

FIRST DIVISION

RUGBY

P R O M A G



FOUNDED 1873

Vol 1/2
£2.00



PEACE IN OUR TIME?

The Five Nations Championship
by Alastair Hignell

EPRUC & the First Division

a summary by Robert Armstrong

The Northern Scene,
review by Steve Smith

The Super Twelve

by Jim Clipson



Plus
Local articles,
results and pictures

Westbury

GLOUCESTER
v
BATH

at Kingsholm
Saturday 21st September 1996
Kick off 2.15 pm



Saturday 21st September 1996 Kick-off 2.15pm

GLOUCESTER

Cherry & White

BATH

Blue, White & Black

15	Chris Catling	Full Back	Jon Callard (I)	16
14	Eral Catling	Right Wing	Jason Robinson (I)	15
13	Craig Emmerson	Centre	Phil de Glanville (I) *	14
12	Martin Roberts	Centre	Jeremy Guscott (I)	12
11	Mike Lloyd	Left Wing	Ade Adebayo	11

10	Mark Mapletoft	Outside Half	Mike Catt (I)	10
9	Charlie Mulraine	Scrum Half	Andy Nicol (I)	9

1	Tony Windo	Prop	Dave Hilton (I)	1
2	Phil Greening	Hooker	Graham Dawe (I)	2
3	Andy Deacon	Prop	Victor Ubogo (I)	3
4	Rob Fidler	Lock	Martin Haag	4
5	Dave Sims *	Lock	Nigel Redman (I)	5
6	Pete Glanville	Flanker	Andy Robinson (I)	6
7	Ian Smith (I)	Flanker	Nathan Thomas	7
8	Ed Pearce	No.8	Steve Ojomoh (I)	8

16	Martyn Kimber	Replacements	Charlie Harrison	16
17	Laurie Beck		Gary French	17
18	Warwick Bullock		John Mallett (I)	18
19	Simon Devereux		Eric Peters (I)	19
20				
21				

After today's game
Gloucester Colts will play
Bath Colts at 4.15pm.
Please feel free to stay
for further entertainment.

Half Time

Referee
Brian Campsall (RFU)

Full Time

Touch Judges
N J Yates (RFU)
C R D Leeke (RFU)

(I) International
* Captain

Another Day, Another Bath

Peter Arnold

While it's always gratifying to hark back to triumphs of the past, there isn't really much point in spending time and printer's ink on that ferocious cockpit of an occasion, last Spring, when the might of the Champions came a decided cropper here at Kingsholm. O.K. so it was a great night, but to compare today's little tea party with that memorable shindig is certainly likening apples with oranges.

Today we have different players, different conditions, different rules. It sometimes feels as though we have a whole different game to the one we all grew up and took our bruises in. For example, we could well see a couple of short-term visitors from the Rugby League on Kingsholm today, and as far as I am aware, that's the first time that has happened since the Wartime Internationals back in the '40's. Having said that, Ed Martin will probably prove me wrong by producing a few servicemen, playing for the Army or whatever, on some long-forgotten (except for Ed.) evening a decade or so ago.

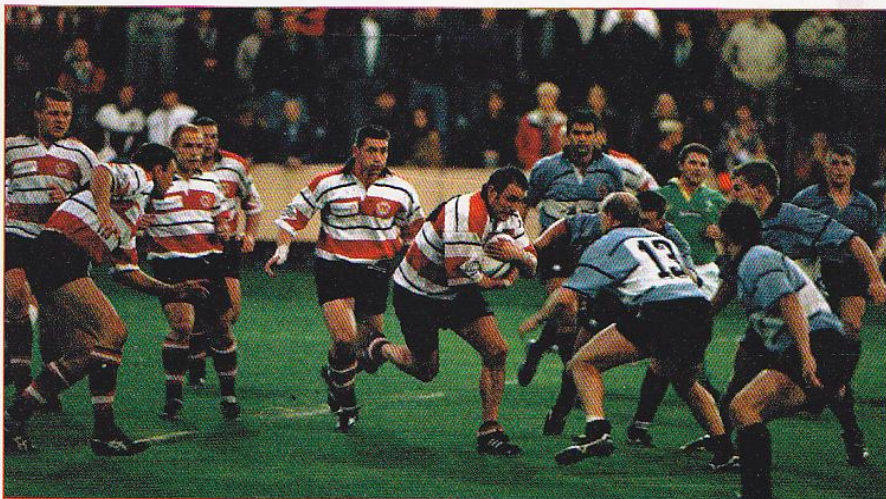
All those considerations apart, it's still Gloucester v. Bath at Kingsholm, and we all know what that means. There will be a special buzz around the ground, and a special

determination among the players of both sides, by no means reduced by the presence of former Bath players on the home team.

