

GLOUCESTER

The Cherry and Whites

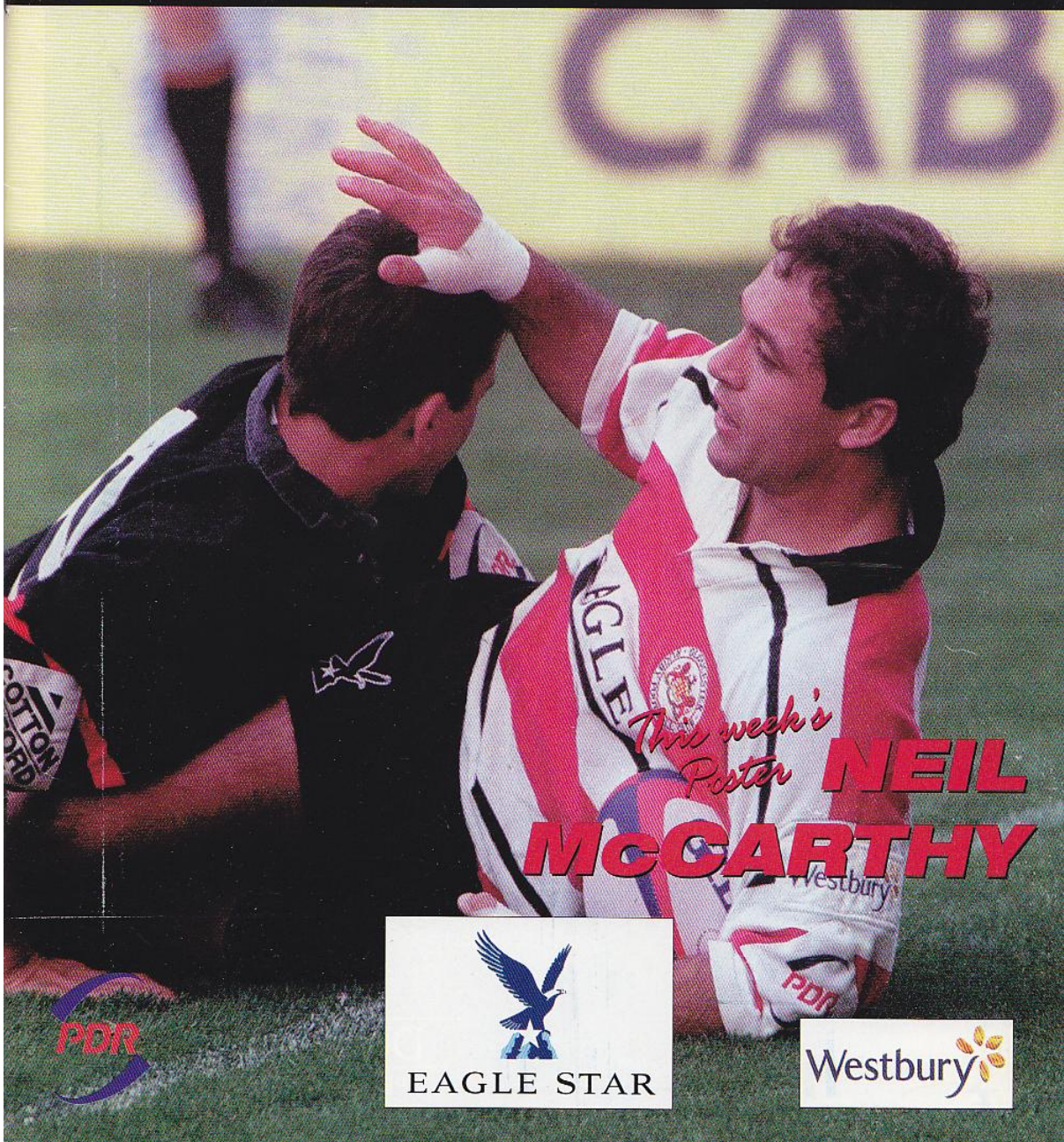


GLOUCESTER V HARLEQUINS

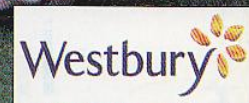
£2.00

2nd November 1997 KO 3pm Vol 2/6

Today's Match Day Sponsor: Rickerby Watterson



*This week's
Poster* **NEIL
MCCARTHY**





Toughest Test

so far

Peter Arnold

If, as has been reported, Gloucester's aim is to win all their home matches this season, then today sees the sternest test of that resolve so far. I realise that may be stating the obvious, but it's worth saying nevertheless, if only as part of our very sincere welcome to today's formidable visitors.

