THE FIVE NATIONS POINTSFEST

BRISTOL & WEST

BRISTOL V GLOUCESTER

at The Memorial Ground
Tuesday 18th January 1997
Kick off 7.30 pm
IT is seriously refreshing to find that England are turning not just to Bath but to the rest of the west country for their international players.

The latest men to join the ranks of players getting national recognition are Scott Benton and Mark Mapleton from Gloucester.

Both were called-up for last Friday's England A game against Ireland A in Dublin when ex-Bristol scrum half Kyran Bracken and former Bristol University fly-half Alex King dropped out through injury.

Already, Jack Rowell cannot look outside the region for the two best hookers in the country, Bristol's Mark Regan stepped into the shoes of Pitsull Brian Moore when he decided to hang up his England boots in 1995.

And Gloucester's Phil Greening has started to warming his backside on the same bench which Bath veteran Graham Davve occupied a record 34 times during his international career which started in 1987 and earned him just five caps.

Add to those the now seemingly rock-solid place in the middle of the England line for Bristol's Simon Shaw plus the rise of Gloucester captain Dave Sims and Bristol skipper Martin Corry to A team places, and it seems as though the balance of power on the big circuit is shifting.

Once mighty Bath's contingent in the national set-up has dwindled, At one stage, they could boast most of the back division plus one or two up front.

Now, quietly, Mike Catt and Jeremy Guscott were dropped to the replacement's bench for last Saturday's Five Nations clash with Brian Ashton's Ireland in Dublin and Adedayo Adebayo has become a one-cap wonder after playing against Italy before Christmas, although still involved in the A team set-up.

That leaves just Phil de Glanville and wing Jon Sleightholme as representatives from Bath in the national team - and England captain de Glanville is being hassled hard for his place by people such as Leicester's wonder centre Will Greenwood.

If Benton and/or Mapleton do well themselves in future A team matches, they could press their cases for inclusion on the summer tour of Argentina and, after that, Rowell could even consider them for the main side if they develop sufficiently.

So, while it may seem doom and gloom for Bristol and a satisfactory mid-table feeling for Gloucester and players may think that they are being overlooked because they are not in a fashionable club, that is certainly not true and the opportunities are coming the west country's way.
Gloucester know exactly how Bristol are feeling at the moment. The Cherry and Whites have fought and won four consecutive battles against relegation, with the fight getting a little bit harder every year. But they saved themselves from seemingly certain doom last year and now things are looking a whole lot brighter.

After losing the first five matches of the season, it seemed that they might be in for another long, tough struggle for survival in Courage League One. But the turning point came in October with a memorable win over Wasps at Kingsholm and since then, slowly but surely, Gloucester have been digging themselves out of the mire. When they beat West Hartlepool 37-10 at Kingsholm in January they set a new club record of six consecutive league wins. That has now been stretched to seven with this month’s 30-11 victory over Orwell at home, and Gloucester are certainly hoping the run will not stop there.

While Gloucester have been climbing the table, Bristol have been slipping back with seven successive defeats and the relegation play-offs are beckoning to them unless they can produce a Gloucester-style recovery.

Gloucester have been helped to an extent by a fixture list which pitted them against top five clubs at the beginning and end of the season and allowed them to play all the clubs from the bottom half of the table twice in the middle of the campaign. However, the players have worked extremely hard for the relative mid-table security they are now enjoying and they are certainly not taking it for granted yet.

Many of them went though last season’s harrowing escape from the drop and, having won a winner-takes-all clash with Saracens last April, they do not want to put themselves through the tension of the play-offs this time. So Gloucester come to Bristol tonight full of the confidence which comes with success, but also with the words of director of coaching Richard Hill ringing in their ears telling them that they can’t consider themselves safe in League One until they have amassed four more points.

Gloucester knocked Bristol out of the Pilkington Cup last month and the visitors tonight know their hosts will be out for revenge as well as precious league points.

Gloucester captain Dave Sims said: “Bristol will be out to try and kick-start their season by beating us. They want to get out of that bottom four and we are determined to keep them there, because if they get out of trouble it will probably be us that falls into it.”

Gloucester have put in a couple of below-par performances recently so, although they have kept winning, they know that there are improvements to be made.”

Sims said: “I sometimes think that if we lost a game it would be better for the players because that would concentrate our minds on where we went wrong, but I obviously don’t want us to lose a league or cup game.

