comes to us from a stint as Assistant Editor of the Western Morning news in Plymouth, a town which has a pretty fair rugby tradition itself.

Mr. Mean should also be aware that the Citizen, itself, has a great rugby background. It is still the only local paper in the country which leads its sports coverage on rugby, and was the first newspaper in Britain to appoint a female rugby correspondent: the fondly-remembered Katie Coker, who was last seen working for 'Rugby World'.

As for that 'intensive training - quite simple. Come and stand in The Shed for a few weeks.



After today's West Country Derby, one of the most traditional fixtures in English rugby, Monday night at Kingsholm will see the revival of the United team, one of the most traditional sides in Gloucester Rugby.

Under the management of Ian Smith, himself a Gloucester icon with over 330 games for the Cherry and Whites in an esteemed career that also saw him win 25 Scottish caps, the Gloucester United team will play the first of thirteen planned fixtures this season against a strong Leicester side.

Smith re-joined the Club that he served so well as a player as forward's coach for the final months of last season. He has now taken on the role of bridging the gap between the U21 Academy side and the 1st team. The United set up will provide competitive games for 1st team players that are either not getting enough action or those returning from injury who need to restore their match fitness.

"In the pre-professional era the United side was for the youngsters who were joining the squad as well as the 1st team players coming back from injury or just wanting to continue playing after they had finished their 1st team career so to speak", explains Smith.

Smith, along with Nigel Melville, who instigated the re-birth of this flagging tradition, sees the role of the United team, for so

long the back bone of the Gloucester Club, as three fold.

"From a 1st team point of view, you have a squad of players who are not being selected week in week out. They are either injured or are on a rota and not getting as many chances as they would like. They will train all week but there is no substitute for playing, so they need to play", explains Smith

"This is a vehicle for them to retain or regain their match fitness, but more importantly their confidence, because if you don't play, your confidence can slip and the best players are always supremely confident" he adds.

"From an U21's point of view it is a chance to take the U21s out of their environment into a new environment that is faster and tougher, where the opponents are physically bigger so we can test them and see how they fair in that United role".

"Also there is a financial implication. In the past, it was nothing to get four or five thousand people at Kingsholm on a mid week night to watch the United side. Historically in the community this has been well supported and we are trying to resurrect all this.

Smith (and Melville), are keen to reinforce the fact that whilst the United team is an obvious step up for the younger players in the Gloucester squad it is certainly NOT a step back for the

UNITED FRONT

Gloucester United v Leicester_Monday 23rd September
KO 7.30pm (Kingsholm)
Season Ticket Holders free (on production of booklet)
Adults £5
Juniors £2.

senior 1st team squad members.

"Basically this is all about game time. Some players come on regularly for 40 minutes or so a game, but if a player is only getting five or ten minutes or not getting on at all over a number of weeks, then they really need a game".

"The United squad is a vehicle for bringing all the players that you want to be available to play at the highest level into an environment where they can play together and get some quality game time", says Smith.

In order to underpin the ethos that all players will continue to be available for their respective sides, the United side has moved its fixtures from the traditional mid-week time to a Monday night. This is designed to give the first team players as much chance as possible to be fit for selection for the following 1st team match on a Saturday or Sunday the following weekend.

"If they are selected on a Monday night a first team player who comes back from injury, or someone who is playing particularly well has four days rest to prepare themselves for a Saturday fixture".

The quality game time Smith refers to is represented in the quality of fixtures that the United team have organised this season. They kick off their campaign with the sternest

possible test against a strong Leicester side. The current Zurich Premiership Champions and European Cup holders are renowned for having a strong Academy and Development process.

I sat down with Nigel during the spring and we decided that the United was a worthwhile idea, but that we needed worthwhile fixtures. I sat down and made numerous phone calls and found that a lot of Directors of Rugby were very receptive.

"Leicester, Northampton, Bristol, and Newport plus others, home and away, all represent worthwhile fixtures. There is no point playing in un-worthy fixtures because the boys don't get anything out of them. They need to be tested physically and mentally and learn about making decisions on the field so they need good competition", explains Smith.

Gloucester, along with a number of Premiership Clubs have identified the need for more competitive fixtures. This logic though seems to fly in the face of the PRA who continue to campaign for less games and a more structured season with only one game per week.

Last week they put pressure on ERC and SANZAR chiefs to resist the temptation to include a Northern v Southern hemisphere World-Champions type fixture and yet here are Gloucester and other Clubs building a dozen or so more, highly competitive games into the season.

"It is obviously the case that at certain times in the season, certain players will need games, specifically players in the first team squad. I agree that we have to be careful with the U21s as they are the ones that we could damage if we don't manage them correctly. But we have a number of players in the 1st team squad that have just come out of the U21s that are too old like Mark Irish and Josh Frape who are, as yet, not playing anywhere. We have scope for giving these guys a game and balancing their time over the season" reasons Smith.

The message then is that the Gloucester players will not be flogged but rather that the United teams will be made up of horses for courses.

Smith spends much time with the 1st team players and coaches to ensure that he is up to speed with current thoughts on how the game is played. He then spends time with the Academy teams to ensure that they are "Singing from the same hymn sheet". Smith then meets players in the middle to ensure that a seamless passage exists between U19 to first team through the U21s and United teams.

"It is a traditional thing and its good to have it back. But we have to be forward thinking take things forward", says Smith as he tries to build up a United front.