On paper, Bath only have to turn up to acquire points: while Gloucester have yet to win a League match this season, Bath have been putting seventy and eighty points on good opposition, except at Leicester where the Tigers refused to roll over and have their tummies tickled, and against Wasps when they got stung.

But the game isn't being played on paper. It's being played on turf, and Kingsholm turf at that. On such occasions, reputations and records have a way of departing into the middle distance. While today's respected visitors are undoubtedly a very fine side indeed, as the formidable Swansea outfit discovered, Gloucester are probably underrated - although assuredly not by Bath. It isn't quite David and Goliath, whatever the pundits may be writing today.

It's another great Gloucester v. Bath occasion, and things will turn out as the fickle gods of rugby decree. What is absolutely certain, is that we're pleased to welcome our distinguished visitors, and their supporters, to Kingsholm again, and hope everyone thoroughly enjoy themselves.



Andy Stanley charges at Newbridge 11/9/96

DON'T DESPAIR, ANDY'S ARMY

Peter Arnold

Had quite a long conversation with Andy Mitchell the other day. He's working his - well - ears off at the moment, what with the complexities of player registration and other jobs which have descended on him in his new capacity as Club Secretary.

He is, however, adamant about one thing. He still intends to run his legendary coaches this season. Not quite so many of them, perhaps, but all the ones which have proved most popular, over the years, will still be on his schedule.

"I might have to give some things up," he told me, "but the coaches will be the last to go!"

So, take heart, Andy's Army. There is life after professionalisation.

The first proof of this comes with the advance information that the legendary overnight trip to West Hartlepool will go ahead, the hotel already having been booked. The date for the diaries of those hardy souls who participate is November 9th. So there's time to get into training.

WHERE'S YOUR CAR ?

You wouldn't think my old friend Councillor David Evans was a Welshman would you ? How could any native of the land of Gareth Edwards and JPR Williams have the brass neck to suggest that Gloucester RFC be exiled from Kingsholm and banished to the Outer Darkness at the edge of the City ?

The idea, of course, got short shrift from everyone who matters, including the local residents' organisations. However, we would do well to take note of the reasons for the outrageous, and knowing David, I suspect slightly tongue-in-cheek, proposal. In short, he was, quite rightly, drawing attention to the traffic problems which can occur in the areas around the ground on big match days.

The last thing we want to do is get up the noses

of our neighbours. How would you like it if you couldn't get your car out of your own drive on a Saturday afternoon, for example ?

I am well aware that, in common with everything else, the Club has found it necessary to increase car park charges this season, but if you don't want to pay the extra, or if the ground facilities are full by the time you get here, do give a thought to the people who live here all week, and obviously have problems every time several thousand extra vehicles descend on their area. Please try to cause as little obstruction as possible, and park somewhere as inoffensive as you can, even if it does mean walking for a few minutes. The extra stroll will improve your thirst, anyway.

Better still, if you can, either share a car or use public transport.

If you can't do that, be advised that the Police can and will take action against cars parked illegally around the ground, so they tell us.

To ameliorate the situation, the playground at Kingsholm School will be made available for parking, as will the facilities at the YMCA in Sebert Street. Leave your car in one of those, and you'll not only solve a problem, you'll be contributing funds to organisations which deserve them.

There's another facility this season too. Parking will be made available at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, all proceeds to go to the Pied Piper appeal for new children's facilities. A little further away, perhaps, but still well within walking distance.

GANGWAY !

I might as well complete the Sermon for Today by reminding you that the Fire Officer takes a very dim view of people who watch the game from gangways or steps. I know it can be tempting, but the relevant legislation does require us to keep such access points clear - just in case.

UP AND UNDER

Peter Arnold

THANKS GARY

I'm asked by Barry Preece to give a special Mentioned in Dispatches to Gary Jones, of Glevum Windows, a request to which I'm very happy to accede.

Gary has done a lot of work for the Club, far more than is really necessary if he were simply interested in the commercial aspects of the thing. He has been active on our behalf in several spheres, and is very happy to help, however and whenever he can. Gloucester RFC couldn't survive without excellent relationships with the business community, and we're indebted to such companies as Glevum windows for their continuing support.