Our first Allied Dunbar win over Bristol was adequate, the next Kingsholm victory was little short of brilliant. Indeed, it must have done something positive to the underrated London Irish side, because they certainly did a power of no good to the reigning Champions, the strangely stuttering Wasps, last weekend.

Not that all has been plain sailing in the Harlequins camp, hitherto, with some wins and a couple of defeats which I wouldn't have thought they really expected. Nevertheless, Harlequins must have arrived here with a fair amount of confidence, because if Gloucester are to keep the ground record, they're going to have to end a losing run which goes back almost exactly three years. And that Gloucester win wasn't at Kingsholm, either. On Guy Fawkes Day, 1994, we won 14-10 at the Stoop. You have to think back a further year since we put it across

the Quins here, by 24-20, and that was a pretty heart-stopping encounter, as I recall.

Of course, a lot has changed at the Stoop in those three years, not least the name of the club. After having schooled myself to remember, for decades, that the correct title was the singular, 'Harlequin Football Club', I now have to use the plural form, and add an element or two as well.

The official title, in these increasingly commercial days, is 'NEC Harlequins of London', which makes excellent marketing, and even geographical, sense, but hardly trips off the tongue, does it? Never mind - I expect we'll keep on talking about 'The Quins', as we've always done.

And I do mean always. I think I'm right in saying that there are only a couple of clubs - Blackheath and Richmond - which are older than Quins, but we aren't that far behind them, and there have certainly been fixtures between us for most of that time. It's all very well being in a professional era, with promotion and relegation issues to consider and all the rest, but it would be a great shame if historic encounters like this one were to disappear.

Of course, time is a funny old

thing. I was surprised, over the weekend, to discover that in the Sale game, Daren O'Leary scored two tries in his 100th game for the club! Most of us will recall his searing try against us while playing for Saracens, and if you'd asked me, I would have said that that was only two or three years ago.

All that is background. Now, how about today I haven't seen either side, at the time of writing, of course, but there are one or two potential confrontations on the cards which are positively mouth-watering. Wood v. Greening. The entire front-row battle, for that matter. Mapletoft v. Lacroix. I could go on, but you're quite as capable of making the comparisons as I am.

Who's going to win? Wouldn't put my shirt on either side. Both are capable of thrilling rugby. Both can produce hard, dour, forward battles if the occasions warrant it. Both have world-class potential match winners. Should be a great afternoon.

And the Quins always provide one of the highlights of the Kingsholm season. It's great to welcome them again, and we hope they have a fine old time with us.

Straight talking



G. L. Oster

A Higher Class of Rugby

...it's made wet Wednesday evenings worthwhile!

A *Higher Class of Rugby*, the new Bath mantra unveiled in the first episode of the BBC's fly on the wall documentary "The Rugby Club." Five weeks later and the image of the U.K.'s most glamorous club side is somewhat tarnished.

How unfortunate it was to see the ground staff at The Rec struggling to find seats for their guests from Wasps on the opening day of last season. And I must admit I had to smile when preparations for that same game were so disrupted by a bunch of schoolgirls wielding lacrosse sticks. I mean *lacrosse sticks*. Anywhere else it'd be hockey, netball or rounders.

Gloucester may not be as glamorous as our West Country neighbours at Bath, but I suggest the programme makers would have discovered a lot more about genuine rugby folk if they'd chosen Kingsholm instead of the Rec. Not for us the rap CD that sunk like the proverbial stone in the River Avon. Instead, we're treated to the pre-match sounds of the Band of the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment, or the

Glorious Glosters to you and me (and wasn't that a real treat). In fact I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU STRAIGHT, I think that Gloucester Rugby Football Club is improving at the moment, both on and off the field at the same rate as Bath appear to be losing its (sic) grip on things. As well as the marching bands, did you notice how popular the big screen was at the match against London Irish. In fact, it was so popular I'm sure I spotted Ed Morrison taking a sly glance at the screen before blowing his whistle at least once during the game. That poster of Ed Pearce which appeared in the programme for the same game is just the right size to cover up that damp patch on my bedroom wall, and best of all we've won some good early season matches for the first time in a few years.

