

Gloucester

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



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A PROFILE OF
ANDY DEACON
CORNWELL v CONNORS
HEAD 2 HEAD



vs N'hampton Saints

ZURICH PREMIERSHIP FIXTURE
SATURDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2002
KICK-OFF 3.00PM



NIGEL'S NOTES...

Nigel Melville

Director of Rugby

Welcome to Kingsholm for this afternoon's Zurich Premiership action between Gloucester and Northampton Saints.

This season, Northampton have been one of the form sides in the Premiership, they have developed Franklins Gardens into one of the country's finest rugby stadiums, their squad is packed with international talent and they are coached by former All Black coach Wayne Smith – nothing but our best will do this afternoon!

“WE LEFT ADAMS PARK WITH A BONUS POINT AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS IN A GAME WE ARE PREPARED TO STAND UP AND FIGHT TO THE VERY END.”

Last week's game at London Wasps did not go to plan. Our first visit to Adam's Park was an opportunity to lay to rest an appalling Premiership record against Wasps, however, with just 4 minutes played Adam Eustace was sent off for allegedly stamping on Alex King. That single event turned the game, we lost, but every Gloucester player and supporter did their very best to win the game – and we nearly did! We left Adams Park with a bonus point and the knowledge that no matter what happens in a game we are prepared to stand up and fight to the very end.

Obviously the subject of refereeing has been high on the agenda again this week, Dean and myself met with Ed Morrison and watched the match video. Ed has been a great help in recent weeks, he is working hard to ensure that we have quality referees every week, but we simply do not have enough to go round. The decision to allow the top English referees

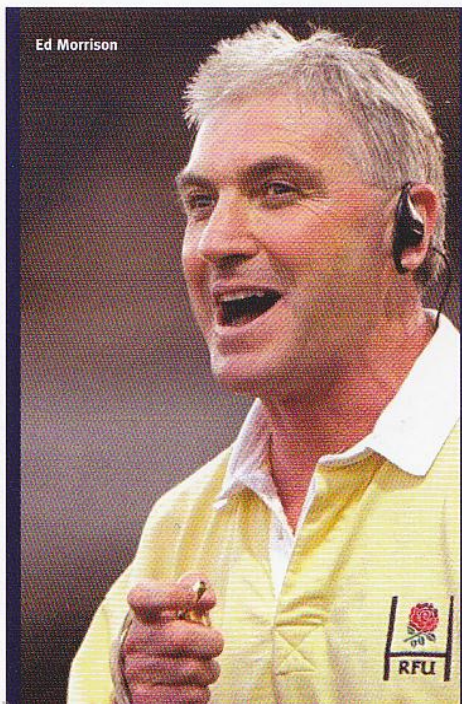
to officiate in the Celtic League when we have Premiership matches must be reviewed.

Today it gives me great pleasure to welcome today's referee J Kaplan to Kingsholm. Last week Jonathon refereed the Currie Cup Final and next weekend he takes charge of the England v New Zealand game. I have no doubt you will all recognise the difference this afternoon.

Today is the final Premiership game before the November internationals. We don't know how many of our players will be required, but a sizable contingent have been attending the England training during the past few weeks. The absentees will make the next three fixtures against London Irish, Leicester and Leeds very tough in deed. In preparation we have promoted 10 Academy players into the First XV squad during the past few weeks. They have all played for the unbeaten United team, trained alongside the 1stXV and will be hoping for a call during November. I know everyone will get behind these young players during the next few weeks.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Terry Fanolua on his 100th Premiership appearance for Gloucester today, a massive milestone for a fantastic player. With Tezza there is never a dull moment on or off the field, he keeps us laughing all week and makes thousands smile every time he plays – brilliant!

Have a great afternoon! ■





CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Phil Vickery

Club Captain

When you go down to fourteen men, as we did last weekend then as a captain there is little you can say. You need to re-group and ask everyone left on the field to give that little bit extra. We all had to work twice as hard for the rest of the game.

The loss of Adam cut down our line-out options and more thought had to go into some decisions, but really we just had to get on with it and make the most of the situation. We took a point out of the game, which is better than nothing, but we still had a good opportunity to win the game and we are disappointed about that.

There were a lot of positives that came out of the game. I think we showed good team spirit and a collective will not to roll over or fold and have lots of points put on us like we may have done in the past so that was pleasing.

“WE LOST THE GAME THOUGH, AND THAT HURTS, BUT WE HAVE A CHANCE TODAY TO PUT THAT RIGHT BY PUTTING IN ANOTHER MASSIVE PERFORMANCE AND GETTING A WIN.”

We lost the game though, and that hurts, but we have a chance today to put that right by putting in another massive performance and getting a win.

We have put that loss behind us and we have learnt from it but this weekend is a new game for us, a

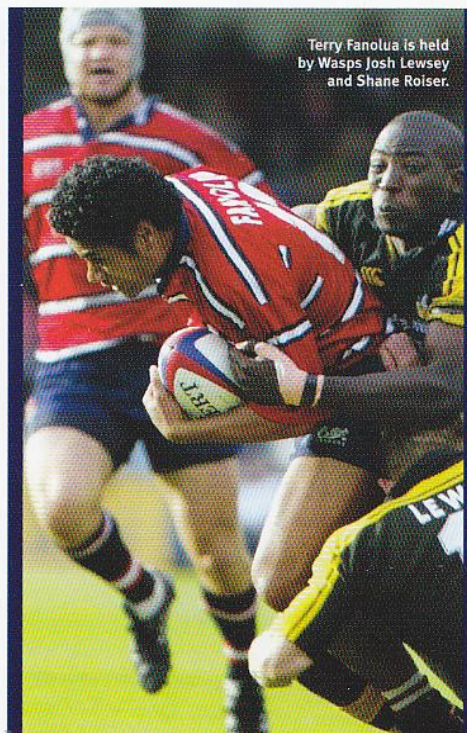
massive game and I am almost tempted to say, a game that we must win. We have a chance to get back on track against another big team but we know that we will have to play better than we did last week if we are to get anything out of the game.

All the games are coming thick and fast now and it is important for us to get another win under our belts, particularly with the Autumn internationals coming up and potential for quite a few of the Gloucester team to be away with their respective countries.

The Club are entering a tough time, with a number of tough games coming up, so we need to win this game. If we don't, I don't mind saying that it will be a massive blow to us, particularly at home.

Of course it will be tough this afternoon. Conditions may be bad and Northampton are a big side, with a strong pack of forwards. They have achieved some good results this year, particularly away from home and won't fear coming here. They have a good coach and play some good stuff and we are well aware that if we are not at the top of our game one loss could become two.

We knew we had to up the ante in training this week. We feel that we didn't play that well last weekend, we made some basic mistakes and we were disappointed with some aspects of our play. Training though has gone well; everyone has put in 100% effort and is very focused on what we need to do today. ■



OXFORD UNIVERSITY U21 22
GLOUCESTER U19 37

ACADEMY REVIEW

The Gloucester U19 side produced a strong second half performance as they fought back from a 16-22 half time deficit to run out eventual winners 37-22 against Oxford University U21's this weekend.

The young Cherry and Whites held the students to a scoreless second half at Iffley Road whilst they wracked up the points with three, second half, tries.

In the first half, Gloucester remained in touch with their hosts with two tries. The first, from second row Luke Collins, ended a move that involved all fifteen Gloucester players, the second coming from Luke Narrowway, who was driven over from a line out.

In the second half a very young Gloucester team ran riot over a generally bigger Oxford pack. The Gloucester side included four U21 players returning from injury with the remainder of the squad under the age of nineteen.

After another Gloucester drive over the line Rob Elloway emerged from the bottom of the pile, Hartpury College's James White and Rory Teague then finished off the students. Winger White completing a good back's move whilst Teague gathered his own chip and chase to score.

Full back Neil Hunter kicked three, second half, conversions to add to two penalties scored in the first half.

"This was a very pleasing all round performance" said Academy Director Carl Douglas.