Thanks Gary! Hope your valued association with us leads to some commercial advantage for you too. As well as a lot of fun, of course.

ANOTHER LITTLE DRINK...

It's all right for the likes of us. We can sit in the bar and enjoy our favoured tippie without more than a passing thought towards or waistlines or our livers. Players don't have that privilege. They have to drink healthy things which help with stamina and general fitness levels.

Such beverages were confined to Lucozade or Robinson's Barley Water in my day, but it's all very much more high-tech nowadays. Which is why we're fortunate to be able to announce that a company called Multipower Fitness and Nutrition are now official suppliers of such products to Gloucester RFC for the season 1996/7. So if you see the lads taking a drag or two on a mysterious bottle, during training, or before or after the game, you can bet your beer money that it contains some highly nutritious potion designed to help their performance on the field become just that little bit better.

Thanks Multipower ! I'll buy you a

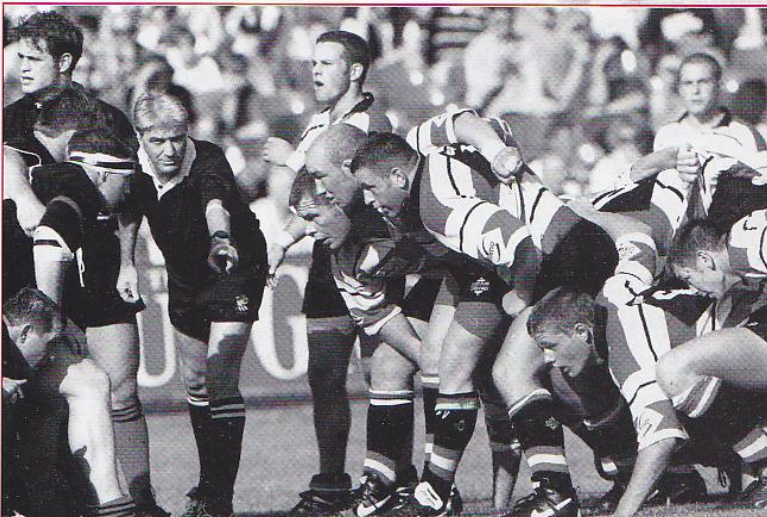
drink, sometime.

Having become used to the constant requirement for GRFC to acquire sponsorship in all its myriad forms, it came as something as a surprise to see a notice in the New Olympus Theatre which proclaimed 'UP AND UNDER - SPONSORED BY GLOUCESTER RFC', the boot on the other foot with a vengeance.

A quick remark by Barry Preece set the record straight. "I told 'em they can have anything they like as long as it's not money !", he explained. The fact of the matter is that the GODS intend to stage a production of John Godber's hilarious rugby-based comedy, and that they will be counting on the club to provide some support. I'm told that they intend the good guys in the show to wear Gloucester strips, and the bad ones to be accoutred in the blue, black and white of Bath.

Sounds like fun. The production is scheduled for November, and any Gloucester player can have a free ticket. Paying customers will, it is hoped, be able to buy tickets here at the ground in the fullness of time.

'Up and Under' is to be directed by a wholehearted Gloucester supporter, and devout and practicing eccentric called Mark Payne, son of the redoubtable Roger. So the pedigree is right, and I thoroughly recommend anyone to trot along and see the show. More news when I have it.



COACHES

Peter Arnold

Nice little note from Bob Barge telling us that he is planning to run coaches to Leicester, next Saturday, leaving Kingsholm at 11.30, and costing £6.50. He needs bookings ASAP, so why not drop into the office while you're here?

There will also be a coach to Swansea on October 19th at £7.50, time of departure to be announced later.

Bob is also hoping that there will be a coach to Orrell on October 31st, also at £7.50, and warns that this will depend entirely on the amount of support he gets. He also warns that it will probably mean an early start because Birmingham has to be negotiated, and there is time-consuming work going on on a viaduct, somewhere along the line.

Bob would also like to see the coaches better supported than they have been this season. There is a whole raft of reasons why he hasn't put bums on all seats so far, and no doubt things will liven up shortly. They'd better. The club can't run them at a loss.

By the way, Andy Mitchell will be running his usual trip to Leicester, Leaving at 10.30, and costing £7.00. Then as usual travel with Andy will know what to do.