The skipper is looking for a better performance from his team tonight, but his priority is for them to notch up another win. But is he feeling the pressure of the winning run? Is he looking ahead cautiously and wondering when it will end?

“I don’t even think about that,” said Sims. “Being on a winning run is half the fun. The only trouble is the fans expect more each week but no situation is perfect.”

Katie Coke
Rugby Correspondent, Gloucester Citizen

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IAN SMITH was due to have further talks with Gloucester's director of rugby Richard Hill this week about his future at the club.

But one thing pretty certain: Scottish flanker Smith will not be making the move south from Kingsholm to Bristol.

And that means the 20-capped international could face losing his Scotland place because the national side want their men to play first-team rugby in future and not turn out for second XVs.

So, with Nasan Carter first choice flanker and Andrew Stanley second choice - both of them ahead of Smith - it leaves the 31-year-old in serious career trouble unless he and Hill can thrash something out between them soon.

Bristol had tracked Smith for weeks but got fed-up with waiting for him to decide whether he wanted to join them or not.

They set a deadline, 12 noon on Tuesday, for him to say one way or another - but he failed to ring up.

Therefore, it left frustrated Bristol director Derek Brown with no option. He issued a statement saying: "His deadline was on Tuesday lunchtime but there has been no response.

"So we are no longer interested in Ian Smith and we will look somewhere else to strengthen our back row."

Rumours were that second division Moseley were interested in buying six feet one inch Smith out of his contract and take him to The Recllings.

But upheavals there have changed all that. Moseley's director of rugby Mark Anscombe resigned a week ago yesterday to be replaced by Welshman Alan Lewis, whose pedigree includes coaching stints at Llanelli.

Lewis, however, has been overwhelmed with work since arriving at Moseley so the last thing on his mind at present is rumours about buying Smith.

With those avenues blocked, that just leaves the flanker the immediate option of getting some sort of dialogue with Hill to secure his future.

Hill is determined that the former club captain should fight for his place with Carter and Stanley but whether he is able to oust them, becomes first choice and, therefore, save his international place remains to be seen.
Meet the two Hookers

MARK REGAN

Born: 21st January 1972
Height: 5ft 11ins
Weight: 16st 2lbs
Full name: Mark Peter Regan

Mark has represented at England 16 Group President’s XV, 18 Group, Colts, Students, Under 21’s and Emerging Players. His first game for England ‘A’ was in the 21pts–20 victory over Ireland at Donnybrook, in January 1995, as he toured Australia and Fiji the following summer when Paul Hull led England ‘A’. Mark took the England No. 2 jersey off the most capped hooker, Brian Moore, for the game against South Africa in front of a 78,000 capacity crowd at Twickenham in November 1995. This season he has won caps against Italy, Argentina, Scotland and Ireland as well as playing for England in the non-cap game against the New Zealand Barbarians.

International Honours:
England ‘A’ (7), England (9)

PHIL GREENING

Born: 3rd October 1975
Height: 5ft 11ins
Weight: 17st
Full name: Phillip Bradley Thomas Greening


Phil marked his debut for England ‘A’ with a try as they thrashed Western Samoa 55pts–nil at Gateshead in December 1995. He was England’s first substitute, for Bristol’s Mark Regan, in the International against Italy at Twickenham on 23rd November 1996.

Phil was also named as a replacement for England’s games against the New Zealand Barbarians, Scotland and Ireland but had to withdraw from the game at Lansdowne Road due to injury.

International Honours:
England ‘A’ (3), England (1)
There have been many exciting tussles between Bristol and Gloucester over the 104 years of this local derby with just seventeen of the 193 games ending level, thankfully only three of those where without a point being scored.

This afternoon we look back nearly 25 years to February 1962. Gloucester had won the game at Kingsholm earlier in the season by 15pts-3 but on this occasion Bristol vice-captain David Weels scored his side's 100th try of the season.

Bristol were without Glover and Mann who were on County duty as Cornwall took on Warwickshire at Coventry. The Gloucester side included 17 year old scrum half John Spalding plus, two of the 1966/67 Committee at Kingsholm, Eric Stephens and Alan Brinn.

Horace Hinn reported for the Western Daily Press on the game, from 3rd February 1962, that ended Bristol 23pts Gloucester nil. Playing at the top of their form Bristol outclassed Gloucester as they have never done before by their whirlwind handling movements on the Memorial Ground.

Even larger victory than a goal, a drop goal and five tries to nothing would not have exaggerated their superiority. This was more than ample revenge for their 15pts-3 defeat at Kingsholm earlier in the season.