2002/2003 Table

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	TB	LB	PTS
LEICESTER TIGERS	8	8	0	0	267	122	6	0	38
GLOUCESTER	7	5	1	1	224	117	2	1	25
BRISTOL SHOGUNS	7	5	2	0	258	133	3	1	24
N'CASTLE FALCONS	6	4	1	1	180	106	4	1	23
LONDON WASPS	8	4	4	0	199	199	3	1	20
BATH RUGBY	7	3	4	0	173	181	3	0	15
WORCESTER	7	2	5	0	175	251	4	1	13
LONDON IRISH	7	2	5	0	159	198	3	1	12
NEC HARLEQUINS	6	2	4	0	114	151	1	2	11
N'HAMPTON SAINTS	7	2	5	0	160	218	2	0	10
SALE JETS	5	2	3	0	144	129	1	0	9
SARACENS	7	1	6	0	91	339	1	0	5

"This was a very good result for a very young team playing against a much bigger side".

GLOUCESTER U21 41
WASPS U21 12

The Gloucester U21 side maintained their challenge at the top of the U21 Zurich Premiership with a 41-12 demolition of London Wasps.

Before the game Gloucester, in third and Wasps in fourth position were separated, only on points scored. In terrible conditions however, the Gloucester side produced a strong all round display to send an emphatic message to their closest challengers.

Gloucester rampaged into a 16-0 half time lead with a converted try from Nick Southern, who burst up field after a planned move and side-stepped the Wasps full back before crossing the white wash and three penalties from young full back Andy Frost who kicked

magnificently all night. In the second half Gloucester scored four more tries, to end any hint of a Wasps fight back.

First back row Luke Narrowway, then hooker Rob Elloway were driven over after strong forward play, then Jon-Paul Goatley, playing out of position on the left wing finished off a great move involving good interplay between forwards and backs.

Gloucester's fifth and final try came from substitute back row Duncan White who came off the bench to score another well worked try.

Promising half back pairing of Brad Davies and Matt Brittan controlled play well with good hands and a strong tactical kicking display and with Frost in rare form with the boot Gloucester were always in control of this hard fixture.

Both the U21's and the U19s have fixtures planned against Northampton this weekend.

GLoucester United 44 PLYMOUTH ALBION UNITED 07

The United's next game is away at Harlequins on Monday 2nd December. Kick off 7.30pm.

UNITED FRONT

2002/2003 UNITED FIXTURES

An impromptu firework display greeted the two teams last night, but it was the visiting Plymouth team that started with a bang. It took the home side ten minutes to find their stride, by which time Plymouth full back John Fabion had already missed two shots at goal. The Gloucester United side, packed with players keen to make an impression on the 1st team management watching in the stands showed superior muscle and stamina that eventually won through.

1st team squad member Josh Frape opened the scoring, crashing over from twenty metres out after a good break from centre Andy Frost and a bulldozing run from Adam Caves. The second came in similar fashion from Zimbabwean number 8 Matt Evans, who cut a bruising line through the would be defence. Simon Amor converted and added another penalty but had a rather mixed night with the boot.

Gloucester had established a healthy fifteen-nil lead after a quarter of the game but despite electrifying breaks from Frost, Tom Beim and strong counter attacking from Chris Catling, who looked imperious at full back, the United had to wait until the second half to add to their tally.

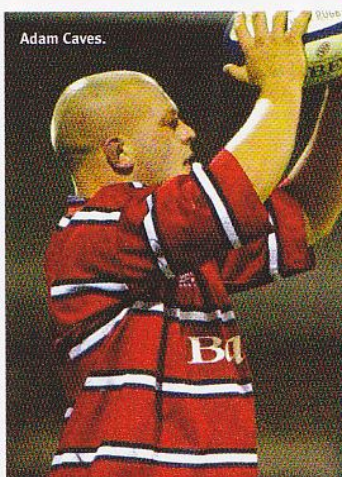
United coach Ian Smith made three changes at half time with Clive Stuart-Smith, Frape and the injured Caves being replaced by Brad Davies, Thinus Delpont and Rob Elloway respectively. Stuart-Smith's departure, after another promising game meant a move to scrum half for the versatile Amor, he teamed up with the young Davies at ten and the young fly half immediately set about dictating the game with good tactical kicks and swift hands. The three substitutes made an immediate impact and it was from Davies's touch find from a penalty deep in the Plymouth twenty-two that set up Gloucester's first score in the second half. The lineout was controlled well and Argentinean prop Rodrigo Roncero was driven over to score. Delpont took over the kicking duties and slotted the extras.

Versatile back row-come-lock Nick Southern then added Gloucester's fourth. After sustained pressure on the Plymouth line Southern burst in on the left wing from a sharp Amor Pass. The Gloucester team then stepped up a gear sensing that the visitors were tiring. Delpont burst through to score a fifth and Frost stepped inside weak defence to add a sixth in quick succession. Both players, now in the centres were leaving a trail of defenders in their wake each time they stepped on the gas.

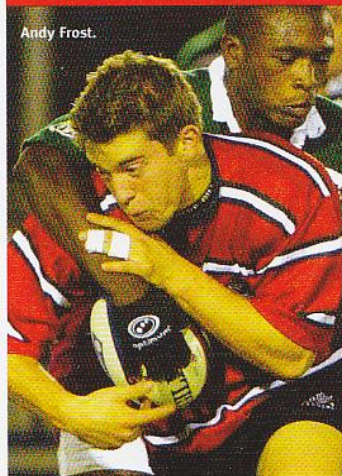
Tom Beim looked sharp all night and it was his electric break that started the move for Gloucester's seventh and final try. Andy Frost, a young centre with a good turn of pace carried the move on and after good hands, U21 lock Mark Rimmer, the biggest right wing on display, stepped in off his right foot and burst through two tackles to score.

Credit to the Plymouth side that never gave up and were rewarded with a try of their own from former Gloucester scrum half Nigel Cane who was driven over to score. Fabion fared better than his initial penalty attempts and slotted the conversion.

23 Sept 02	19:30	H	Leicester	W	24-03
30 Sept 02	19:30	H	Worcester		Postponed
07 Oct 02	19:30	A	Northampton	W	8-15
28 Oct 02	19:30	H	Plymouth Albion	W	44-7
02 Dec 02	19:30	A	Harlequins		
30 Dec 02	19:30	H	Northampton		
07 Jan 03	19:30	A	Newport		
27 Jan 03	19:30	A	Bristol		
10 Feb 03	19:30	H	Coventry		
24 Feb 03	19:30	A	Worcester		
10 Mar 03	19:00	A	Leicester		
07 Apr 03	19:30	H	Harlequins		
28 Apr 03	19:30	H	Newport		



Adam Caves.



Andy Frost.

HEAD 2 HEAD

Strengths

As a seasoned Cherry and White, Cornwell now has a lot of responsibility resting on his shoulders. He is one of Gloucester's senior players and has to take on the mantle of leader in a number of situations. He has been an ever-present in the Gloucester side this season and is in rare form.

"My lineout work is good, but that is why I am in the team", comments Cornwell. This statement says nothing for his ability in the loose where he has shown excellent hands and is not unaccustomed to scoring the odd try or two.

Weaknesses

As such a tall man Cornwell has to work very hard on his defensive positioning in one-on-one and in group situations. While this is hardly a weakness for the towering lock, he has spent a lot of time working with defensive Guru Dave Ellis to develop his technique.

High and Lows

Cornwell was adamant that last year the Club he loved so much needed to start winning trophies. He felt he had been at the Club altogether too long and the squad altogether too talented for the Cherry and Whites not to be winning something.

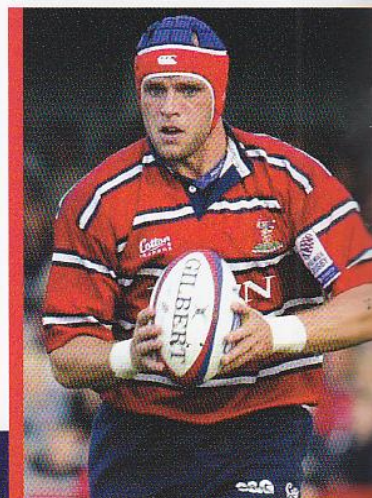
The time came at the end of last season with a thrilling finale at Twickenham and Gloucester's first major bit of silverware for twenty years. On the day though, a broken wrist, sustained against Bath in the last game of the regular season, kept the giant lock on the sideline. The day became one of mixed emotions for the towering lock.

"That was brilliant for the Club. I was there for the weekend with the team, in the changing rooms before and after the game and it was something that I will never forget. But it was a strange time for me, I had played a lot of rugby to get us to that position but on the day I was out injured. Looking back though it's great to be part

of something special like that and I hope to do it again this year. Maybe we can even go bigger and better", says Cornwell.

