

# Gloucester

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



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MATCH ACTION PICTURES

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

THINUS DELPORT'S  
POWERGEN CUP DIARY

A LOOK AT TODAY'S VISITORS



## VS Newcastle Falcons

ZURICH PREMIERSHIP FIXTURE

SATURDAY 12TH APRIL 2003

KICK-OFF 3.00PM







## WELCOME FROM...

### Charlie Little

Marketing Manager

It is a privilege to be asked to write the welcome page in the first programme since we became the Powergen Cup Winners, 2003. Sounds good doesn't it? Last Saturday was the most perfect day for everyone associated with the Club and a great advert for Gloucester Rugby Club – we should all be very proud of what we achieved last weekend.

But today we are back to the business of the Zurich Premiership and what is promising to be a fascinating and thrilling end to the season. On behalf of everyone at Gloucester Rugby Club can I welcome the Newcastle team and their supporters to Kingsholm for this afternoon's match. Both teams will want the points today for very different reasons and therefore we are guaranteed an enthralling game. Whether it is the Zurich Title, the Heineken Cup, European rugby or the battle to avoid relegation, all 12 Premiership teams have something to play for and therefore the remaining weeks promise to be fascinating.

This page however gives me the opportunity to bring all of our supporters, especially the Season Ticket Holders, up to speed with all the relevant news that maybe of interest.

### Player of the Year (2003)

Following Ludo's success last year, there are number of possible candidates for this season's winner. Your committee have chosen to use voucher 17 within the Season Ticket Book to ensure that each member has one vote for their Player of the Year. Please write your chosen player on the back of Voucher 17 and either post it, hand it in to the ticket office at the Club, or alternatively place it in the boxes provided in the members bar. The deadline for your vote is close of play

on Friday 2nd May and we will announce the winner at the Leicester game.

### Season Tickets (2003/2004)

Proposed by your Season Ticket Holders' committee, next season's Season Ticket Deal will represent even better value for money as we look to extend the committed supporter base that we have. We will look to launch it at the next home game against Harlequins (26th April), but it is true to say that buying your 2003/2004 Season Ticket will be the only way to guarantee your place. 25,000 fans travelled to Twickenham last week and more supporters have been through our turnstiles at Kingsholm than ever before. Kingsholm has already had four complete sellouts this season and with the average attendance for Gloucester home games well over 10,000, unfortunately many supporters have been turned away on match days. We are confident that more will commit to a Season Ticket in time for the new season just to ensure they will not miss out on another year of brilliant rugby.

There are greater savings to be made in the new deal as we reward those who commit to us from the start of the season. I have read with interest many of your views on the Club's official website message board and I hope that you will be pleasantly surprised by what is offered. The member's committee have worked hard on your behalf and there are only 14 days to go until we release it.

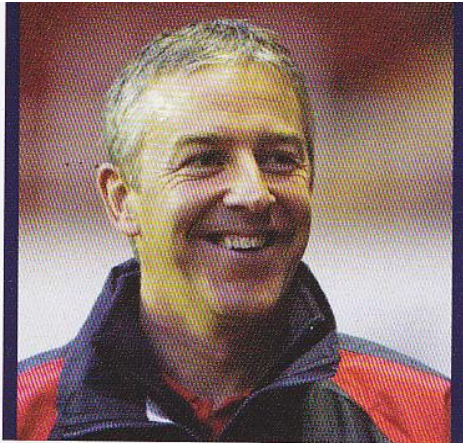
## “LAST SATURDAY WAS THE MOST PERFECT DAY FOR EVERYONE ASSOCIATED WITH THE CLUB...”

### An Evening with 'The Southern Hemisphere'.

Next Tuesday, 15th April, the members committee have organised an evening with Terry, Junior, Jake and Toddy. These four have yet to go in front of the Season Ticket Holders but they take their place from 7:30 in the member's bar. Please bring your books with you to gain entry.

It has been a long time since our last game back in early February, but today starts a run of five vital games for the club. A summary of what happens next can be read on page 27. No-one can be quite sure of what to expect but it starts and finishes here – at Kingsholm, the home of the Powergen Cup Winners. ■





## NIGEL'S NOTES...

**Nigel Melville**

Director of Rugby

It gives me great pleasure to welcome Rob Andrew's Newcastle Falcons to Kingsholm for their afternoon's Zurich Premiership contest. A considerable amount of water has passed under the bridge since our last meeting at Kingston Park last September. It is sometimes hard to believe we are talking about the same season; such is the length of our domestic calendar.

The Falcons have had a difficult season, injuries to key players certainly affected their early season form but the arrival of the Foreign Legion, Mayerhoffer, Andrews and Britz certainly made the necessary impact and recent results have, I'm sure, steadied the nerves of Newcastle owner Dave Thompson. Off the field, Newcastle have continued to grow, not only rugby union in the North East but also their facilities at Kingston Park Stadium. With so much positive hard work and commitment behind the scenes it would not be in the interests of the Zurich Premiership to relegate the Falcons.

At the time of writing, Bath are preparing for their crucial game against London Irish, whatever the result they will still require huge performances against local rivals Bristol and the Falcons to guarantee their survival in the top flight. Whilst the relegation battle commences at one end of the table, the fight for the play-off places promises an exciting climax, at the other. Gloucester, Sale, Wasps and Leicester are all in with a chance, there will be no meaningless fixtures at the end of this season.

Last weekend the 'Cherry and White' army travelled to Twickenham for the Powergen Cup final. Having

been involved in a number of Twickenham final's before I cannot remember one that came close to this season on or off the pitch. To see two Premiership Clubs fill to capacity a 75,000-seater stadium is one thing, but to experience the special atmosphere this created was amazing. Northampton certainly played their part in making this a celebration of everything that is good about the Club game. The game was equal to the occasion, a helter-skelter first half, in which the lead changed seven times, was followed by a superb display by Gloucester in the second half.

It is impossible to thank everyone who played their part on the day; from supporters to backroom staff it was a special performance, one that will live in my memory for years to come – thank you.

**“...a helter-skelter first half, in which the lead changed seven times, was followed by a superb display by Gloucester in the second half.”**

Finally, it was with great sorrow that we heard of the sudden death of former Bristol player and coach Dave Tyler. I have no recollections of Dave as a player, but I am sure he played and coached with the same dedicated calm he exuded whilst working for the RFU. Dave worked tirelessly on behalf of the Premiership Clubs at Twickenham during some of professional rugby's most challenging times. Dave will be missed by so many; our thoughts are with his family at this difficult time. ■



THANK YOU ALSO TO ALL OF YOU WHO MADE THE TRIP TO TWICKENHAM TO SUPPORT US.





## CAPTAIN'S CORNER

### Jake Boer

Match Captain

As an occasion, last Saturday must rank up there with the best moments of my career, if not the best! It was an unbelievable day for the Club and the players. Getting the result in front of 75,000 people, it doesn't get much better than that, especially at a place like Twickenham.