CATCHING 'EM YOUNG

Our first Match Mascot of the season is young Harry Preece who attends Gorsley Goffs Primary School in Herefordshire. Today isn't the first time he's been on the telly. In 1989 he was the first baby born locally on April Fools day, so as they do, the TV people came and interviewed Mum. Apparently, she was asked if young Harry would play rugby for Gloucester, but her reply, probably unprintable, isn't recorded.

Harry has a 9 year-old brother, Ben, and twin 4 year-old sisters, Jessica and Emily, so Mum and Dad obviously have their hands full.

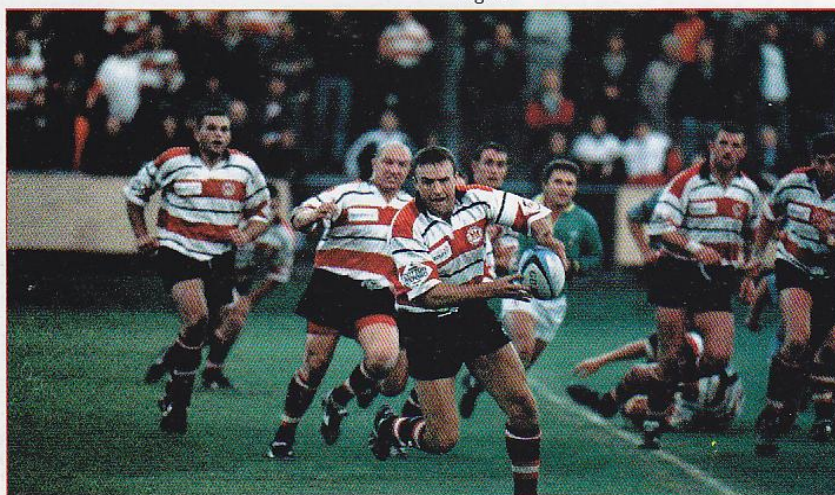
Football and swimming are on young Harry's menu at the moment, but he also turns out at rugby for Monmouth Minis, so one of these days, we could well see him in the cherry-and-white here again.

Thanks for doing us the honour, Harry.

TAILPIECE

Talking to Alan Townsend the other day, I congratulated him on his new post as Club Secretary. "Ah, well," he remarked, philosophically. "I looked after the beer kitty 35 years ago, so I expect I can look after the beer kitty again!"

Nice to have a Treasurer who gets his priorities right.



HOW MIKE WARNER SEES IT

There's very little doubt that Mike Warner is one of the best-known, and most respected businessmen in the area, so it makes considerable sense to invite him to sit on the Board of Directors of Gloucester RFC Limited. It makes even more sense to ask him to take responsibility for the commercial side of things.

I'm told he's also going to be involved in a major membership drive, any minute now. So watch out for his name in that context.

Although Mike has been a great supporter and benefactor to the Club for years, to my knowledge he's never been asked to contribute to the Programme before. An omission we will now rectify.

GRFC has a great responsibility to City and County Rugby. We are very fortunate to have Richard Hill at Kingsholm. Richard is regarded as one of the finest coaches in the country and is highly respected by both young and old players - he has already built some very good links with local clubs both at junior and senior levels.

The season has not started very well, however Richard is not only starting off with young inexperienced talent, he is also trying to change the style of rugby at Kingsholm. Major change can bring disappointment, but as long as good foundations are put down, the success always outweighs the pain - the win at Newbridge was very encouraging.

Richard Hill's approach to player recruitment was the only way Gloucester could go to build a future. We don't have the financial resources of other top clubs, mainly because we have spent the last five or six years struggling at the bottom of the league, therefore we have to rely on developing young players. Not every new recruit will succeed, but in the squad there are some great players of the future.

Squads without stars, don't put 'bums on seats' however and this is something of which my board colleagues and I are fully aware.

I do believe that by the end of the season, we shall start to see some of our players emerging as tomorrow's stars - one national paper has already referred to our squad as Hill's Young Blades.

I do hope that the RFU climbs down from its current position with the Clubs. It is a great family squabble and I believe that the best way forward for the game is for the club to run the commercial side of the game in conjunction with the RFU.

The RFU must be regarded as the parents of the clubs. Over the years, they have provided them with the roots to grow and with the advent of the professional era, they gave them the wings to fly - now they won't let the clubs fly and we all know what happens to birds that can't fly!