Cornwell on Northampton

"It's like playing Leicester at home or Bath at home, they are another big rugby town with good support, both home and away. They are usually very big and tough up front, and traditionally very strong around the ruck and maul area. We know that it will be another big challenge this weekend and we need to put right what happened last weekend", explains Cornwell.



So, welcome the Saints. Actually Gloucester have extended that a bit too much lately as Northampton have won here on two of their last three visits. Kingsholm form however remains a strong building block for the club, and there's an air of invincibility about the place at the moment. I just hope I'm not tempting fate saying that.....

Conversation about a winning team can crop up in the most unlikely places. What's left of my hair

was Wasps' gain. If I was Nigel Melville I'd just tell the boys to treat every Northampton player today as if they were Lawrence Dallaglio. The blood would surely be boiling. A Saint he is not.

My colleague Peter Matthews, who covers the football for BBC Radio Gloucestershire, has recently finished a book about the Steve Cotterill era at Cheltenham Town, and there were some interesting insights into people management.



IAN RANDALL
BBC RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE

was being cut the other day when the man doing it said how Nigel Melville was also a customer. The polite and efficient Nigel the press see every week both on match days and at training isn't just "put on" for the media - according to the man with the scissors, Nigel's enjoying life down here both inside and outside rugby, though events at Adams Park last Saturday must have tested his temper.

I was astonished at Nigel Williams' lack of action towards Lawrence Dallaglio. I have never seen so much back chat between a player and a referee go unpunished, and it was hard not think that Williams wasn't actually running the match. Officials in other sports wouldn't have stood for it, and surely that's the only way to stamp it out. Talking of stamping, the loss of Adam Eustace for his early indiscretion will be a painful penalty to pay, especially for a player who's played very little in 2002 because of injury.

The question now is how Gloucester respond to the first defeat. For 40 minutes the team coped manfully, but those first 10 minutes in the second half proved pivotal. One point was salvaged by Henry Paul's late penalty goal, and you couldn't find fault for will or effort - but the loss of Eustace

Cotterill spoke of "energizers" and "energy sappers" - players who exude the positive and those who don't. It's a bit like the one bad apple theory - leave it at the bottom of the barrel and it will rot and effect the rest. At Gloucester at the moment, Andy Gomarsall's form would make him a big energizer, while the likes of Jake Boer and Terry Fanolua and skipper Phil Vickery would be constants. It's hard to think of a "sapper" in the current squad, which would go a long way to explaining why the team is where it is.

Those of you unable to travel to the Wasps match last week may have listened to our commentary either on the radio or via the club website. The technical facilities at Adams Park, of course, were vastly superior to those in Italy for the Viadana match, when once again we as a radio station faced a barrage of criticism for things beyond our control. Let's face facts. Rugby is backward off the field at club level compared to other sports.

Football would never allow a team to be in contention for promotion to the Premiership with a ground that has no cover and no seating (Birmingham/Solihull), and at Viadana, we have a team competing in the equivalent of the Champions League with 1 phone point in their

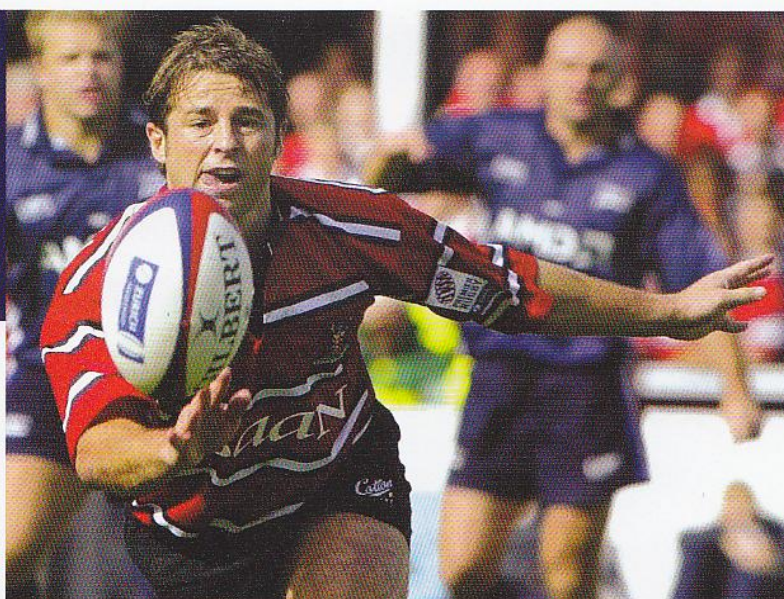
press box. We faced similar problems in Rome 2 seasons ago, and had to solve them in the best way we could. No other radio station sent a reporter (though obviously Alastair Downey was there for "The Citizen", and we updated the game every 10 minutes. I expect there to be no such issues in Perpignan or Munster.

As for today, Saints come into the game off the back of a narrow win away against London Irish.

In Grayson & Dawson they have a strong combination at half back - though Dawson is another "chatterbox" - Beal and Cohen are talented runners and Budge Poutney is as consistent a back row forward as there is in the Premiership. Last Saturday's result ended an unbeaten run of 8 matches. Time to start another one this afternoon....

B B C

C'mon Glaws !



Andy Gomarsall,
currently a big energizer.

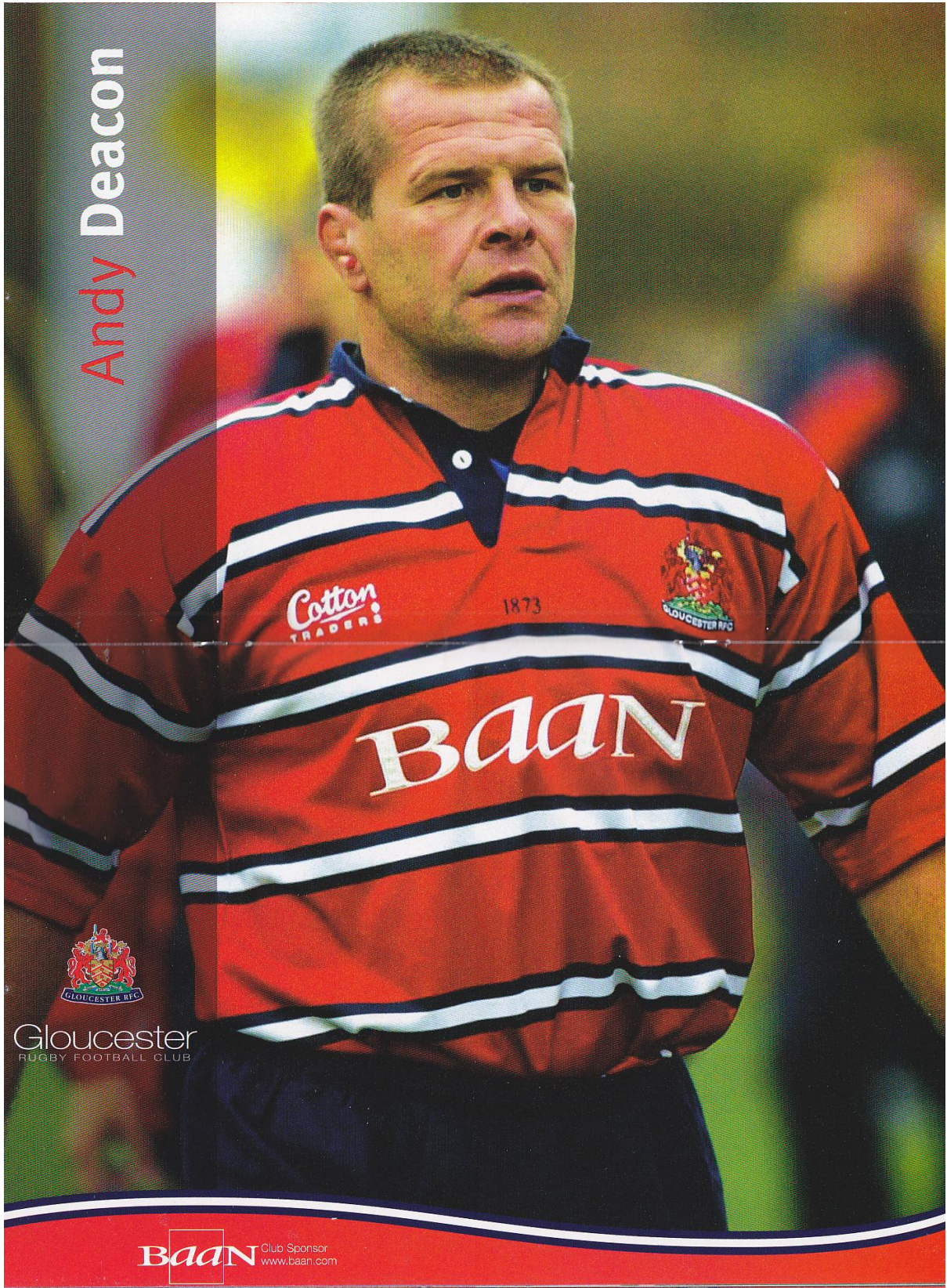
RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE


104.7 FM & 1413 AM

B B C

FIRST FOR COVERAGE OF THE CHERRY & WHITES

Andy Deacon




Gloucester
RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

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PLAYER PROFILE

IF YOU'RE GOOD ENOUGH YOU'RE YOUNG ENOUGH

It's Monday night, 5.30pm, two hours before the Gloucester United team take on visitors Plymouth Albion. The player's area is a buzz with Academy and 1st team squad member's activity. Everyone involved is showing signs of nervous energy ahead of the game, as all are keen to make a good impression.