It was obviously a great honour to be Captain on the day and lead the boys out. My biggest fear on the day was that I didn't want to lose, but I was confident in the way that we had trained and prepared for the day and it made my job a lot easier having players in the squad who had played on that stage before. There are some things that can't be learnt without experience.

Andy Deacon was the first up to collect the trophy and that I felt was very fitting, there is no-one at this Club that epitomises what Gloucester Rugby Club is all about more than Deacs. He is here day in, day out, week in, week out so it was great for him and I hope that I have a few more years in me yet to enable me to be in that position in years to come.

Unfortunately for the players, we have had little time to reflect on the Powergen Cup Final win, we will have to wait until the summer to do that, but as professional players we have a job to do and that job started again on Monday morning as we focused on the game today. Obviously, winning the Powergen Cup and achieving our first goal of the season takes the pressure off a bit, but we now have to work very hard to achieve our next goal, which is to finish top and win the Premiership.

Although we are top of the table, winning the

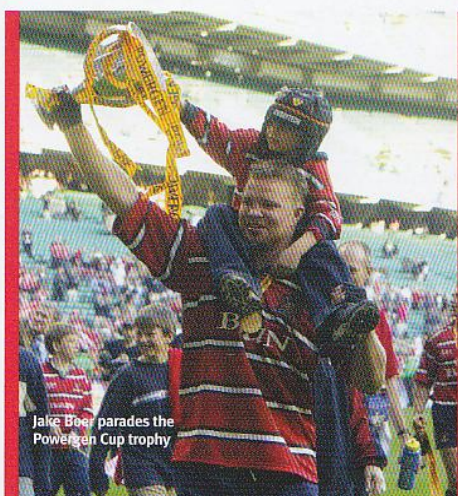
Premiership title will be by no means easy, we have five Premiership games to go and that has to be our priority. We will have to block the Cup win out of our minds for the moment, it was a nice piece of silverware to win but we still have things to achieve this season. We had a great day at the office on Saturday but today we are back at work.

Our opponents today Newcastle are a great side. We went up to Kingston Park earlier this season and scrapped out a win, which was a great result for us, but today there are guys fighting for their positions and a Club that is fighting for its Premiership survival. The Falcons have some class

**“LAST SATURDAY MUST RANK UP THERE WITH THE BEST MOMENTS OF MY CAREER, IF NOT THE BEST!”.**

players in their squad and we will certainly not be underestimating the quality they will bring today. They have had two weeks off, they will have prepared well and they have altered the way they are playing at the moment, we will have to be at our best to get the result again today.

I would like to finish with a message to the fans. At Twickenham on Saturday the atmosphere was electric. On Monday night here at Kingsholm we saw over 2000 people come to welcome us back. The supporters of this Club are with us week in, week out and this week we have seen just what this Club is about. I would like to thank you all once again and hope you stay behind us for what promises to be a very exciting run in to the end of the season. ■



Jake Boer parades the Powergen Cup trophy



# UNITED FRONT

**GLOUCESTER UTD 27**

**28 HARLEQUINS UTD**

Gloucester United last night came within a lick of paint of an unlikely victory against a visiting Harlequins side.

In the eightieth minute Clive Stuart-Smith, who had taken over the kicking duties from the sin binned Simon Amor, lined up a 35 metre penalty attempt, which if successful, would have given the Cherry and Whites a narrow victory.

The kick had the legs but not the direction and as it faded past the right hand post the final whistle blew.

It would have represented an unlikely comeback from a Gloucester side that was well below par and behind on the scoreboard at half time.

At the break the strong and experienced Quins side lead 13-06 with a try from ex Gloucester colt Karl Rudski, and an impeccable kicking display from fly half David Slemen.

Slemen and Amor traded early penalties before Slemen added his second and third successful kicks, a penalty and conversion after lock Rudski had crashed over from ten metres out following good work from the Quins pack.

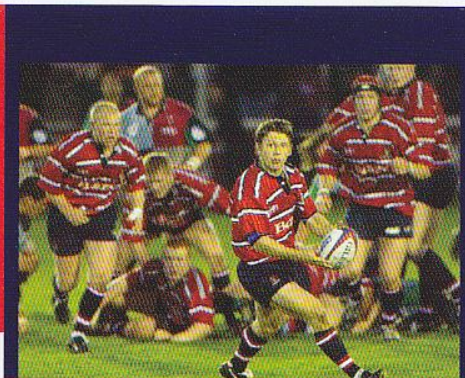
Amor missed his second penalty attempt but landed the third on the half-hour mark after Gloucester had put some good phase play together.

Slemen missed a penalty on the half time whistle and Gloucester were thankful not to be further behind as the Quins pack showed more zest and experience at the breakdowns.

At half time Gloucester were forced to make a change with fly half Brad Davies replacing Jon Goodridge. Davies moved to centre and Daren O'Leary switched to his more accustomed position on the wing.

It was the visiting side however, who scored first after the break with hooker James Hayter being driven over after sustained Quins pressure. Slemen missed the conversion but at 06-18 down Gloucester were staring down the barrel of an embarrassing defeat.

The Quins score stirred the Gloucester side into life. The Gloucester eight began to control the ball and from a second successive lineout catch and drive the forwards set up



Gloucester's first try. From an Ed Pearce catch the ball was swung wide left and recycled. Simon Amor cut the ball back to young winger Mark Foster, who picked an excellent line to carve through the Quins defence to score under the posts.

Amor kicked the conversion and then added a converted try of his own to start a comeback. Brad Davies seemed to be running into Quins cover on the left wing but the former St Peters pupil stepped inside and broke free. He drew full back Williams and with options left and right he gave the scoring pass to Amor, who scampered in unopposed and then dispatched the conversion with ease.

Gloucester led for the first time in the game and Amor had another chance to stretch the home side's advantage but his penalty attempt drifted wide. It mattered little as from the restart Duncan Murray found space on the right wing and with a good turn of pace and side step he was able to slide in the right hand corner. This time Amor was on target from the touchline.

Much of this work was undone however, very swiftly. An eighty-metre run from Matt Moore led to a Quins penalty which cut the Gloucester lead to six and then as Quins increased the pressure the Gloucester lead was conceded as hooker Hayter barged over for his second try of the game.

The move which led to the try was started as Gloucester were penalised for an infringement in front of their posts. It came after the Quins had put Hayter in space on the right wing but as he ignored the obvious overlap that would surely have led to a try he was held up just short. The referee pulled play back and Simon Amor was sent to the sin bin for his intervention at the break down and it was left to fourteen-man Gloucester to fight for the victory.

In the dying moments both Stuart-Smith and Brad Davies had opportunities to kick a match-winning penalty but as the game came down to the final kick Stuart-Smith's last effort was just off the mark.

"We played well in the second half", said United coach Ian Smith "But we should never have been in that position. We have played well below the standard we have set in the United team this year. We gave ourselves a mountain to climb and only got half way up".