There were times when Bristol simply bewildered their opponents by their interpassing at speed and their quick changing of the point of attack.

This was most evident in the first half when they literally ran rings round Gloucester but their was a weakness in finishing power, otherwise Bristol would have almost doubled the four points they obtained in that period.

Not so spectacular were Bristol in the second half but they still dominated the play and they were clearly more than nine points better than their rivals during that stage.

Throughout the game Bristol showed unmistakably that they were far in advance of their opponents in terms of ideas in attack and had extra skill, pace, determination and team work to execute manoeuvres which would have paralysed any defence.

Their six tries, however, came not from pre-conceived schemes but from the snapping up of chances and the quick perception of the way to develop a handling movement to outwit the disposition of the defence.

**ORTHODOX STYLE**

Gloucester's attacks were few and confined to the orthodox style with no element of surprise likely to bring about an overthrow of Bristol's improved defence, in fact they seldom seriously threatened the home side.

In defence Gloucester offered spirited resistance in the centre and although their wing forwards could not check attacks developing, they concentrated in the middle to form a barrier to Bristol penetrating too deep too often.

One of Bristol's strongest features was the way their forwards combined attack with defence. All of the eight had periods of running with the ball as individuals or as links in a concerted handling movement but at the same time they defended with rare vigour.

Through the good work of John Currie, Dave Watt and Derek Neate, Bristol had more of the ball from the line-out but honours seemed even in set scrum mages and Ken Taylor hooked well for Gloucester.

In the loose Bristol were faster on the ball and no one was more effective in the open than Len Davies, who was quick and...
OUTCLASS GLOUCESTER

KICKING OFF-TARGET

Bristol's goal-kicking was off the target and the only try converted was by John New--his first ever for the club.

The opening score was a drop goal by Blake, who after his forwards had heeled in front of the posts, had all the time in the world to steady himself and take careful aim, which showed the hesitancy of the opposing wing-forwards.

Then Godson raced over following a neat handling movement.

Bristol's 100th try of the season was obtained by vice captain David Weeks, who accepted a well-directed pass from Redwood to round the opposition and fling himself over in the corner.

Then Ellery obtained his first try, taking a pass from Peter Colston and beating two opponents to the line. This was the try which New converted.

Early in the second half Davies charged down a kick by Spalding after the Gloucester forwards had heeled near their own line, and he scored a try.

The same forward a little later swept up the ball in his own half and Ellery accepting a pass in his stride, raced 50 yards to the line, leaving his pursuers well behind. His third try came after Blake scooped up the ball from the loose, and the right wing again weaved his way by opponents to the line.

DISTINCT ADVANTAGE

Bristol had a distinct advantage at half back, where at the base of the scrum Bill Redwood was far too experienced for the 17 year old John Spalding, who took the place of Mickie Booth. As an engineer of constructive attack John Blake outplayed Terry Hopson, who did little but kick to touch.

Bristol's centre play was a little jumpy, Laurie Watts once or twice jinxed his way through, and Alan Godson was here, there and everywhere but his unpredictable moves often confused his side as much as his opponents.

The outstanding three-quarter Mike Ellery, who scored three grand tries in which he showed pace which enabled him to outstrip the opposition,

Bristol: P Colston, M Ellery, L Watts, A Godson, D J Weeks, J Blake, B Redwood
D St G Hazell, J Throne, J New, J Currie, D Watt, T Base, D Neate (capt) I Davies
Gns: New
DG: Blake
Gloucester: R Hillier, A Osmann, E Stephens, A Holder, P Meadows, T Hopson, J Spalding
A Townsend, K Taylor, J Fowke, B Hudson, A Brinn, P Ford, T Davies, D Smith
Referee: D O H Davies (WRU)

It wasn't just the Bristol 1st XV who were dominating the action against the Cherry and Whites, as this report from the game played the same day reveals.

Gloucester Utd 3pts
Bristol United 24

Bristol United, fielding no fewer than five County players, found Gloucester United no match for them at Kingsholm.

The result, Bristol's three placed goals and three tries to Gloucester's solitary penalty goal, speaks for them at Kingsholm.

Superior in all departments, the Bristol side may well have run up 50 points but for some sound work by Gloucester full back Stan Ingram who refused to panic although continually under pressure.

Gloucester:
Penalty: Ingram

Bristol:
Tries: Collins (2), Morris (2), Lewis, Fry
Conversions: Cripps (3)
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**Referee:** Doug Chapman (Scunthorpe Soc.)