Andy Deacon though has seen it all before. The veteran prop, described as the last of his kind, those seasoned veterans who made the transition from amateur status to professional and beyond, is quietly mulling over the night's prospects and ensuring that son Ollie is behaving himself at a ground he considers a second home.

Whilst he admits that the butterflies still get into his stomach before each game, time and experience has taught Deacon to cope with pre-match nerves. He takes time out of his pre-match preparation to discuss his position within the squad and the role of mentor, which he plays to all the young bucks that are setting the world alight around him.

Regardless of age and rank, Deacon remains almost a father figure to the whole squad. No player, whether he is a British Lion, with a multitude of international caps or a young cub, just making his way in the professional squad, is spared from a tongue lashing or a quiet, well designed, comment if Deacon feels they are not pulling their weight.

He has seen a number of changes in his years at Kingsholm, a number of coaching teams have come and gone, the games ethos has transformed from a hobby to a job, and Gloucester

have signed some of the biggest names in international rugby. One thing though has remained constant, his commitment to the Gloucester cause and his ability to hold down a first team place.

"When new coaches have come in and there have been a few over the time I have been here, everyone wanted me to keep playing with them or under them, and that didn't change with Nigel and Dean and I am just happy to be in the squad", says the prop who signed another one year deal at the start of the new season.

The former drayman began his Gloucester career in 1988, making his debut for a United side against local rival's Cheltenham. At this time, team-mate's Clive Stuart-Smith and Marcel Garvey would have been around five years old and barely out of kindergarten. He has since amassed 226 appearances for the Cherry and Whites with 17 tries over the course of fifteen seasons but like a well-tuned motor engine he just keeps on going.

The secret to Deacon's longevity, apart from an ultra professional attitude, is very simple. The thing that keeps driving him on and putting in the graft is the honour and the privilege he feels about putting the Cherry and White shirt on.

"It's an honour to play for Gloucester. We are not in the real world here, playing a professional sport. We are very privileged to do what we are doing and I feel very privileged and that is what keeps me going. I am as enthusiastic as ever to be playing for Gloucester and to play well", admits Deacon. ►►

PLAYER PROFILE

Before the start of this season speculation mounted that Deacon, who was expected to lead the United team in their come back season would take a step back from first team rugby. Not a chance, instead he continues to demand selection, albeit behind Phil Vickery, who he describes as probably the best number 3 in the World at the moment.

Whilst his selection for the United might be a neat way to complete his rugby journey, back from whence he came, the book on Deacon's Rugby career is by no means closed and he is about to write another chapter this next month.

"It was bound to be talked about. I'm 37 and maybe people think I am coming to the end of my playing career so they have that attitude. But the attitude of the coaching staff is that it is not just to bridge the gap between colt rugby and senior rugby, but it is also chance for 1st team players to stay match fit and get games in. It's exactly the same for me. I am lucky enough to captain the side but if players aren't playing for the first team, they play for the United, that's the deal", says Deacon.

Whilst he pulled all the playing resources together and lead the United side to another strong victory on Monday night, Deacon's role within the squad will see him take on more front line action over the next month. The Autumn international series kicks off next week and if, as expected, Gloucester lose two first choice props in messieurs Woodman and Vickery, not only will Deacon take on the mantle of first choice number three, but the squad will need to utilise all of his experience, particularly away at Welford Road, the meanest of grounds for visiting teams.

Two seasons ago, Deacon lead a Gloucester team to within seconds of victory, with a try from the prop to boot. This season, Gloucester know that if they are to maintain their challenge at the top of the table this next phase of premiership action will be crucial.

"It is like a mini series, with England playing over three weeks. Hopefully I will be picked to play and I am looking forward to the challenge. I want to play to the best of my ability and draw on all my experience".

Deacon at 37 remains the oldest player to be registered with a Premiership Club. The visit of today's opponents

Northampton is significant because on their books, the Saints have a young fly half named Ben Russell, who at 17 is the youngest. The two players have trodden completely different paths to Premiership rugby. Russell is part of the Northampton Academy squad and has enrolled on a degree as part of his development. Deacon meanwhile walked the tried and tested 'if you are good enough for a local Club you are welcome to come and have a go with us' route.

"I don't think he will be playing when he gets to my age, I am the last of my era to be still playing. I don't think he would want to either. He has a good education and can fall back on that later in life", commented Deacon after meeting the young Russell with Rugby World last month.

Deacon the sage was asked what advice he would give to Russell and indeed any young player trying to make the grade. For someone who has been at the top for so long the answer will not surprise readers.

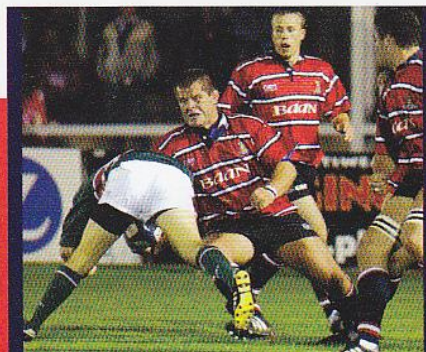
"I told him to be patient, things don't happen over night. You have one good game and everybody builds you up, but they also shoot you down", explained Deacon. "You have to be strong willed as sometimes things don't go well but you need the attitude to keep going".

The attitude to keep going is something Deacon certainly has. As long as he feels he is able to keep pulling on the Cherry and White jersey, he will.

"As long as I have the desire and the physical attributes to keep going. You don't know until you get there what you want to do. I still get the same feelings I did ten years ago, it's still a nice feeling especially in front of your home crowd. You always look forward to a Saturday at Kingsholm it's a special occasion every time I play".

Today could be another special occasion for Deacon.

You can read all about when Deacon and Russell met each other in Rugby World's January edition, which comes out at the beginning of next month. ■





KINGSHOLM SATURDAY 12 OCTOBER 2002



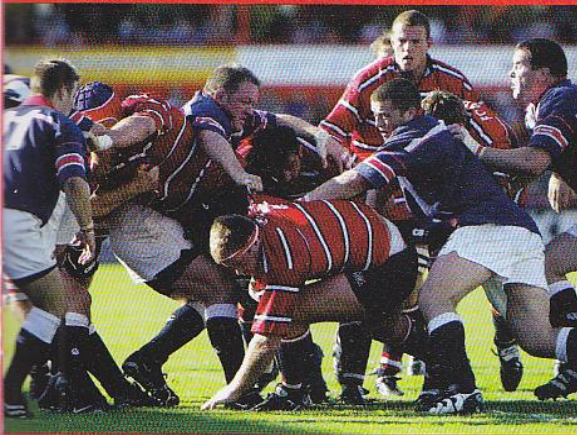
GLOUCESTER 35

TRIES: GARVEY, BOER (2), MERCIER
 CONVERSIONS: MERCIER (3) PENALTIES: MERCIER (3)

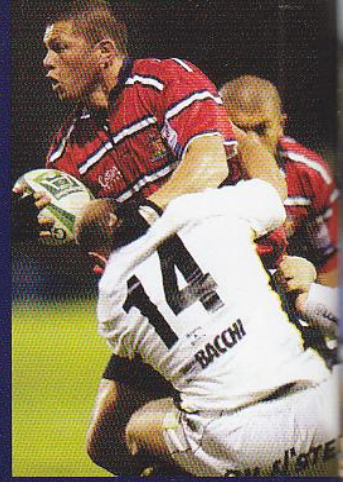


MUNSTER 16

TRIES: STRINGER CONVERSIONS: O'GARA
 PENALTIES: O'GARA (3)



(Top Left) Marcel Garvey breaks away from Rob Henderson.
 (Top Right) Azam throws in at a Gloucester lineout.
 (Middle Left) Peter Buxton breaks through Munster's defence.
 (Middle Right) Andy Gomarsall rounds Munster's Jeremy Staunton.
 (Bottom Left) Tom Beim squeezes through the Munster defence.