So, where were you at Twickenham? The chances are most of you here this afternoon were amongst the many thousands who made last Saturday such a glorious day for everyone connected with the club. The day may have been a long time coming, but it took away all the pain of the defeat by Bath in 1990, and also tied up the first element of a possible Cup and League double. The over-riding thought at the end of the game

been a bitter experience, and I'm not sure I'd fancy them to turn over Toulouse this weekend in the Heineken Cup. Director of Rugby Wayne Smith will take full credit if they do.

Some fans may question why no plans were made for a possible tour of the city should Gloucester win. This may be mentioned elsewhere, but you have to admire the single minded attitude of the club to put that prospect aside until the end of the



**BY IAN RANDALL**  
**BBC RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

was how the value of Gloucester's Academy had shone through, and how, in this round of cuts that seem inevitable, the Academy may suffer. It's a system that has brought through Garvey, Simpson-Daniel and Forrester, all of whom have been spotted and nurtured into the explosive stars they undoubtedly are. Forrester's break to create Garvey's try was sublime, and my "moment of the match."

His knack for being in the right place at the right time, and seizing opportunities when they come along, also sets him apart from others with far more experience.

It was fascinating to see how the game shifted tactically in the second half. The frantic mayhem of the first 40 minutes looked set to continue once Forrester put Gloucester in front for the fourth time in the match, but then came the stranglehold. The Saints rarely posed a threat, and Gloucester squeezed every last drop of energy out of them before delivering the coup de grace with Simpson-Daniel's final try. Losing for a second successive year must have

season, which is the decision they have taken. The Premiership still remains to be won, and that is the benchmark by which teams are measured. 5 matches remain, including today's visit from the Falcons, and surely victory today, and at Sale next Friday would take Gloucester to an almost unassailable position, and ensure another day out at Twickenham at the end of May. The route for a possible tour would be interesting too – one argument might be to open the ground instead, although that would obviously limit the numbers. Something for the club and the city council to ponder when the time comes.

Amongst the euphoria felt on our return journey last Saturday, one name kept cropping up. Andy Deacon. Jake Boer clearly had a full appreciation of what "Deacs" has done for the club, and what he as an individual means to the fans by asking him to go up, along with his son, to collect the Cup. The word "legend" is overused, but his contribution over the years has been colossal, and now, with careful management, his star is arguably higher than ever. Yearly contracts may be the order of the day, but even at 37, there



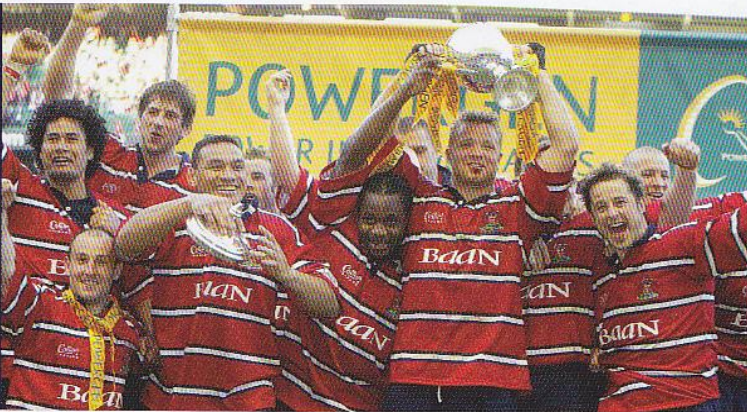
appears no doubt that he should be around again next season, unless, of course, he should decide that to leave on a high would be appropriate. That would be Deacon's choice, and his alone.

It seems a long time ago that Henry Paul kicked that last minute penalty at Newcastle to secure a narrow win back in September. Today's return match sees the Falcons in real danger of relegation, despite having blooded some bright

young talent of their own, especially in the backs. There's a lad called Wilkinson at fly half who may have a big future, though he would hope not in the National Leagues. This is no time for sentiment however, and Gloucester will want to leave Sale, Leicester and Wasps scrambling for the play off places by themselves.

**B B C**

**C'mon Glaws!**



The Boys celebrating at Twickenham last weekend.

**RADIO GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

104.7 FM & 1413 AM

**B B C**

EXCLUSIVE LIVE COMMENTARY BOTH HOME AND AWAY





KINGSHOLM SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2003



# GLOUCESTER 29

TRIES: AZAM, GARVEY CONVERSIONS: MERCIER (2)

PENALTIES: MERCIER (5)



# BATH RUGBY 16

TRIES: BORTHWICK CONVERSIONS: BARKLEY

PENALTIES: BARKLEY DROP GOALS: CATT (2)



(Top Left) Ludovic Mercier is tackled from behind by Bath's Mike Catt.

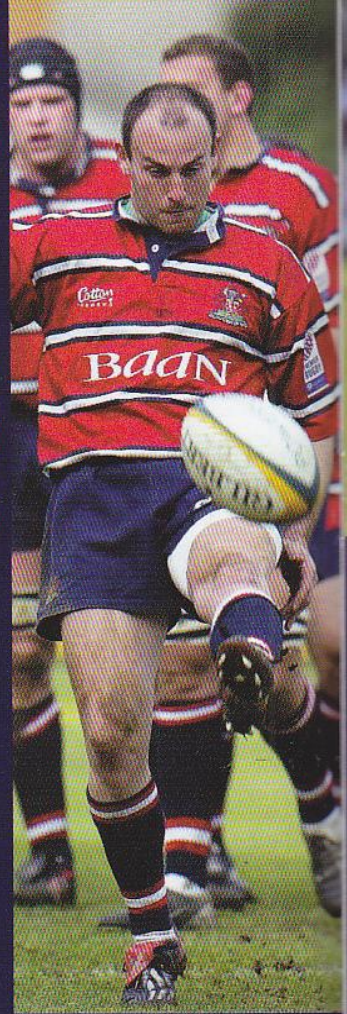
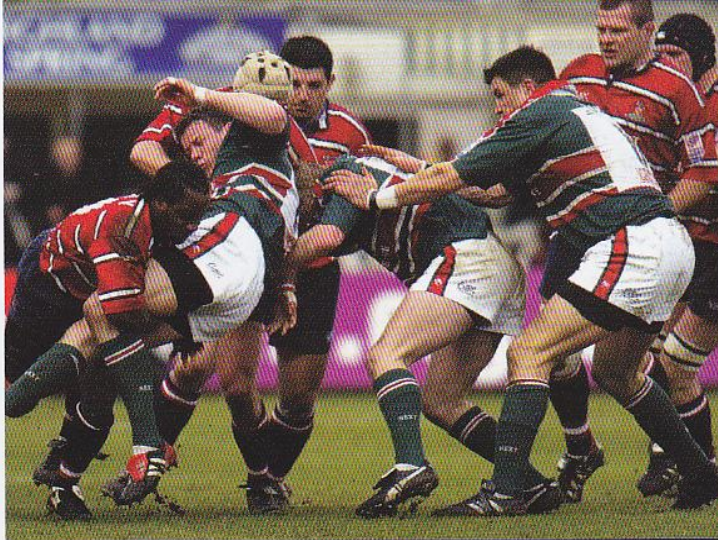
(Top Right) Marcel Garvey prepares to touch down for his second half try.