But let's be honest. Would a programme based around Kingsholm have made as entertaining viewing as Bath did for "The Rugby Club"? I mean, who at Gloucester could have filled the shoes of Mr Coca Cola, Steven Hands, who's taken

to the role of the Bath baddie like a duck to water. How we booed as he ended a century of tradition in Bath with one turn of his flip chart when he introduced the word "rugby" into the club logo (lots of marketing training needed for that one!). And surely Gloucester would never be so careless as to literally lose its chief coach midway through the season, even if it did add spice to the plot of a sporty soap.

The producer of the series Alistair Laurence told me that "Bath took it on the chin." He admits that Chief Executive Tony Swift and others at the Rec. "Found it hard to watch." Well I can tell you Mr Laurence, as a true Gloucester fan. I didn't find it hard at all. In fact, it's made wet Wednesday evenings worthwhile.



Last week's poster of Ed Pearce, one of Gloucester's many ex-players Bath

LETTERS



Peter Arnold

Here we have a happy little plea from a chap who has been staying here for a few weeks, and now has to return to his native Australia. As you'll see, he's enjoyed himself immensely, and doesn't want to sever his connections when he has to rejoin his prison hulk en route to Botany Bay.

He would like to maintain his links with our fair city by acquiring a like-minded pen pal or two. And why not ?

Anyone interested ? Over to you.

JEFF PETERSEN
166 HURSTVILLE ROAD
OATLEY 2223
SYDNEY, N.S.W.
AUSTRALIA

Dear Sir/Madam,

Hi! I wonder if you could please see it in your heart to do me a small favour?

I am a 24 year old Australian from Sydney (unfortunately leaving here in a few days after a three weeks holiday) but as I am a life long rugby fan I hope you could publicise this in your club programme or magazine.

I would like to write to supporters, female or male, to keep me in touch with the club and its players. I love the people, and just can't wait to be back!
I want to find a regular fan to correspond with.

Thank you.

Regards,

Jeff Petersen
JEFF PETERSEN

Buy him a new hat, someone



Peter Arnold

Ken Johnston is the long-serving and highly respected press officer of the Bath club. A story of his, which he told in BBC 2's excellent documentary series on the fortunes and misfortunes of the club during the 1996/7 season came as a bright candle in the winds of trauma which was sweeping the then Champions at the time the series was being filmed.

Ken was sporting a rather flamboyant straw headpiece, which was remarked upon by the TV people. He grinned, and explained that the article had been given to him by the actress, the late Pat Phoenix, who played 'Elsie Tanner' in Coronation Street for so many years. Apparently, it had become something of a club good-luck charm.

"I wore it to one game, and we won", he explained. "So I've worn it to every game since"

"There was only one game when I didn't wear it, and that was for that unfortunate defeat against Gloucester at Kingsholm, last season. So now whenever I turn up, they always make sure I'm wearing The Hat!"

Do you think we should have a whip-round to buy him a new hat before we go down to the Rec on December 20th?

All of which is merely a prologue to pointing out that we have a lot going on between now and Christmas - but none of it is going on at Kingsholm. In fact, after today, we only have one First XV game at home between now and the Festive Season. And that's

against Fylde, on December 6th, in the rather odd League Cup which is about to descend on us. It's also the day when England entertain New Zealand, so it will probably be a 12.30 kick-off, so that everyone can watch events at Twickenham. Even the December 20th Bath fixture is in doubt, because that's the day of the European Semi Finals, which means that if either or both of the two sides progress that far, there will have to be a rearrangement.

So let's have a look at who's doing what and to whom over the coming weeks.

Saturday, November 15th, we make the long trek northwards to play West Hartlepool in the League Cup, and I'm rather pleased about that. Over the seasons when 'West' were in Division One, our two sets of supporters got on like a house on fire. The annual trips to West Hartlepool were notable for the fun everyone had, and the hospitality which was extended to us, so it's nice to be able to visit them again, albeit in a rather contrived situation.