STADIO LUIGI ZAFFANELLA FRIDAY 18 OCTOBER 2002



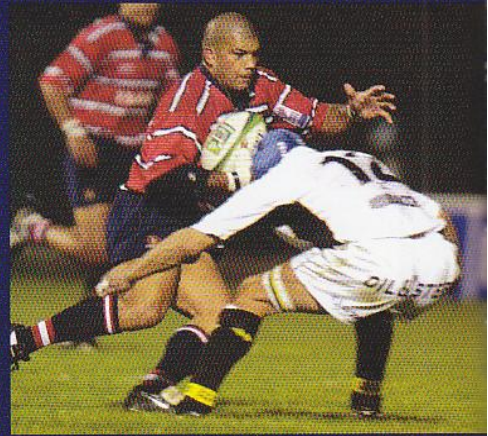
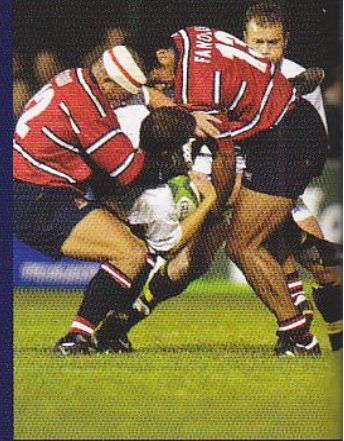
VIADANA 28

TRIES: CASPER (2), FRASCA, DOLCETTO
CONVERSIONS: CASPER (2), R PEDRAZZI (2)

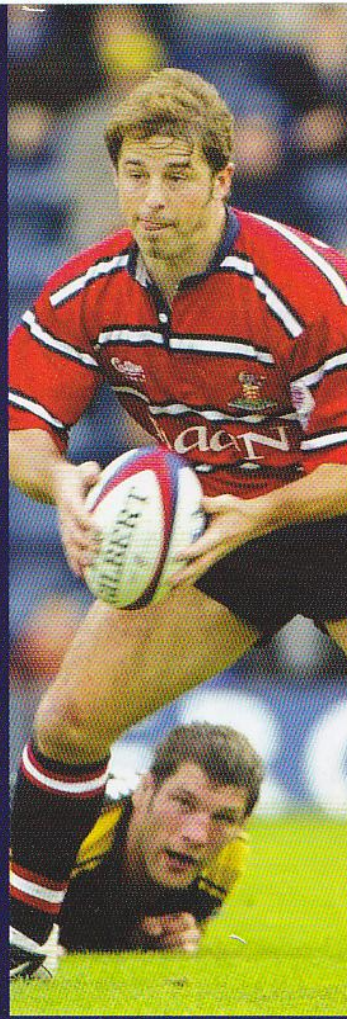
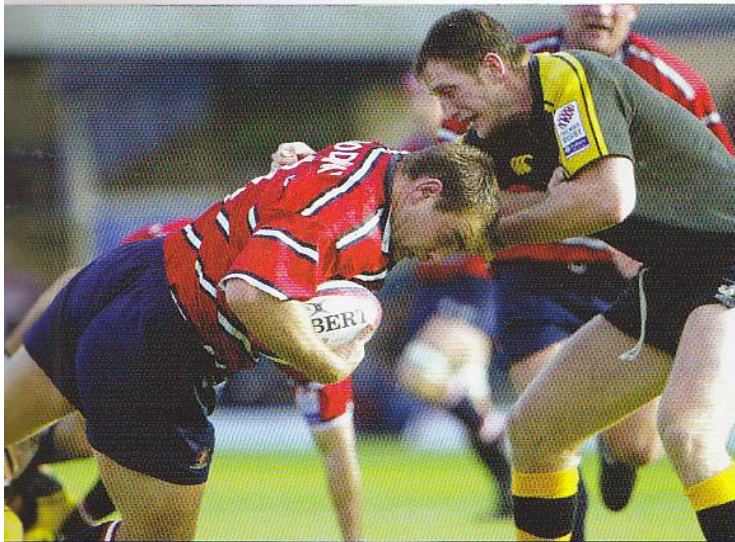


GLOUCESTER 80

TRIES: S-DANIEL (3), FANOLUA (3), PAUL (2), RONCERO, BOER,
FORRESTER, GARVEY CONVERSIONS: MERCIER (10)



(Top Left) Andy Gomarsall starts another attack.
(Top Right) Henry Paul tries to get the ball away in contact.
(Upper Middle) (L) Robert Todd (R) Terry Fanolua show rock solid defence.
(Middle Left) James S-Daniel in try scoring action.
(Middle Right) Robert Todd on the charge.
(Bottom Left) Terry Fanolua scores a try.



ADAMS PARK SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER 2002



LONDON WASPS 23

TRIES: VAN GISBERGEN, LEWSEY, SHAW

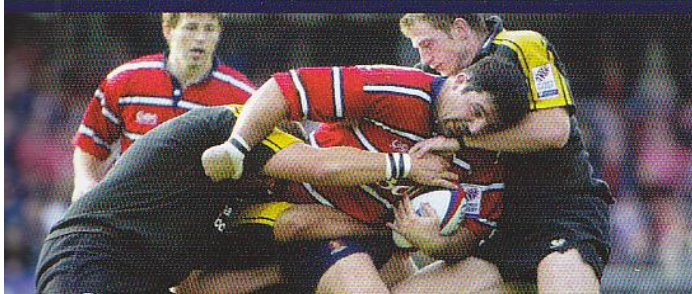
CONVERSIONS: LOGAN PENALTIES: LOGAN (2)



GLOUCESTER 16

TRIES: FANOLUA CONVERSIONS: MERCIER

PENALTIES: MERCIER (2), PAUL



(Top Left) Trevor Woodman charges through the Wasps defence.

(Top Right) Simon Shaw looks on from the floor at Andy Gomarsall.

(Middle Left) Josh Lewsey is unable to stop Terry Fanolua going over for his first half try.

(Middle Right) Henry Paul leaps over Wasps Kenny Logan.

(Bottom Left) Olivier Azam is held by Wasps (L) Will Green and (R) Richard Birkett.

Fans Eye View

With Bob Fenton

That European Cup was a bit of a laugh wasn't it. All those pundits who said we would struggle against Munster were forced to eat their words after they were summarily dispatched by an outstanding performance, and Viadana provided a perfect opportunity for various players to up their try count for the season.

The post match party after the Munster game was a treat, those boys knew how to party and despite the loss were in good spirits and were generally complimentary about Gloucester. The addition of an Irish band was a bit much for me though, do you think they will put on a traditional English folk band for us at Thurmond Park. I hope not...

For those of us stuck at home and unable to travel to Italy, trying to keep up with the result from the game proved to be a bit of a trial. Radio Gloucester tried hard but appeared to have forgotten the charger for the mobile phone, and there was no on-line link to be found. The job of finding out what was happening wasn't helped by whichever idiot was responsible for tapping the scores into the Teletext system.

Like everyone else in the City I dialled up page 371 at about 8:15pm to be greeted with the score 'Viadana 24 - Gloucester 0'. My exact words cannot be repeated in a family publication, suffice to say they contained one or two choice expletives. Things were not helped by she who must be obeyed saying somewhat smugly "That's not what you expected to see, is it!"

To bloody right it wasn't!!!! Gloucester Royal was swamped with guys wandering in clutching their chests, and every shop in the city sold out of Double A batteries as people re-charged their pacemakers. Can you sue an organisation for mass mental cruelty? If you can, they have had it!

A lot of people wonder where the paranoia of your average Gloucester supporter comes from. Is it any wonder we all walk around with a variety of nervous tics and twitches when they do this to us?