(Bottom Left) Jake Boer passes.

(Bottom Right) Andy Gomersall makes his point to Bath's Mike Catt.

Pictures courtesy of Bruce Seabrook - GPA





FRANKLIN'S GARDENS SATURAY 1 MARCH 2003



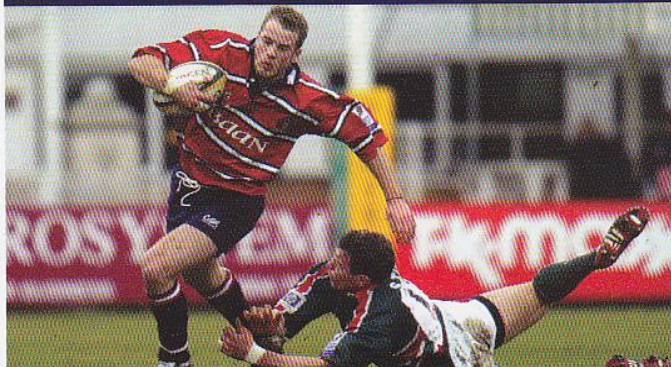
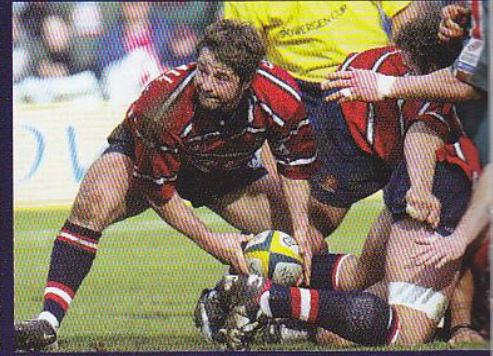
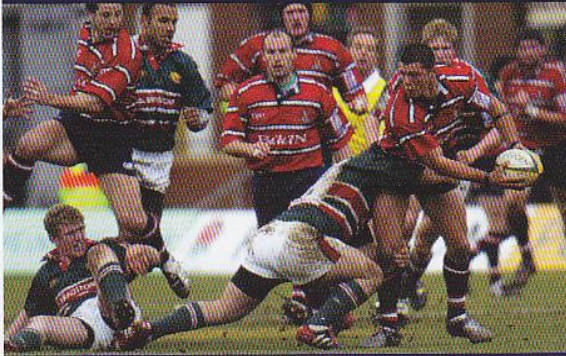
**LEICESTER 11**

TRIES: **KRONFELD** PENALTIES: **STIMPSON (2)**



**GLOUCESTER 16**

TRIES: **GARVEY, DELPORT** PENALTIES: **MERCIER (2)**



(Top Left) Marcel Garvey turns over Leicester's Tim Stimpson.

(Top Right) Ludovic Mercier.

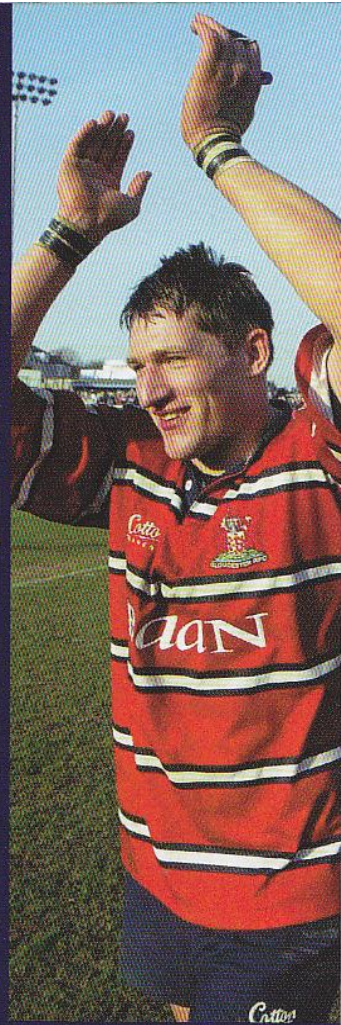
(Middle Left) Henry Paul passes as Leicester's Rod Kafer tackles.

(Middle Right) Andy Gomarsall.

(bottom Left) James Simpson-Daniel escapes a tackle from Leicester's Tim Stimpson.

Pictures courtesy of Bruce Seabrook - GPA





MEMORIAL STADIUM SUNDAY 16 MARCH 2003



# BRISTOL SHOGUNS 21

TRIES: CHRISTOPHERS, DRAHM CONVERSIONS: CONTEPOMI

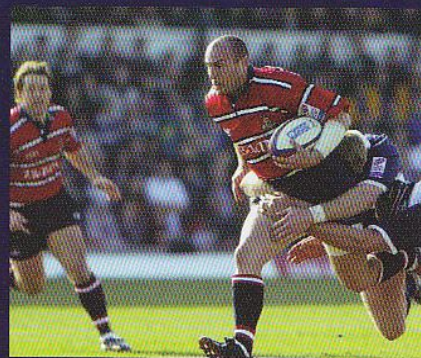
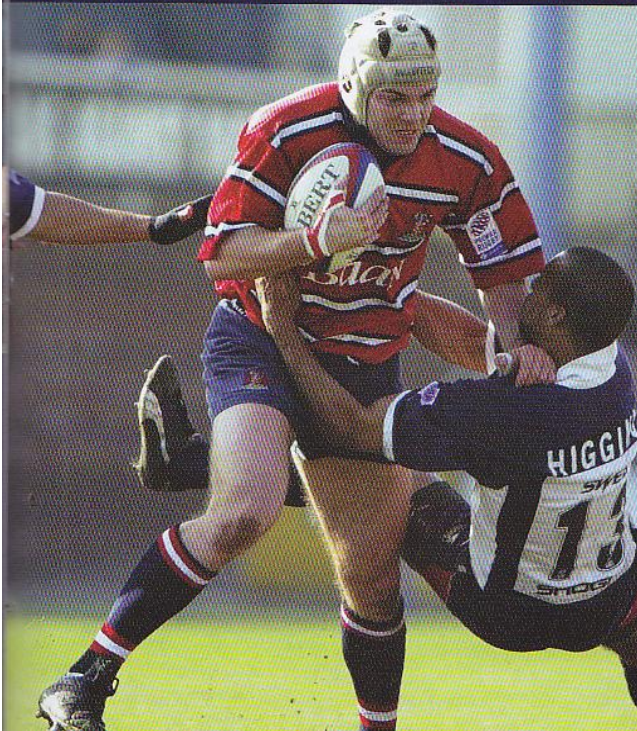
PENALTIES: DRAHM, CONTEPOMI (2)



# GLOUCESTER 38

TRIES: FORRESTER (3), HAZELL, GARVEY, MERCIER

CONVERSIONS: MERCIER (4)



(Top Left) Trevor Woodman starting his first match since his operation breaks thro' Bristol's David Rees and Michael Lipman.