**RFU Adviser:** Alan Welsby (Manchester Soc.)

**Touch Judges:**
- Steve Leyshon (Bristol Society)
- Sam Collins (Gloucester Society)
MARK MAPLETOFT and Paul Burke will probably be
The two fly-halves went head-to-head last Friday when England A
With so much riding on the match, as far as Bristol are concerned, Burke
point for point, while the tactics of both
So what is the make-up of two of the key

Paul Burke

Age: 23
Born: London
Height: Five feet eight inches
Weight: 12 stones
Honours: Has played for Ireland on eight occasions, making his
debut against England in 1995. Also Ireland A, Ireland Under-
Educated: Epsom College, Surrey

The most surprising statistic to the uninitiated about Paul Burke is that he is actually an Englishman born and bred
and actually captained England Colts at one time.
But he is very proud of his Irishness and, if he ever lapses
from that, he will have his mother and father to answer to.
His father is from Galway and his mum is a Kildare woman.
After his years in England and playing for London Irish, Burke
went across to the Emerald Isle to teach schoolchildren and
play for the Cork Constitution club.
He has had a constant battle to keep his Irish
place, however, since his debut in 1995. Always on
his tail are Eric Elwood and David Humphreys.
Burke came back to England during the summer
when Bristol persuaded him and his club-
mate, Irish international flanker David
Corkery, to join them.
Has formed a very good partnership this season
with ex-British Lions and Wales scrum half
Robert Jones at The Memorial Ground.
sick of the sight of each other after tonight's match. Look on Ireland A in Dublin, and now the two players are at it again. He will be under pressure to make sure he matches Mapleton's kicks at goal. His fly-halves will be vital to the outcome. We've seen in this match? Here we examine them.

**Mark Mapleton**

**Age:** 25  
**Born:** Mansfield  
**Height:** Five feet seven inches  
**Weight:** 13st 8lb  
**Honours:** England A (made his debut v Ireland A last Friday), England Under 21, England Under 18  
**Other sporting achievements:** Was with Coventry City FC reserves as a schoolboy.

Educated: Bawtry Middle School and Lawrence Sheriff School, Rugby, and Loughborough University.

Mapleton was converted to a fly half this season after spending much of his rugby career at full back. His career was rocked by a serious knee injury that threatened to end his rugby playing days, but he made a remarkable recovery to get back to fitness and began playing rugby again towards the back end of last season.

Mapleton has adapted to his new position with supreme confidence and done a fantastic job in helping retrieve Gloucester’s flagging fortunes at the beginning of the season through his goal and tactical kicking.

His efforts were rewarded last Friday when he was called up as a replacement for ex-Bristol University fly-half and current Wasps number 10 Alex King to play in the England A game against Ireland and earn his first major senior cap at that level. That was a double celebration for Gloucester because Mapleton was joined at half-back by his scrum-half partner at the club Scott Benton.
Audley Lumsden

If ever there was one fixture that seemed immovable at Bath's Recreation Ground over the years among the backs, it had to be Audley Lumsden, the quiet, unassuming but immensely talented winger-cum-full-back.

So it was quite a shock to the system when Lumsden dropped the bombshell on the double league and cup champions and decided to move to arch-rivals Gloucester at the start of the season.

The reason for the switch was purely professional in that Bath wanted all their players to train during the day and, with a very good job as a physics teacher at top private school Millfield, the 29-year-old could not afford to give that up.

But, since his arrival at Kingsholm, Lumsden has had some other responsibilities put onto his shoulders.

He is the old head in a back division blossoming with young and adventurous talent.

Although he has not been around the Kingsholm first team much in recent weeks, rugby director Richard Hill knows that the stabilising effect that six feet tall Lumsden can have on his youthful backs is vital.

He is no mean try-scorer either! Lumsden has had few opportunities to show his skills in the first XV this season but, while at Bath last season, the contest was white hot between him and England wingers Jon Sleightholme and Adebayo for the two wing places.

Lumsden has also achieved honours. He made his one and only appearance for the then England B side in 1989 when he scored a try against the French but has also played for England Students and England Colts.

But numerous injuries - including a broken neck which had to fitted with a special brace - have hampered his progress through his career.

Now he has established himself among the Kingsholm clan and, injuries permitting, will be able to help settle the side for the run-in towards the end of the season and beyond along with ex-Bath colleagues Hill and Gareth Chilcott.