I do feel that EPRUC have some great ideas for the future, and the RFU should try to understand their vision for the game and their ability to take it forward.

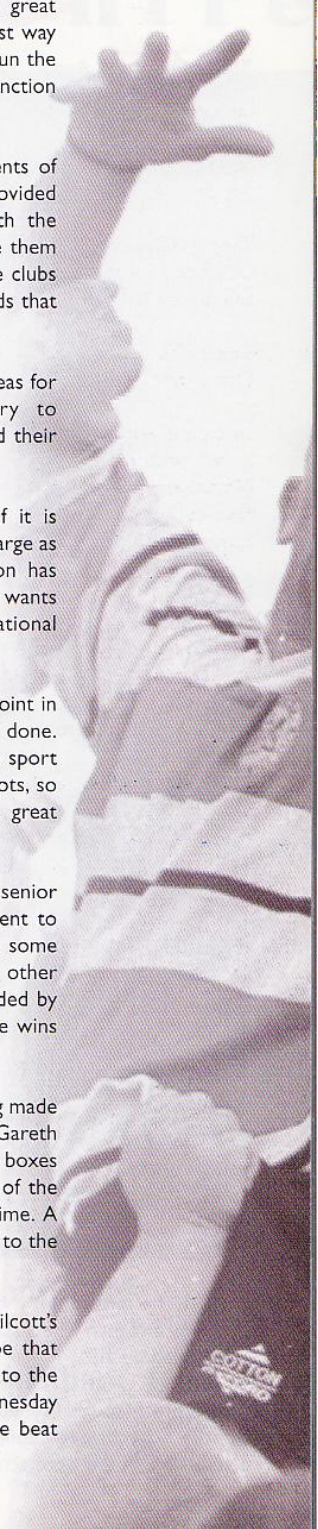
The game of rugby will only survive if it is allowed to present itself to the world at large as an exciting international game. Television has shrunk the globe and the youth of today wants to participate in high profile international sports.

The senior clubs can provide this focal point in the same way as top football clubs have done. This success can then cascade down the sport to ensure a bright future for the grass roots, so that future generations can follow the great traditions of Kingsholm.

I would like to personally thank the senior players in the squad for their commitment to Gloucester by signing contracts at terms some of which could have been bettered by other clubs. I do hope that they will be rewarded by participating in some great sport and the wins which total dedication deserves.

Finally, I am happy with the progress being made by the commercial side of the club. Gareth Chillcott and Barry Preece have filled the boxes and there is an atmosphere in this area of the ground that has been missing for some time. A new club shop is on the way and changes to the bars are due to take place in November.

We are lucky to have somebody of Chillcott's profile involved with the club. Let's hope that today's result will bring the same feeling to the City and Kingsholm, as that magic Wednesday night at the end of last season when we beat Bath.



ED MARTIN

'All the President's Men'

The index of the August 12 issue of The New Yorker gives no clue as to an interesting short article by George Plimpton that is of more than a passing interest to rugby - and political - monomaniac, not to mention those dastardly setters of sporting trivia quizzes.

Scanning the index, the eye passes the regular "Talk of the Town" feature that in this issue has a piece about "A very Presidential chat". The eye may well rest on the "Letter from California" which is subheaded "Bathing Suit Heroines: From Esther Williams to Pamela Anderson".

However, it is "The Talk of the Town" that contains the interesting piece (unless, of course, you are interested in whether or not they wear thongs in "Baywatch" or whether or not the producers of the TV show will allow Butt Floss?).

It is the "presidential" bit that was easily missed. Under the heading "Jock Talk" we learn that George Plimpton, editor of the august "Paris Review" and sports author who actually goes and plays the games (at the highest level) that he writes about, spent a day with President Clinton at the Olympics.

Then come Mr. Plimpton's article an short except now follows:

....I ask him (the President) about his own athletic career. What games did he play at Oxford when he was there as a Rhodes Scholar?

"I played a year for the University basketball team ... for the second team, which shows you how weak basketball was at Oxford. If I wasn't overweight, I was slow, and I wasn't in good shape. It was a period in my life when I didn't have the discipline to show up and do the practice. What I really liked was rugby"

I ask if he played in the scrum, that odd confluence of men who struggle on the field like a wounded beetle.