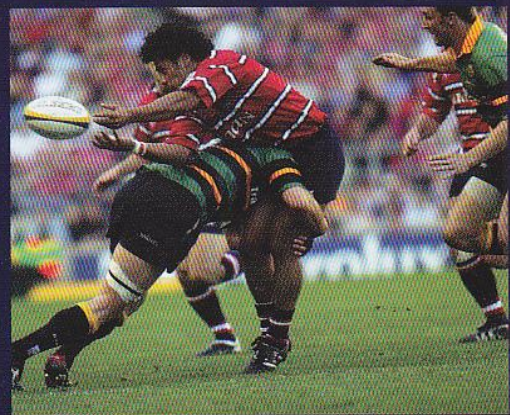
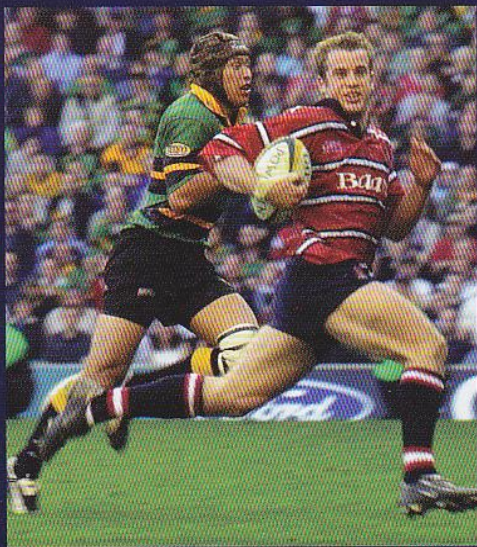
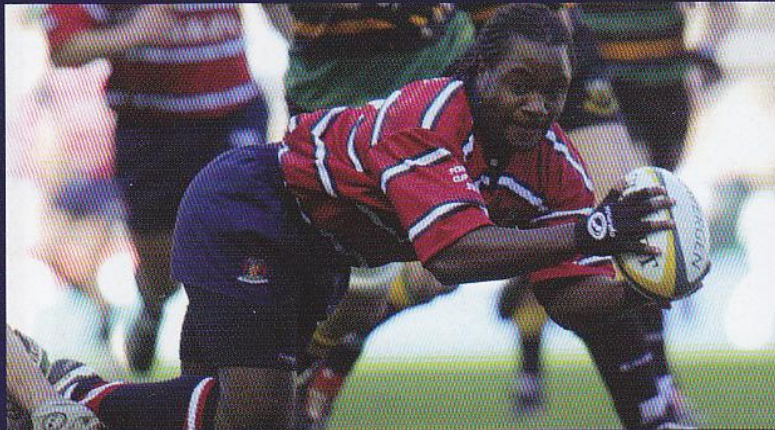
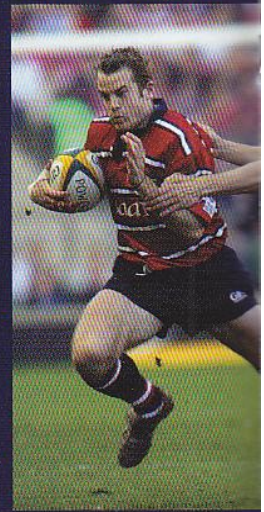
(Top Right) James Forrester celebrates his hat trick of tries.

(Bottom Left) Andy Hazell pushes off Bristol's Andrew Higgins.

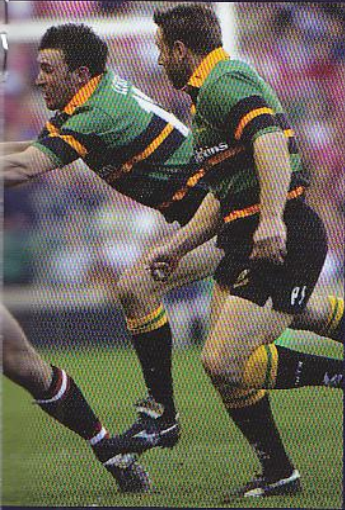
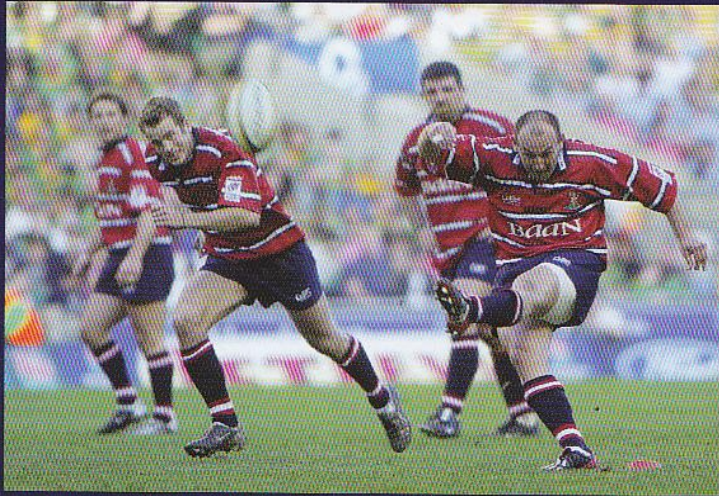
(Bottom Right) Ludovic Mercier drags Bristol's Alex Brown along in his wake.

Pictures courtesy of Bruce Seabrook - GPA

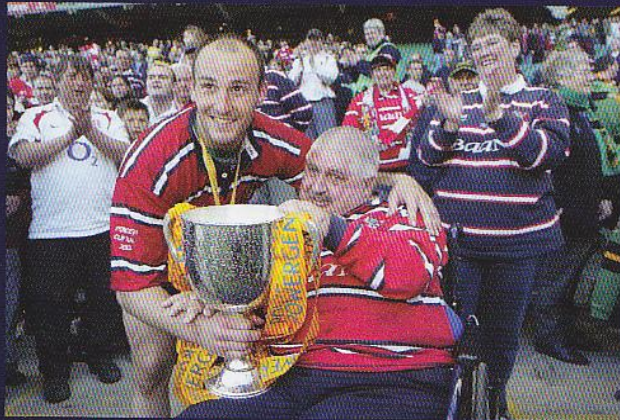








Official Powergen Cup Final pictures available on [www.gpaimages.com](http://www.gpaimages.com)





## BY KEVIN WILLIAMS

BBC RADIO NEWCASTLE

95.4 FM BBC RADIO NEWCASTLE

With the Powergen Cup already in the trophy cabinet, though doubtless taken out to be shown around today, Gloucester now seek to do what Leicester couldn't manage in their recent pomp, a league and cup double. For the watching neutral the cup final provided a thrilling first half and a magnificently controlled second, where Northampton were never allowed a whiff of a score. Heartfelt congratulations to all at Gloucester, silverware has been a long time coming, but is well deserved.

Today it is a return to the bread and butter stuff of Zurich Premiership rugby and the men of Gloucester and Newcastle meet in a table that has evolved into two very different competitions. While the top six are all striving to improve their Heineken Cup seedings, five of the bottom six must desperately battle to avoid the bottom slot, and with it the drop into National League One.