On Friday, November 21st, we're on our travels again, this time to Northampton, the day before England take on the All Blacks for the first time. Please note: this is also a League Cup affair, and not an Allied Dunbar Premiership engagement, so it's nothing to get your shorts in a shiver about.

This is followed, on Saturday, December 6th, by the aforesaid Fylde game at Kingsholm, after which it's

back to the stern realities of Premiership action again. And a tough reintroduction it is, too.

We start, on Sunday December 14th, with the hard old visit to Rob Andrew's army at Newcastle. That's followed, on the ensuing Saturday by the in-doubt fixture at Bath. Then it is, at long last, back to Kingsholm.

There's a mouth-watering prospect for you. The highly-polished, and highly-expensive, group of young gentlemen from Richmond descends upon us on the Saturday after Christmas, again, in the Premiership. I can't think that many of us will want to miss that one.

Finally, for 1997, we visit Sale, also in the Premiership, rather oddly, on Tuesday December 30th.

So now you know. The situation isn't ideal, by any means, and you will have seen various highly important people around the game objecting to the lack of meaningful club rugby in the immediate future. I'm not going to get into that argument, here, but one thought does occur.

If the Powers That Be persist in staging no fewer than four pre-Christmas Internationals, and if France, Romania, Argentina and Italy want to continue with their Latin Cup, couldn't the various authorities get together and stage the two sets of matches at the same time? That way, English clubs would not be deprived of their overseas stars for important Premiership matches.

Or is that too simple?

Player Profile

Dave Sims

Peter Arnold

The last twelve months have certainly been a period of highs and lows for Dave Sims. Last season, he had grown into the job of Gloucester RFC's Club Captain, and was fulfilling that role with admirable authority and dignity. His presence on the field was awesome, and his influence on many games, undoubted.

Then, at the end of the season, things got even better for him. His attractive wife, Jill, presented him with a son, who was named 'Nathaniel'.

Even that was accomplished, on Dave's part, in typical Sims fashion. Babies are no respecters of timetables, as anyone who has done their share of early-hours bedroom-pacing knows, and young Nat was no exception. He delayed his kick-off time so that he made his arrival less than an hour before a home game. Nothing daunted, and with the promptings of his wife, Dave dashed from hospital to ground, and ran straight out on to the field.

It was after the season finished that things went wrong. Dave Sims was invited to tour Australia, with England 'A' but had to turn the trip down because of injury. An Achilles tendon problem had reached the stage where surgery was essential, so Dave really had little choice.

Even worse, the recovery period was at least as long as had been feared, and Dave had to miss the first half-dozen or so games of the season. He admits that his pet hate is 'being injured at any time', and I remember

bumping into him at the Bristol game, where he was pithy on the subject.

"How's the Achilles going, Dave?" I warbled. "Coming on fine." He grumbled. "But it's bloody awful standing here watching!"

Dave Sims seems to have been the rock at the heart of the Gloucester pack for so long that it come as a surprise to learn that he doesn't attain his 28th birthday for three weeks yet. Lock forwards need time to perfect their craft, so there's plenty of time for the 6'7" and 19st. 5lbs. of Sims on the hoof to achieve his one remaining ambition of winning a full England Cap.

Let's face it, he's done just about everything else. Starting with Longlevens, who have provided any number of good players for Gloucester, he has also turned out for Sunny Bank in Australia. He's played for the South West, England at U21, 'B' and 'A' levels, and has also made prestigious appearances for Penguins, Major Stanley's XV, and of course, the Barbarians.

But he makes no bones about it. For him, his most memorable match is the first time he turned out for Gloucester. "It's my home town!" he explains, and isn't it nice to hear someone saying that in these peripatetic days?

The players 'Simmo' admires most are John Eales and Ian Jones, but Dave can hold his head up, even in that company. Anyone who saw him take apart Jeremy Davidson and Gabriel Fulcher in our recent victory over

London Irish won't have much doubt about that.

We can all think of periods when England would have been extremely glad to have Dave Sims to call upon, and without naming names, we can also think of recent lock-forward Internationals - and even Lions - who don't really deserve to get the nod over Dave Sims.