The worst thing was that having seen the score, and gone through the "It must be a mistake!" phase, you start totting up what a reverse like that means. Before long you find yourself working out the '...that means we have to beat Perpignan home and away, and Munster in Limerick...' permutations to ensure qualification to the next round. Sad, very sad...

Final word on Viadana must go to the carriers of the 'Shed on Tour' St George's Cross (too many names to mention here). These guys are at every game, home or away, and deserve huge credit for their dedication. Not only do they create a little bit of the Shed everywhere they go, and are ambassadors for Gloucester rugby - you never hear a bad word said about them by an opposition supporter, quite the reverse in fact.

However there must be some concern as to how they are going to get all the fixtures on the flag now - best start the search for an even bigger one for next season, boys!

But now it's time to put the glamorous world of the European Cup on hold for a few weeks and get back to the humdrum bread and butter stuff that is the Zurich Premiership, and the little matter of Wasps and Northampton in consecutive weeks.

Okay we suffered our first reverse of the season at Adams Park last weekend, and in a sort of déjà vu moment we had a player sent off just as we did when we went to the plastic dustbin (aka Loftus Road) last season. This time, though, instead of succumbing to a 44 - 9 hammering as



we did back then, we showed immense character and shrugged off having the handicap of playing 77 minutes with 14 men, and still came away with a point.

Overall there were probably more plus points than minus ones to be taken from the game. As well as learning that this really is a special Gloucester side, we learned that bit-part referees from Wales should not be allowed in charge of showpiece Premiership games, especially ones that are on TV.

As one Gloucester player remarked after the game - and I won't name him in case he gets into trouble - "Little wonder Welsh rugby is in a bit of a state if they have guys like him in charge each week."

You do have to wonder why one of the top English referees was not in control of the game. With only one other Premiership match taking part that day it's not as if they were all booked to appear somewhere else.

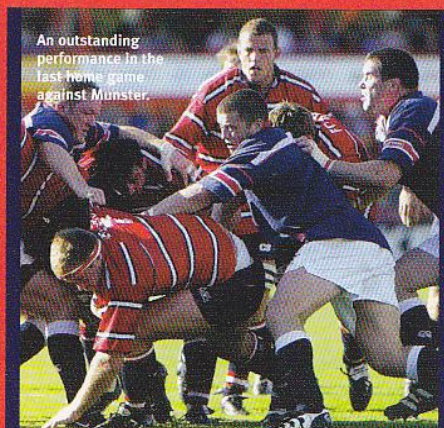
Having said that there was one person on the pitch who seemed to be under the illusion that he is a top referee and he was in charge - step forward please, Gloucester's old friend Mr Laurence Dallaglio...

A word about Wasps new home at High Wycombe - great little stadium, really good facilities and helpful polite staff - shame they had to bring that hopeless 'MC', the insulting 'theme tunes' for visiting teams, the 'canned' cheering and overly loud music when Wasps score with them.

If only they had some decent supporters and some decent chants they could generate a bit of excitement of their own without the artificial rubbish. Apart from the occasional shout of "Wasps, Wasps, Wasps" (and I looked around half expecting to be the victim of a marauding swarm of the little beasts) we heard nothing from them - and they were easily drowned out by Danny 'Fog Horn' Rumble and his one-man rendition of 'Gloucester Boys'. I got my hearing back some time on Sunday afternoon, if you're interested, Danny...

So on to today's visitors Northampton - another team who insist on bringing their own referee with them - Hi Matt! We played them just four days after the debacle at Wasps last April and, in case you need reminding, they stuck 58 points on us.

A bit of pay back for that score line won't go amiss...



Peter Arnold

THE MILLSTONE HAS BEEN REMOVED

All right, so we got to October 26th before we lost our first match. Nothing to be ashamed of in that, and I often think that an unbeaten record can be a millstone round the neck. In my experience it can lead to a side becoming more concerned with not losing than by going all out to win. The result can be boring, negative rugby and inevitable losses, anyway.

Not that there's any danger of that from this Gloucester side, as they showed at High Wycombe last Saturday.

Quite simply, you're not going to beat a side like Wasps, on their own turf, with fourteen men. In the circumstances, many a team would have buckled down, gone into its shell, and tried to tough it out. And then lost. Not so Gloucester. Sitting in front of the box, watching the Sky coverage, it seemed to me that all the brilliant, inventive back play was coming from the Cherry and Whites. Every single one of the backs had at least one moment of glory, and there were even times, defying all logic, when one felt they might even pull it off. It was quite admirable, in a 'Charge of the Light Brigade' sort of a way. If we go on playing like that, and don't come out on top of the pile, I, for one, will still be perfectly satisfied.

To play a man short for virtually all the game, but still come away with a bonus point, while denying the home side one of their own, is no mean achievement.

Let me take you back to one week last April. That was the period of the Interregnum, after Philippe St André had departed, and before Nigel Melville took full control. Over those few days we suffered two right royal thumpings, results which, in the end, made the difference between coming second in the table and a mere third.

The two teams concerned? Wasps and Northampton. Wasps are now water under the bridge. We have a point to prove with the Saints.

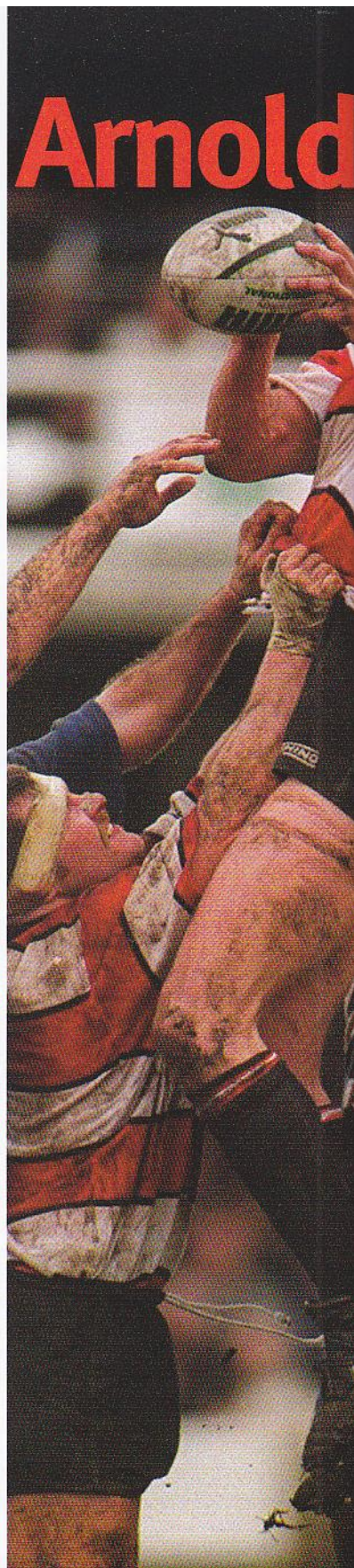
Northampton - you have been warned.

FIFTEEN TO ONE

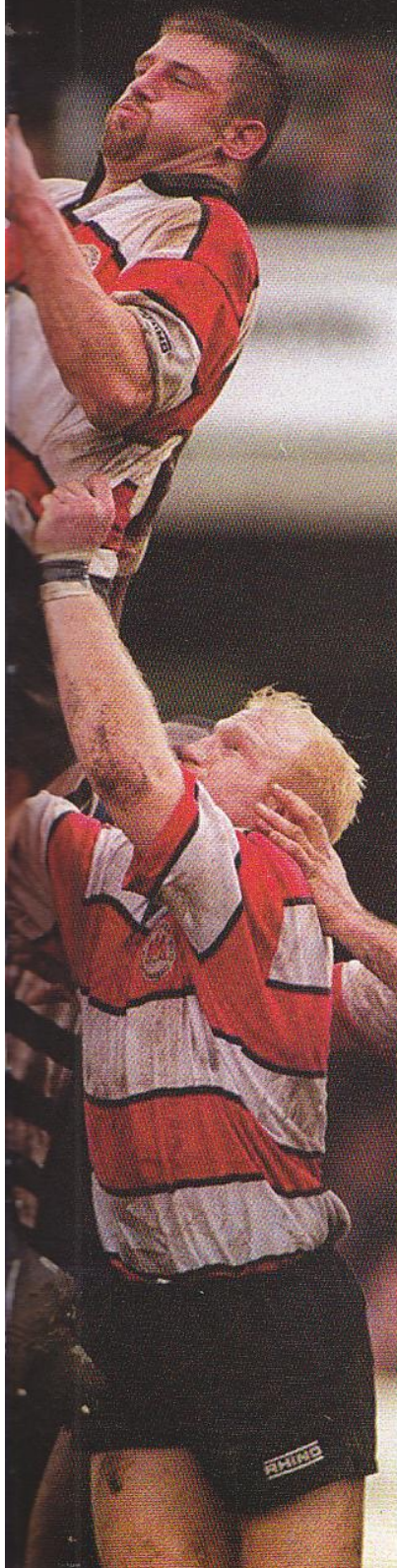
I couldn't help feeling sorry for Northampton a week or two ago. They went down to Biarritz in the Heineken Cup, courtesy of the last kick of the match after, what my informant reckoned, was an inordinate amount of injury time.