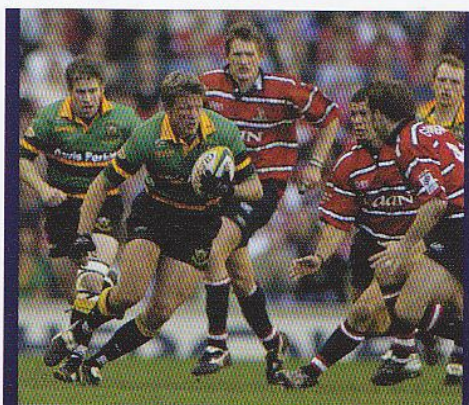
The top half is virtually sorted with just the deck chairs to arrange. No doubting where Gloucester would wish to sit, but there yet could be a final ironic twist. The play off system, designed to ensure that no club was able to claim to be champions by the end of March, could yet hand the title of champions to the very club that it might have been invented to scupper. After gaining five points against Sale, you can't rule Leicester out of the equation.

Away from the politics, or perhaps more accurately, still waiting for the political machinations to be revealed, there is one hell of a scrap going on in the lower reaches of the Zurich Premiership. Newcastle Falcons are bang in the middle of these fisticuffs, despite two months ago having looked like a knocked out fighter. Last Sunday's results moved London Irish off the bottom to be replaced by Bath; the game between the two on Thursday night will have been watched keenly in Newcastle, Bristol and Watford. With Bristol and Bath in the relegation mixer, I doubt that there

has rarely been a better time to wear a cherry and white shirt.

The financial ramifications of finishing first and last make for interesting comparison too. The Zurich Champions will receive number one seeding in next year's Heineken Cup (unless you know who keep their European Champions' title), which makes for an easier group and offers a better chance of progress to the later stages, with that comes more income. At least that's the theory. For the team that finishes bottom of the table, relegation means obscurity, the loss of your best players and a fight to survive. Just ask West Hartlepool, always assuming that you can find them. I would venture to suggest that the teams at the bottom have more to lose than those at the top stand to gain.

So for different reasons both sides need something out of today. Newcastle gifted Gloucester victory when a draw looked a certain result at Kingston Park in the reverse fixture. Nobody expects the favour to be returned at Kingsholm, it isn't that kind of place. Winning the cup and the league might be considered greedy, but no one can show me a Director of Rugby or a set of supporters who would put good manners first.





# Fans Eye View

With Bob Fenton

Not a normal 'Fans eye view' this time, more a fan's eye view of how a player builds up for a game like last Saturday's cup final. When I approached James (Bennett) with the idea of doing this I intended to compare the measured build up a player goes through, compared the wild paranoid neurosis of an average fan. But we all know all about that - though I was a bit shocked when Matthew - who is only nine - started insisting we went to Pizza Hut the night before the cup final, because we went there before the Leicester game and had won!

Every evening in the week before the final I spoke to Thinus Delport about his day, and how the team prepared - he probably found our conversations a bit irksome - I found them fascinating. Hope you do to... So a fan's eye view of a player's build up to the Powergen Cup Final.

## Monday

Preparations for the game were slightly disrupted by the United game that evening and waiting for the boys to come back from the England Squad. We started out with a weights session while we waited for the others to arrive, before moving on to some continuity drills. There is a definite buzz of anticipation around the place, some of the guys are quite relaxed and are treating it as another game, while others are looking a bit tense. In the afternoon we were fitted for our cup final suits - normally we would just wear our trousers and club t-shirts, but for the formal presentations we have to look that bit smarter. We have a bit of a problem with the shirts though...

Back home and spent the evening studying - I have my radio licence exams on Thursday as part of my programme to get my helicopter pilot's licence.

## Tuesday

We started out with a long video analysis session on how Northampton play. We are looking at clips of their set plays, strike runs and kicking patterns. We concentrate on the whole team, but are mindful of game making

individuals like Paul Grayson who dictates through his boot and others like Budge Pountney and Andrew Blowers. After that we are all given a DVD to take home to study certain elements of their game, and we have to present back to the team tomorrow - I am looking at their kicking patterns. Even professional rugby players get homework! After that, it's outside for some hard work, mostly organisational training before we split into forwards and backs for particular drills.

Spend the evening continuing my radio licence studies, but break off to prepare my presentation for the boys tomorrow.

## Wednesday

I made my presentation today on the Northampton kicking game. Luckily I didn't have to stand up in front of the guys to do it, it was more of a brainstorm with everyone else just chipping in. Everything we discussed will be written up and given to us on Friday as the game plan - and no, nobody will be taking their copy out in a taxi on Friday night!

After that it was out for a normal Wednesday training session, nothing different - just the same as we would prepare for a Premiership match. We were given the afternoon off though, we would normally have had a weights session. Jake and I went into Cheltenham for lunch and played a bit of pool during the afternoon. The nerves are starting to kick in with the boys now and everyone is talking about the game.

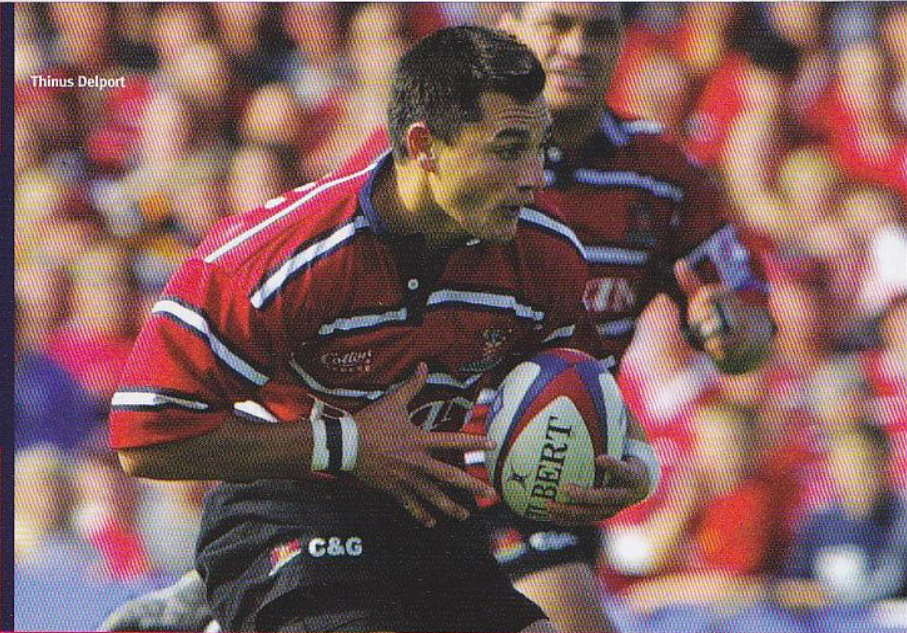
The rest of the day was spent with my nose in my books preparing for my exam tomorrow morning - I am more nervous about that than I am about the rugby at the moment!