However, Dave keeps on plying his trade, and waits for the call which must surely come one of these days. Meanwhile, he spends as much time as he can on the weights, and might be seen, when not in training, in the Prince of Wales.

I think that one of my favourite memories of David Sims concerns the next match after his son was born. There was a line-out in front of the Shed, on the opposing throw-in. "One for the boy, Simmo!" someone shouted, and Dave duly delivered. But then, he always does.



Gloucester v Harlequins, 2nd



FOUNDED 1873



Sunday 2nd November 1997

Kick-off 3.00pm

GLoucester 16

Cherry & White

HARLEQUINS 17

Light Blue, Magenta, Chocolate,
French Grey, Black & Light Green

Full Back	CHRIS CATLING	15	24	■	JAMIE WILLIAMS	Full Back
Right Wing	RAPHAEL SAINT-ANDRE	14		■	DAREN O'LEARY	Wing
Centre	TERRY FANOLUA (I)	13	11	■	SPENCER BROMLEY	Wing
Centre	RICHARD TOMBS (I)	12	38	■	TULSEN TOLLETT	Centre
Left Wing	PHILIPPE SAINT-ANDRE (I)	11	32	■	JASON KEYTER	Centre
Outside Half	MARK MAPLETOFT (I)	10	12	■	JONNY NGAUAMO	Centre
Scrum Half	SCOTT BENTON	9	13	■	WILL CARLING	Centre
Prop	PHIL VICKERY	1	10	■	THIERRY LACROIX	Stand Off
Hooker	NEIL McCARTHY	2	18	■	ROB LILEY	Stand Off
Prop	ANDY DEACON	3	9	■	HUW HARRIS	Scrum Half
Lock	ROB FIDLER	4	8	■	ADAM LEACH	No 8
Lock	DAVE SIMS	5	28	■	RORY JENKINS	Flanker
Flanker	PETE GLANVILLE*	6	7	■	LAURENT CABANNES	Flanker
Flanker	NATHAN CARTER	7	19	■	IAN PICKUP	Flanker
No. 8	ED PEARCE	8	33	■	BILL DAVIDSON	Second Row
Replacements	NICK OSMAN	16	4	■	GARETH LLEWELLYN	Second Row
	AUDLEY LUMSDEN	17	3	■	JASON LEONARD	Prop
	LAURIE BECK	18	17	■	ALTAN OZDEMIR	Prop
	TREVOR WOODMAN/ANDY ROBINSON	19	1	■	MASSIMO CUTTITA	Prop
	PHIL GREENING	20	2	■	KEITH WOOD	Hooker
	MARK CORNWELL	21	22	■	TOM BILLUPS	Hooker
		22		■	CHRIS WRIGHT	

Referee

NICK COUSINS
(RFU/London)

(I) International
* Captain

Fourth Official

L Beck

Touch Judges

S WOMERSLEY (RFU)
B OCKENDEN (RFU)

Catching 'em Young



Peter Arnold

Today's Match Mascot is, would you believe, Ben Clarke.

Well, I suppose he had to find something to do with himself now that he's been dropped from the England squad.

Seriously, though, our own Benjamin Clarke is twelve years old, attends Newent Comprehensive, and lives in

Westbury-on-Severn, where they do have a thriving rugby club, so perhaps someone ought to call around to Ben's place and do a spot of recruiting. If he's out when you call, he's probably gone swimming.

Not that rugby has it all its own way in the Clarke household. Ben's father is a convinced and practising

Manchester United supporter, and claims that they are the only possible club to support. Ben, therefore, and his younger brother, James, don't have much choice in the matter.

But all that apart, it's nice to see young Ben here, doing the business for us. Thanks a lot, Ben!