We can certainly relate to that. Over the past few seasons we've lost quite a few games which we could, and should, have won, through last-gasp penalties, slight losses of concentration, or unkind decisions by the officials. This season, the Gods of Away Matches have generally smiled on us, and last-gasp results have gone our way. Although there was that final-minute Ollie Barkley penalty to tie the game at the 'Rec', you recall.

The perpetrator of Northampton's unfortunate demise was our old mate



Dave Simms, might be displaying his awesome skills at Kingsholm once again, just before Christmas.



Dimitri Yachvili, who might have been playing today if he hadn't gone back to France during the close season. His unconcerned penalty broke a 20-20 stalemate which looked as if it would have been a fair reflection of the game, had it been allowed to stand.

So, the Saints were beaten by one Gloucester man. Today they have fifteen to cope with.

'SIMMO' BACK ?

I see that there's a distinct possibility that our ex-Captain, the much-respected and fondly-remembered International lock forward, Dave Simms, might be displaying his awesome skills at Kingsholm once again, just before Christmas.

Exeter, who are going well under his guidance, could well be our opponents in the Powergen Cup to be played over the weekend of December 21st and 22nd.

There are a couple of hurdles to be overcome first. There is the little matter of defeating Henley - which they may have done by the time you read this - and then Exeter have to get past either Nottingham or London Welsh. You may recall that we entertained Henley at Kingsholm in the Cup just a few seasons ago.

On current form, Dave Simms' side is quite capable of making it this far, and it would be nice to see him again, albeit wearing the wrong colours. For that matter, Exeter would be very welcome visitors in any case. They were a regular feature of Gloucester's fixture list for many years, before the advent of professionalism. From that point of view, we wouldn't mind if our visitors were London Welsh. There is a long history of friendly relations there, too. Not excluding what is probably Gloucester's most famous knock-out competition victory of all,

when we defeated an Exiles side which included eight British Lions. Thanks to a try by Mike Potter, as I recall.

Of course, that was in the days before everything changed, and London Welsh descended into the lower regions of the Leagues. The days, in fact, before, as one unkind journalist put it, Old Deer Park became 'Oh dear!' Park.

On balance, however, I think I would like it to be Exeter here on the weekend before Christmas. The idea of Simmo jumping against Fids and Pasty is a mouth-watering one, and would make a super run-in to the Festive Season. Although I suspect there would be precious little Peace and Goodwill about it.

NOMINATIONS PLEASE

I note that Bristol's Garath Archer, obviously wanting his England squad place back, was quoted as saying, "If there are four better locks around, I'd like to know about them."

How about Rob Fidler, Mark Cornwall, Ed Pearce and Adam Eustace for starters ?

AND FINALLY...

I hope you'll pardon me for a little piece of self-indulgence, just for once.

Many years ago, I brought a very pretty girl along to see her first game at Kingsholm. Ten minutes into the game she asked me where the goalkeeper was.

After all this time, I can't remember what my reaction was, but I couldn't have been too hard on her, because today is our 45th Wedding Anniversary. It would be nice if the lads could score one point for every year we've been married. See what you can do, chaps.

Brian Ashton quotes courtesy of Jon Newcombe, Rugby Times.

THE INTERNATIONAL FUTURE'S ACADEMIC

Gloucester has been identified as the production line that will provide players that could win England the World Cup in 2007.

Four of Gloucester's first team squad have been selected for the National Academy, a non-location based development programme that seeks to take the cream of England's developing talent and make them better players.

The programme is a non-age specific and non-time specific programme that starts this year.

"The basic criteria of the National Academy is to set up and deliver a programme aimed at developing world class players", says RFU Performance Director Chris Spice.

James Simpson-Daniel, Marcel Garvey, James Forrester and Henry Paul are the Kingsholm quartet that has been identified as the next wave of international stars.

All four players are regarded as being on the cusp of the full international squad but whilst Forrester and Simpson-Daniel have faced the Barbarians in an England jersey, only Henry Paul has gained a full cap. That being a solitary game against France in last season's Six Nations Championship.

As the cream of English talent though, Chris Spice has indicated that these players are by no means out of the reckoning for a place in next year's World Cup if they progress well enough.

Brian Ashton, formally with Clive Woodward's senior coaching party, is the man charged with overseeing this Academy programme.

Initially he will work with a squad of thirteen, all of whom have been identified as potential World Class players. With such a small elite squad, Ashton will have the chance to focus on individual programmes for each of the players.

The emphasis, says Chris Spice, is on quality rather than

quantity and after identifying the areas of development for the thirteen players, this information will be reported back to the respective Clubs with the intention that this development can continue within their Club environments.

The National Academy squad will meet on Mondays, with the rest of the England Elite player squad to ensure that the Academy players all have access to the senior England coaching team. They will also be provided with full conditioning, nutrition and medical advice.

Brian Ashton the National Academy manager said "Although a lot of attention has been placed on one or two players selected for the Academy, they have all shown progress this season and each has a superb opportunity before them over the next few months to break through to the England squad".

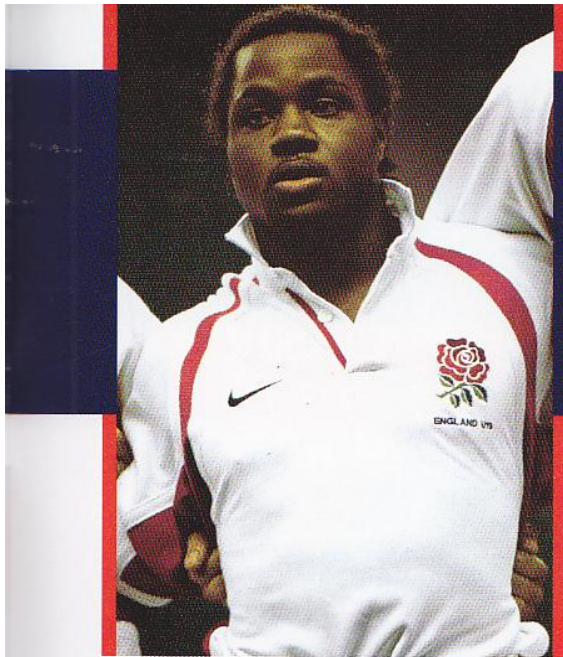
"It's important to make the point that the National Academy is not a closed shop. As players graduate to become permanent members of the senior England squad opportunities will arise for other players with the qualities needed for the Academy", he added.

Henry Paul, the only capped member of the Gloucester quartet said, "It's great. It's a great thing to be involved in. It's a lot of hard work and the England side is so difficult to break into at the moment. I am delighted that Clive Woodward is still thinking of me and it's up to me to keep up the consistency in my game".

Ashton feels that Paul's international future could be at inside centre as he has the all round kicking and passing game to bring others into the game and hurt defences.

James Simpson-Daniel gained his place because, as Ashton describes, he "did what we have been asking English wingers to do for years and attack Jonah Lomu. He was the first to have the confidence to take him on".

"I was delighted to hear about it. The England squads across



Marcel Garvey, one of four Gloucester players in the National Academy Squad.

the country are so strong so to be involved with the top fifty players is something I am over the moon about", admitted Simpson-Daniel.

"Brian is looking at all thirteen of us, deciding what he wants us to work on and then feeding back to the Clubs so they can work on it with you as well. From an individual point of view it sounds brilliant, From England's future point of view if they can work on us know we can develop for years to come", he added.

The young pair that make up the quartet are Forrester and Garvey. Forrester continues to go from strength to strength in the absence of Andy Hazell. Ashton admits that his selection owed much to the fact that the former Gloucester Academy player "was different in a major way and can score tries from 40-50 metres out".