WESTERN
Daily Press
 CONTRIBUTOR



Back in the summer, when all and sundry were tipping Gloucester to win this season's Zurich Premiership title and to enjoy a lengthy Heineken Cup run, Nigel Melville was more concerned about settling a set of smaller goals. The Cherry and Whites' Director of Rugby told a throng of reporters here at Kingsholm that, in order to become the best in Europe, his side would first have to be the best in England. In order to be the best in England, he added, they would first have to become the best in the West Country.

Following the end of last season and, subsequently, the start of this campaign, you would not exactly be sticking your neck on the chopping block if you were to say that Melville's men will at least be crowned the best in the West come May. But, in Bristol Shoguns this afternoon, Gloucester are likely to face a challenge they have not yet encountered this season. Admittedly, there are easier places to go than Harlequins and Newcastle, while Sale (sorry, Sharks), were runners-up in last season's title race. The Cherry and Whites have beaten all those sides, while Bristol are yet to register a single victory despite two home matches out of their first three. But, make no mistake, today's match will be no walk in the park for Gloucester and I'm sure Phil Vickery will be telling his men just that come ten to two.

Covering both clubs and Bath as well I have seen both Gloucester and Bristol in action twice this season. Their fortunes may have varied significantly, and Gloucester's second half display against the men from Heywood Road seemed to make a mockery of Sharks' tag as serious

challengers this time around (until they beat Leicester six days later, that is). But in their last two matches, defeats against London Wasps and Northampton, Bristol have shown a great improvement since their opening day disaster against Saracens. At Wasps they were beaten by an injury-time penalty try, while last Sunday against Saints, Peter Thorburn's side would have won but for crucial handling errors at vital times of the match. Thorburn will not tolerate such mistakes this afternoon, while Gloucester would simply pounce on them and make Bristol's afternoon a living nightmare.

Bristol know they will have to step up another level or two, even from their much-improved performances of the last two weekends, while the home side will surely be taking nothing for granted against a side who twice ran them so close at the end of last season. Things may have changed since Gloucester's 41-40 win at the Memorial Stadium and their 28-23 Zurich Championship win at Twickenham (one obvious example is on the sidelines, with Dean Ryan today sitting on the home bench rather than that of the visitors). As if one derby match were enough, Gloucester travel to Bath next week, where they are sure to be tested by a resilient, if not flamboyant, Bath side. But, typically, Melville, his coaching staff and players will be looking no further than 2pm today. If they are to become the champions of England (and then Europe), they must start with victory over their great old rivals. And you can bet the men from down the M5 (and M4) will not take that lying down.

By Steve Cotton, Western Daily Press

You can read Steve Cotton everyday in the Western Daily Press.

TICKET AND INFORMATION HOTLINE 0871 871 8781

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GLOUCESTER

Henry Paul	15
Marcel Garvey	14
Terry Fanolua	13
Robert Todd	12
Thinus Delport	11
Ludovic Mercier	10
Andy Gomarsall	09

Patrice Collazo	01
Chris Fortey	02
Philip Vickery	03
Rob Fidler	04
Mark Cornwell	05
Jake Boer	06
James Forrester	07
Junior Paramore	08

Clive Stuart-Smith	16
James Simpson-Daniel	17
Tom Beim	18
Trevor Woodman	19
Olivier Azam	20
Pete Buxton	21
Ed Pearce	22



18

BRISTOL SHOGUNS

Jamie Williams	15
David Rees	14
Martin Shaw	13
Daryl Gibson	12
Phil Christophers	11
Felipe Contepomi	10
Agustine Pichot	09

Darren Crompton	01
Neil McCarthy	02
Julian White	03
Garath Archer	04
Alex Brown	05
Ben Sturnham	06
Michael Lipman	07
Ross Beatie	08

Saul Nelson	16
Emiliano Bergamaschi	17
Andrew Sheridan	18
Matt Salter	19
Paul Johnstone	20
Peter Richards	21
Shane Drahm	22

Gloucester RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



GRFC NEXT THREE MATCHES



BATH RUGBY

Zurich Premiership
 Saturday 28 Sept 2002
 Recreation Ground KO 2.15pm
 Call Bath on 01225 460588



SARACENS

Zurich Premiership
 Saturday 05 Oct 2002
 Kingsholm KO 3.00pm

MUNSTER

Heineken Cup
 Saturday 12th Oct 2002
 Kingsholm KO 3.00pm



THIS WEEKEND'S FIXTURES

Fri 20 Sept 2002
 Leeds Tykes vs Sharks

Sat 21 Sept 2002
 Gloucester vs Bristol Shoguns
 NEC Harlequins vs London Irish
 Northampton Saints vs Bath Rugby
 Leicester Tigers vs Newcastle Falcons

ZURICH PREMIERSHIP 2002/03

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	TB	LB	PTS
Gloucester	3	3	0	0	91	46	1	0	13
Leeds Tykes	3	3	0	0	100	52	0	0	12
Northampton Saints	3	2	0	1	88	65	0	1	9
Saracens	3	2	0	1	83	65	1	0	9
Sharks	3	2	0	1	61	81	0	0	8
London Wasps	3	1	1	1	82	86	1	1	8
London Irish	3	1	0	2	70	75	1	1	6
Bath Rugby	3	1	1	1	54	77	0	0	6
Leicester Tigers	3	1	0	2	59	61	1	0	5
Newcastle Falcons	3	1	0	2	56	70	0	1	5
Bristol Shoguns	3	0	0	3	93	119	0	1	1
NEC Harlequins	3	0	0	3	48	88	0	1	1



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TODAY'S MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: Tony Spreadbury RFU
 1st TJ: Rob Debney RFU
 2nd TJ: Stuart Terhege RFU