## Thursday

A day off from the rugby today, but no day off for me as I had my radio licence exams in the morning. It was a two-



Thinus Delpont



stage exam with a theory and a practical part, although it was difficult I'm glad to say I am now the proud owner of a radio licence! This is another step on the road to getting my private pilots licence, and eventually my commercial licence. Will I be buying a helicopter now? I don't think so, they're a bit expensive - I'll just have to rent one. Maybe I will be able to earn a bit of money flying the boys to and from away games! Spent the afternoon flying, doing some solo cross-country trips. With the exams out of the way there is only the rugby to think about now.

#### Friday

We're at the team hotel at Egham on the outskirts of London - we get to go to the best places. After a light training session at Kingsholm it was onto the bus and up to London. It was great to see so many people there to see us off and wish us well, it was a really inspiring send off and much appreciated by the boys. We went straight to Twickenham and wandered around the stadium to soak up the atmosphere and get a feel for the place. After that it was back on the bus and down to the hotel. I've just finished cleaning my boots - a bit of a superstition if you like, I always like them to be clean before a match. Later tonight we have a team meeting to go through the plan for tomorrow but no - we won't be hitting the bar after that!

#### Saturday

Because of the later start we were able to have a bit of a lay in. We got together about 1pm and found that our plans and preparations for the game had taken a bit of a knock when Pasty became ill and had to pull out. Although Rob Fidler was a more than able replacement it upset things because we had been training with Pasty all week. After lunch the forwards had a light lineout session. After that we had a team meeting and got onto

the bus to go to the stadium. On the bus I felt the nerves a bit - I think all the guys did, there was a lot of hanging around just waiting for the game to start.

As always I went out early, I like to prepare myself like that, and make sure that I am really warmed up before the game. First impressions of Twickenham were good, a really nice stadium, but a bit like all the other big grounds around the world. The crowd was awesome, when you looked around and saw all those cherry and white jerseys it was amazing.

The game was a tough one, as we always knew it was going to be. The noise from the terraces once the game started was deafening - we couldn't hear the game calls on the pitch and I had to keep running over to check with Terry what the moves were. We struggled to get going in the first half, but once the nerves settled in the second half we went out and did the business. Why did I get sin binned? I'm not really sure, the referee said I was pushing the Northampton player but really we were just both going flat out for the ball. Some of the Northampton players were making a bit of a big thing about it, and maybe he felt the pressure!

After the game and the presentations some of the boys went back to Cheltenham and Gloucester to celebrate, I stayed in London with Jake and got really drunk! On Sunday we watched the boat race, which was interesting before heading back home on the train.

Games like these live in your memory forever. Before the game Dean Ryan said to us that we would always remember this game, and the guys in the team at the time. He is right and I couldn't have put it better myself.



# Peter Arnold

## AS I WAS SAYING BEFORE I WAS SO RUDELY INTERRUPTED...

Like the man said, after the repeal of Prohibition, "It's a long time between drinks". It's certainly a long time between after-match post mortems in the Clubhouse. Luckily, the last time we gathered together in the face of this congregation was on the occasion of the defeat of Mike Catt and 21 other players formerly known as Bath.

That's not to say that we haven't had plenty to occupy our minds in the meantime. The Six Nations proved to be a highly satisfying exercise in the end, after one or two stutters, and the Cup Semi Final against Leicester eventually went to the better team. That was rather marred by the Mysterious Affair of the Uncontested Scrums.

I don't particularly want to rake over those old coals again, except to ponder that if, as they stated, the Tigers 'didn't want to win by default', why didn't they say so in the first place. They surely could have told us that on the Sunday instead of waiting five days to do so.

Nevertheless, the right decision was made in the end, which was good for the game, good for the crowd, who had watched an enthralling game, and not least, good for the referee.

There was also the game at Bristol. It's easy to forget, in the light of events, that several pundits had opined that the home side might nick that one, and there was some justification for that view. While Bristol couldn't exactly claim to be on a roll, they had shown sides of moving in that direction. They were also playing on their own pitch, and with the renowned Argentinean half-back pairing on view, together with a whole clutch of players of the calibre of Christopher's, who demonstrated his pedigree with one of the best tries seen all season, Gibbon and Lipton in the ranks, the match never looked like a 'gimme'.

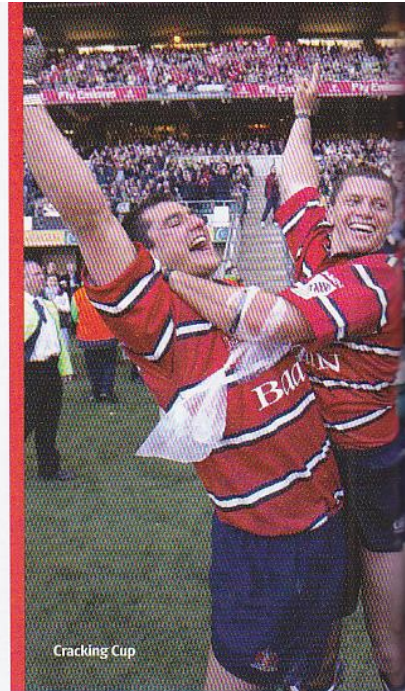
All in all, the result was a very creditable one, and demonstrated that Gloucester has the pedigree to go all the way this season.

But let's not put the mockers on it. Remember 1982, when we had both the Cup and the League in our sights with just one week of the season left, but still managed to blow it?

It won't happen again. I keep telling myself.

## JANGO'S JIVE

One man, who had a real purple week while all this was going on, was James 'Jango' Forester. It isn't often that anyone, never mind a forward, scores



Cracking Cup

five tries in seven days, let alone achieves the feat in a Premiership game and a representative match, but that's just what young James did by snatching a hat-trick against Bristol and a brace against Scotland 'A' playing for England 'A'. And it could very well have been more. Downright greedy, I call it.

I didn't actually watch the England 'A' game until the Saturday morning. In their (alleged) wisdom, Sky decided to screen the game at the unlikely hour of 1.30am. I ask you. Many rugby men are either drunk by that time on a Friday night, or have gone to bed, after which they get up and go home.

However, I did retain my wits enough to set the video recorder before retiring, and I'm very glad I did, because the resulting record is one which I shall keep and bequeath to my grandson. Quite simply, young James's performance was the best I have seen by a Gloucester player in a representative game, approached only by Mike Teague's storming display against Australia in that famous British Lions tour. And I can't voice higher





praise than that. If you haven't seen it, you're welcome to borrow my tape, as long as I get it back.

One of the most interesting facets of the affair was the reaction of the TV commentators. Even the voluble Mr. Barnes was reduced to semi-coherent burbling at times, and that must be a first.

It wasn't just the two tries, or even the three (at least) assists that he manufactured. It was the general work rate and almost psychic ability to read the game and know where the gaps were which caught the eye.

Perhaps my enthusiasm is getting the better of me. As one Barton Street drinking friend of mine said, "I'm's only a babby yet!"