The Face in the Crowd

Congratulations! The Face in the Crowd wins 2 FREE tickets for a Allied Dunbar Premiership One match of your choice at Kingsholm



Gloucester v Harlequins, 2nd November 1997

Great Occasion

Peter Arnold

For family reasons, I wasn't able to be here for the London Irish game, but I was able to watch it on Sky Television. I was impressed. Not by the rugby, alone, although that was highly entertaining and gratifying, but also by the way the old ground looked, and must have appeared to the watching millions. There wasn't any need for cameramen to try and avoid wide open spaces around an atmosphere-free soccer ground, built to accommodate three times as many fans as were actually in attendance. There was no flaking paintwork, no rusting grandstands. The actual playing surface looked green enough to play snooker on, and flat enough to host a cricket match. In fact, the whole ambience was exactly what one would require from a top-class rugby match. I think everyone involved in staging the event, from the Chairman of the Board down

to the lowliest 'Golden Gamble' seller, is to be congratulated.

I enjoyed the coverage, too. Stuart Barnes hasn't always been our favourite person, but his comments were those of a chap who really knows what it's like to play at Kingsholm, and like many other great opponents over the years, has a great affection for the place. That helped immeasurably. I particularly liked his remark when the camera gave us a close-up of Terry Fanolua with plugs of bloodstained cotton wool up each nostril. "That's a fashion accessory at Kingsholm." quipped Barney.

We couch potatoes also had one advantage which you luckier souls didn't. We were able to hear the referee's remarks, too. Mr. Morrison's lecture to Gary Halpin before he yellow-carded him was very revealing. Suffice it to say that he told the international prop that he

would award a penalty try if he persisted in coming into the scrum at that angle. He did, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Quite an occasion. But I'd rather have been here.

GOING TO PARIS NEXT SATURDAY?

I understand that Rob Gough and Rita in the Club are working on their fifth coach for that great Paris trip to watch Gloucester play Stade Francais in the European Conference Quarters, so if you'd like to go for the ridiculously reasonable price of £44 - which includes a match ticket - it's still worth enquiring. What I didn't know until recently is that John Hall has - or had, last Wednesday - around 100 match tickets at just £5.00 each for anyone who wants to travel independently. So if, for your own purposes you'd like to travel on your own, ring Gullivers Travels on 01684 293175. And I won't tell the wife.

It isn't how big it is - it's what you do with it

Peter Arnold

Our big screen over the Worcester Street end seems to have been a great success, although whether referees will enjoy having any equivocal decisions displayed as an instant replay, I'm not sure. Did you think that London Irish's try

should have been awarded, after you'd seen the replay, for example?

However, I did like the story related by 'Ernie Elver' in the Pink 'Un.

Apparently, having watched the screen for a while, one

Shedhead wondered if, perchance he should attempt a streak. "I'd look nice and big up there !" he declared.

"Don't kid yourself !" replied his Missus.

A prophet has no honour...

Tail Piece

You'll have noticed that we have a gratifyingly large amount of information about the Harlequins squad in this issue, and I'm grateful to my old correspondent, Alex Saward for providing it.

In addition, he sent me a copy of the Quins pre-season newsletter, which is a nicely produced glossy effort. On the back page, there's a nice photo of a happy, smiling bunch of kids and their parents,

obviously enjoying themselves at The Stoop. The headline reads: 500 ATTEND OUR FAMILY DAY. Well done, Quins Congratulations. We had 3,000 at ours.

Devil's Jonson at Kingsholm today

Devil's Jonson are a rock band based in Gloucester. The band, formerly known as Cherry Red, changed the name about a year ago. These boys form a rare outfit these days, being only a three piece, but they have resisted all temptation to utilise pre-recorded tapes or electronic gizmos. However, when it comes to equipment they use only the best.

The three guys in the band have a long history of playing live music. They are also well into

completing their first CD of self-penned tracks.

Danny Hobbs is the lead vocalist and bass guitarist. This combination of disciplines is perhaps the most difficult to achieve, but Dan carries it off without any compromise whatsoever. His vocal style is ideal for the music Devil's Jonson play, and regular garglings with razor blades keep Dan's voice in great shape.

Simon Webb on lead guitar is one of the best on the circuit. His

solos flow with a finesse and accuracy sought by many. Simon, or "Knobhead" as he is affectionately known, (he is the band engineer) also sings harmony vocals.

Bob Cocker on drums is the veteran of the band, having played in bands of all genres since the mid-60's. OK, so he is getting on a bit, but Bob kicks the band along with great fluidity and power, and he also sings harmony vocals.