"It was pretty tough. I remember we played one of the Cambridge colleges. I got mild concussion. There were no substitutes in rugby,

so our coach told me to go back in. I asked what I was supposed to do, since I was dizzy. He said, 'Just get in somebody's way.'" The President laughed and said, "I think it's a terrific game. I just loved it" ...

So now the world knows that President Bill Clinton played - and liked playing - rugby.

And at this stage we had better stop quoting Mr. Plimpton and The New Yorker before the copyright lawyers start huffing and puffing like a concussed to-be president at Oxford University.

Mind you, Clinton is not alone among US Presidents who played rugby. John F. Kennedy played rugby at Harvard. And even the Pope is known to have played the sport in Poland.

Now to the matter at hand - the league fixture against Bath.

It has been well documented that in bygone years a Bath fixture at Kingsholm was looked on as an easy game. There was a lot of justification in this, as the records show that Bath had to wait for 32 years and 22 visits before they got their first Kingsholm win. Fixtures with Bath began in 1895 and in the first 90 years of fixtures, Bath posted just five wins at Kingsholm.

Then came the 'league' ... There have been seven meetings with Bath at Kingsholm in the Courage Clubs Championships and Gloucester have won just two.

Gloucester's overall record against Bath in the first 90 of fixtures was 93 wins, 33 losses and 14 drawn games - a 71 percent winning record. Gloucester outscored Bath by 1,745 to 852. During the same period, Gloucester won 61 of the 73 encounters at Kingsholm, five were lost and seven were drawn for an 88 per cent winning record. Gloucester scored 1,076 points and Bath managed 361.

How things have changed!

Ed: I have just been informed of a Gloucester home page on the World Wide Web, the address is: <http://www.gloucester.demon.co.uk>

CORNER

LIPSON'S



Wasps get the accolade this week, doing the impossible, winning a second time at The Rec since leagues began, a real ding dong battle it was too, but it also sent out a warning to Bath, there has been an increase in standards and life will be tough at the top. Sheasby did his representative prospects no harm at all, and the young half backs, Gomarsall and King were impressive. Harlequins though lead the table with a massive points difference and are looking strong, they have a testing time in December and January with games against Wasps, Leicester and Bath (twice), so far, though, so good. West, Gloucester and Orrell are taking up station at the rear and it really looks a difficult winter ahead for those three, all the other sides from Sale in third to Irish in ninth will feel they are still in contention, but will want points not optimism on the board. In League 2 Richmond and Newcastle are making the running but Coventry, Blackheath and Scottish are going well. Bristol's

If Wasps can win this one they are in with a realistic shout, I go for them but never write off Leicester.

bright start faded a little last week and they now play the runaway Harlequins. A similar scene last season saw Bristol lose a thriller and fade away from there. Bristol have too much dependence on their first choice players and injuries could make life difficult for them as the season progresses. Quins are unlikely to be too put out by a visit to the Memorial Ground and will expect to continue their winning ways, expect a further two points for the visitors today.

The last time Gloucester entertained Bath it was a dark, wet night at Kingsholm and the Cherry and Whites put the champions to the sword, well, things are not going the home sides' way at the moment and an emotional win is less likely this

time. Bath travel on the back of two consecutive defeats which is unknown to the men from The Rec. They are caught betwixt entertainment and pragmatism at present but they should beat Gloucester without reverting too much to the latter.

An entertaining game in prospect at Sunbury where third placed Sale will attempt to keep ahead of the pack. Irish will wish to forget last week's game and expect a more even game this Saturday. The home side generally confuse this tipster and I go for a narrow home win but don't back it heavily.

Northampton have what looks like a home banker against Orrell, a side currently struggling to find their traditional fighting spirit. Saints are a side that like to entertain and yet are not massive ball winners so Orrell's pacy backs could get a look in, but it is difficult to see the Lancashire team returning with any cheer.

West entertain Saracens who are continuing to impress and should find their progress unimpeded today. West have to look to damage limitation and begin to pick off the other relegation candidates if they are to survive, certainly not impossible but it will be hard going.

Game of the weekend is at Loftus Rd where undefeated Wasps play Leicester. Wasps played some excellent rugby last week and were magnificent in counter attack and in defence. The Tigers have yet to perform to their huge abilities but their day will come. This would be worth travelling some distance to watch and if Wasps can win this one then they are in with a realistic shout, I go for them but never write off Leicester!

In League Two I go for wins for: Richmond, Rotherham, Coventry, Scottish, Moseley and Newcastle.