Ashton admits that he has seen little of Garvey, the youngest player in the squad and on his first appearance at the Middlesex sevens, the former Widden Old Boy did not stand out. Garvey though set the world alight this season with dazzling foot work and Ashton explains "Marcel will score you a try from nothing and troubles even the most crowded defences with his speed off the mark".

It is tribute to Gloucester's own Academy and development system, aligned with the policy of the Gloucester management that if they are good enough they are old enough, that has pushed these players to the brink of international selection and as Gloucester will reap the benefits in the mean time Nigel Melville is keen that this process doesn't stop. "Its good that we have young English players coming through, I think it is good for Gloucester as well. Gone are the days

when we used to buy all our players in; we have to develop our own. We have a good Academy structure here and another player to look out for soon is Clive Stuart-Smith. We also have other young players training with the first team now and that is the sort of progression we are trying to make. We want to get some very talented players training with the best coaches and the best players as quickly as we can and it is working well", he said.

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY SQUAD



Tom Palmer
(Leeds Tykes)



Phil Christophers
(Bristol Shoguns)



Henry Paul
(Gloucester)



David Flatman
(Saracens)



Dan Scarbrough
(Leeds Tykes)



James Forrester
(Gloucester)



James S-Daniel
(Gloucester)



Marcel Garvey
(Gloucester)



Ollie Smith
(Leicester Tigers)



Chris Jones
(Sharks)



Andy Titterell
(Sharks)



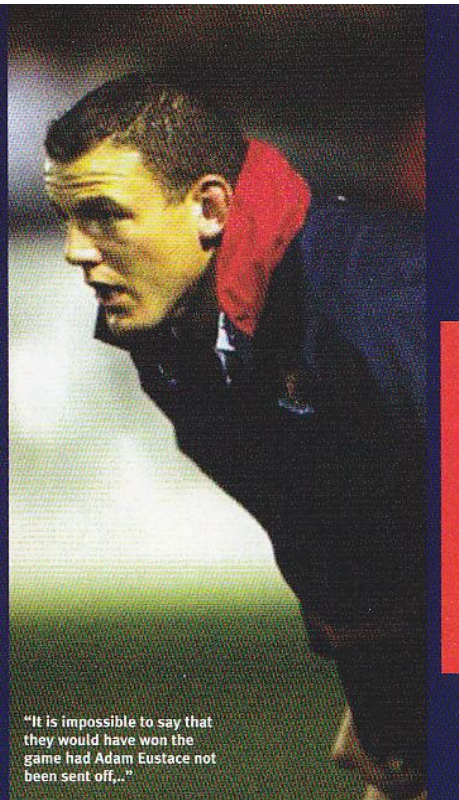
Robbie Morris
(N'hampton Saints)



Mike Worsley
(London Irish)

Gloucester Find Solice In Defeat

Alastair Downey of
The Citizen



"It is impossible to say that they would have won the game had Adam Eustace not been sent off..."

Rumour has it that Gloucester stopped off at an off licence last weekend on their way back from Adams Park. But they had no need to drown their sorrows. In seasons past, you could take it as read that the Gloucester team bus would stop at the nearest hostelry for a thirst-quenching beer or 20, but Nigel Melville has gradually stamped out that tradition - until last weekend that is.

But despite their first league defeat of the season to Wasps, there was a nobility and courage about Gloucester's performance that signified for the first time that they may become real Premiership challengers.

It is impossible to say that they would have won the game had Adam Eustace not been sent off, but all the signs indicated that this Kingsholm vintage is the finest - this squad is the most organised and talented that Gloucester has boasted for many a long year.

Not that the talent was not present before. But it now has a direction and a purpose that is well on the way to maximising its potential. The positive vibes coursing through the squad mean that in the build-up to the visit of Northampton today, director of rugby Nigel Melville and his assistant Dean Ryan would have been able to maintain their momentum.

There were so many positives that emerged from the defeat at Wasps that Melville and his squad would have been capable of building on what they achieved last


Saturday afternoon. Melville is too streetwise to have expected Gloucester to remain unbeaten throughout the season and, in some ways, the loss will have come as a relief. But it was the way they were defeated - still going for the equalising try at the death that would have delighted the Kingsholm chief.

Gloucester work better when they are simply allowed to get on with the job and concentrate on the rugby. They are still a club slightly ill at ease under the spotlight and will be glad to get back down to reality. The defeat puts them within touching distance of the teams chasing them but breaks that aura of invincibility Melville has always been quite keen to avoid.

This afternoon they face a Northampton side boasting one of the best packs in the Premiership, and yes, that includes the Cherry and White eight. This represents the last game before Gloucester lose Phil Vickery and his chums for international duties and those stars will be desperate to bow out with a bang. Gloucester will not have required much motivation for this clash but will have to be careful not to slip up again.

The Saints would relish nothing more than becoming the first team to win at Kingsholm this season. Sit back or lean forward for what should be a beltingly good game.

You can read Alastair Downey everyday in The Citizen.

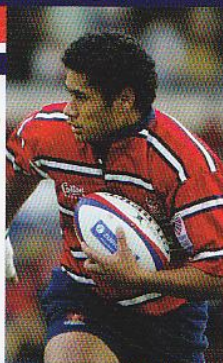
18		9	
GLOUCESTER	V	N'HAMPTON SAINTS	
Henry Paul	15	Nick Beal	
Marcel Garvey	14	Jon Sleightholme	
Terry Fanolua	13	Mark Tucker	
Robert Todd	12	John Leslie (C)	
James Simpson Daniel	11	Ben Cohen	
Ludovic Mercier	10	Paul Grayson	
Andy Gomarsall	09	Matt Dawson	

Trevor Woodman	01	Tom Smith	
Olivier Azam	02	Steve Thompson	
(c) Phil Vickery	03	Robbie Morris	
Adam Eustace	04	Jon Phillips	
Mark Cornwell	05	Mark Connors	
Jake Boer	06	Andrew Blowers	
James Forrester	07	Budge Pountney	
Junior Paramore	08	Grant Seely	

Clive Stuart-Smith	16	Chris Budgen	
Tom Beim	17	Matt Stewart	
Thinus Delport	18	Rob Hunter	
Andy Deacon	19	Mark Soden	
Chris Fortey	20	Johnny Howard	
Peter Buxton	21	James Brooks	
Ed Pearce	22	Chris Hyndman	

ZURICH PREMIERSHIP 2002/03

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	TB	LB	PTS
Gloucester	7	5	1	1	217	122	3	1	26
Leeds Tykes	7	5	1	1	196	141	0	1	23
Northampton Saints	7	5	0	2	179	131	1	1	22
London Wasps	7	4	1	2	207	180	3	1	22
Leicester Tigers	7	4	0	3	179	133	2	1	19
Sharks	7	4	1	2	166	171	1	0	19
Newcastle Falcons	7	3	0	4	146	209	1	1	14
Saracens	7	3	0	4	169	205	1	0	13
NEC Harlequins	6	2	0	4	140	150	1	2	11
Bath Rugby	7	1	2	4	118	166	0	2	10
London Irish	7	1	0	6	136	185	1	2	7
Bristol Shoguns	6	1	0	5	149	209	0	1	5



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Gloucester
 RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB 

GLOUCESTER'S NEXT THREE MATCHES



LONDON IRISH

Zurich Premiership
 Sunday 10th Nov 2002
 Madejski Stadium KO 2.30pm
 Ticket Hotline: 0118 968 1000



LEICESTER TIGERS

Zurich Premiership
 Friday 15th Nov 2002
 Welford Road KO 7.45pm
 Ticket Hotline: 0870 128 3430



LEEDS TYKES

Zurich Premiership
 Sunday 24th Nov 2002
 Kingsholm KO 2.30pm
 Ticket Hotline: 0871 871 8781

PLUS

GLOUCESTER CHERRY PICKERS
 V CZECH REPUBLIC
 KO 4.30pm



THIS WEEKEND'S FIXTURES

Friday 1 November 2002
 Sharks vs Bristol Shoguns

Saturday 2 November 2002
 NEC Harlequins vs Bath Rugby
 Gloucester vs Northampton Saints
 Leicester Tigers vs London Wasps

Sunday 3 November 2002
 Leeds Tykes vs Saracens
 Newcastle Falcons vs London Irish

Ref!Link

TODAY'S MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: J Kaplan (SA)
 1st T.J.: T Spreadbury RFU
 2nd T.J.: D Broadwell RFU