True enough. But one final thought. Perhaps it's just as well that Andrew Hazell's injury kept him out of the side. If he'd been there too, that 78-point thrashing might have turned into a cricket score.

## CRACKING CUP

Well, we didn't blow it, did we? Not the first half of the double, anyway. Gloucester's performance at Twickenham last Saturday, was all we could have wished for in any way you might wish to mention.

For me, the most pleasing aspect of the affair was that it was Gloucester's young guns, James Simpson Daniel, James Forrester, and, inevitably, Marcel Garvey who scored all the tries. And none of them were precisely cut and dried.

Sinbad's first score looked a soft one, resulting from a horrendous piece of mishandling by, of all people, Matt Dawson. . Let's face it, if you had to nominate a scrum-half most likely to get his pass away safely and accurately, then Matt would probably be top of your list.

So, at first sight, it looked easy enough for J.S-D. However, if you play back the video, once or twice, and look at the incident more critically, you'll begin to doubt whether there are many more

players in world rugby who would have had the vision and the nous to spot what was happening and then get to the ball before the cover did. Sinbad then had to gather a ball bouncing away from him. And then swerve around towards the posts. Not an easy one at all.

But that's enough analysis for now. It will all have been done by the time you read this, anyway. Perhaps the most important thing was that the game lived up to the occasion, in front of a packed Twickenham on a lovely day, and there is no better sight in rugby than that.

My favourite comment came from a shattered Matt Dawson, who played his heart out, and must have been devastated by seeing his side go down at the last hurdle yet again.

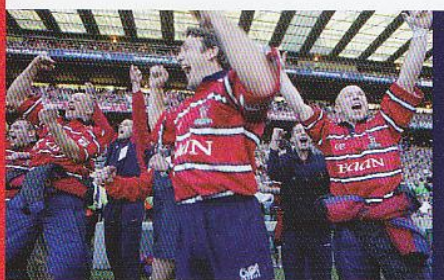
When asked by a sweet young thing on the touchline on leaving the field what he thought the difference was between the two sides, he simply grunted "About 18 points!"

Well done Matt. You might be small in stature as rugby players go, but you're a big man in every way that matters.



# Emma Smith

## The Citizen



It might be back to business in the Zurich Premiership today but who could resist casting a glance back to a golden Saturday in the Cherry and Whites' history.

Not even the controversy surrounding James Forrester's try or the widespread obsession with the club's financial situation could deflect away from Gloucester's achievement. To a man, every player showed true grit, determination and an unflinching passion for their club and their fanatical supporters as they heaped more misery on Northampton.

A third Knockout Cup final defeat in four years for the Saints must have broken gold and green hearts at Twickenham and beyond. But for Gloucester, the wounds inflicted by a drought of domestic cup success for more than a decade, are finally starting to heal.

The Zurich Championship triumph of last season was the first step in the rehabilitation process but the agony was only finally appeased by last weekend's victory at England headquarters. For those fans who had witnessed Gloucester's annihilation at the hands of Bath in this competition in 1990, it must have been sweet indeed to see their Rec rivals slip to the foot of the Premiership on Sunday after a defeat by Wasps.

The worm has well and truly turned and the Castle Grim faithful are the beneficiaries but now is the time for Gloucester to put the past behind them. Now they are top of the pile and, rather than get bogged down in old

rivalries or reminisce about the halcyon days of forward dogfights, they must concentrate on remaining at the summit.

Basking in the euphoria of the Powergen Cup win is a deserved reward for years of heartbreak for the Cherry and White legions, who must have been nursing their hangovers well into Monday, but for the team, the hard work has already re-started.

Nigel Melville and Dean Ryan will have the players finely tuned with their feet firmly rooted to the ground ready for this clash with the Falcons. The Kingsholm chiefs will have emphasised the importance to their players of hitting the ground running today, having only edged to a 22-19 win at Kingston Park way back in September.

Gloucester have developed a winning habit and completing the double over Newcastle today would go a long way towards securing another Twickenham appearance in the Zurich Championship final at the tail-end of May.

It may not carry quite the same prestige as the Powergen Cup in the eyes of die-hard rugby fans, but no one in this shire will complain if the cabinet is swelled by another trophy.

The prospect of two appearances at Twickenham in one season - whoever would have thought? The watering holes of South West London should be ready to be drained dry. ■





TICKET AND INFORMATION HOTLINE 0871 871 8781

25 (0)



**GLOUCESTER**

Thinus Delport	15
Marcel Garvey	14
Terry Fanolua	13
Henry Paul	12
James Simpson-Daniel	11
Ludovic Mercier	10
Andy Gomarsall	09
-----	
Trevor Woodman	01
Olivier Azam	02
Andy Deacon	03
Adam Eustace	04
Mark Cornwell	05
Jake Boer (c)	06
Andy Hazell	07
James Forrester	08
-----	
Clive Stuart-Smith	16
Simon Amor	17
Robert Todd	18
Chris Fortey	19
Rodrigo Roncero	20
Junior Paramore	21
Ed Pearce	22



23 (15)

**N'CASTLE FALCONS**

Joe Shaw	
Michael Stephenson	
Jamie Noon	
Mark Mayerhofler	
Tom May	
Jonny Wilkinson	
James Grindal	
-----	
Ian Peel	
Nick Makin	
Marius Hurter	
Mark Andrews	
Stuart Grimes	
Epi Taione	
Jon Dunbar	
Phil Dowson	
-----	
Hall Charlton	
Gareth Maclure	
Mark Wilkinson	
James Isaacson	
Mathew Thompson	
Craig Hamilton	
Craig Newby	

Gloucester RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB



**GLOUCESTER'S NEXT THREE MATCHES**

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Friday 18th Apr 2003  
Heywood Road KO 3.00pm  
SOLD OUT

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Saturday 26th Apr 2003  
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Zurich Premiership  
Sunday 4th May 2003  
Headingley KO 2.30pm  
Ticket Hotline: 0113 278 6181

**ZURICH PREMIERSHIP 2002/03**

As of 09/04/03

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	TB	LB	PTS
Gloucester	17	14	1	2	479	289	5	2	65
Sharks	18	12	1	5	481	363	7	1	58
London Wasps	19	11	2	6	482	407	5	4	57
Leicester Tigers	18	11	0	7	389	311	4	2	50
Leeds Tykes	18	10	2	6	399	352	0	4	48
Northampton Saints	17	9	0	8	363	299	3	4	43
NEC Harlequins	18	7	0	11	389	470	3	5	36
Saracens	19	6	0	13	426	526	4	4	32
Bristol Shoguns	17	6	1	10	405	478	3	2	31
London Irish	18	6	1	11	342	401	1	3	30
Newcastle Falcons	18	6	0	12	305	454	2	4	30
Bath Rugby	19	5	2	12	323	433	1	3	28



**Ref!Link**

**TODAY'S MATCH OFFICIALS**

Referee: Dave Pearson RFU  
1st TJ: Dave Rose RFU  
2nd TJ: Steve Savage RFU

1609

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