



## From the Team Manager

am sure that you will all remember the game against Richmond at the beginning of the season. It was one of Gloucester's finest performances - particularly away from home - for some time, and the victory it produced was justly celebrated. However, despite some excellent results - notably against Bath - some games since then have not gone our way and we now find ourselves only one place above Richmond in the ADP table. Richmond also have the advantage of having three games in hand over us, so to take the two points this afternoon is

twice as important as it usually is.

I would like to congratulate the team on a great victory at Kingsholm last saturday. Some of the pundits had written Worcester off even before they had stepped on to the pitch, but they proved stiff opposition for the lads, especially up front where they were very powerful. The former Gloucester players in their ranks had obviously not forgotten what they had learned here. It took some determined play, and a

to pull the game out of the bag.

It should hardly need saying that we are pleased to have a home tie in the next round of the cup.

Like

Worcester, Henley shouldn't be written off because they are in a lower division than us. They beat Bedford well, proving that they are more than capable of performing against teams from ADP One and they will certainly be aiming to give us a similar performance to the one they put in against Bedford.

A week today, we travel to Leicester where we hope to get our own back for the narrow defeat they inflicted on us in December. I hope that as many of you as possible will be able to make the journey up to the midlands to lend your support to the boys. However, please remember that the kick-off time has been changed at the advice of the police. The match will now kick off at 2.30 pm, so make sure you leave early.

I hope you enjoy yourselves this afternoon, and with your support we should be able to repeat September's result at the Madejski stadium.

John Fidler

# **Chris Fortey Interview**



ou've either been on the field or on the bench for all of Gloucester's games this season. How do you account for the difference between Gloucester's home and away form?

What we've been working on in the last two games is a different pattern to play away from home i.e. kicking to corners, and mainly retaining possession. That will enable us to get a win away from home, but personally the pitch and the markings are the same, and you've just got to get out there and play rugby like you do at Kingsholm. It's no different whether you've got the crowd there or not. Some players may feel that without the atmosphere at Kingsholm, they can't perform, but it's

professional now. You've got to get out there and perform to the best of your ability.

How do you feel about the level of competitiveness within the Gloucester squad?

You need that level of competitiveness otherwise you don't get the best out of the individual player. If you've got one player playing week in week out without the pressure of someone pushing for his place, then he won't perform to his potential. Otherwise he can just plod through and have a bad game and still play next week.

How does competitiveness for places affect personal relationships, say with Neil McCarthy?

It's bound to affect it a little bit. I get on with Neil and he hopefully gets on with me. We wish each other luck before the game, but you need that competitiveness to bring the best out of a player. If you take the Graham Dawe/Brian Moore situation, they never got on and I can't understand it.

How do you feel about the departure of Phil Greening and the changes in the Gloucester squad in general? It's very sad, but it's a job now, and Richard has done the best thing he could. As to changes in the squad, well, I think you need changes, if he brings in new blood it gives you a new incentive to train harder, and play a little bit better.

This week's Sunday
Times ran an article
claiming that lifting in
the lineout is not only
ruining the lineout as a
contest, but it can also
be dangerous for the
jumper. How do you feel
about the modern lineout
as a thrower in?

I don't feel lifting ruins it, it improves the lineout. Going back 5 or 10 years it was a case of chucking it in and having a free-for-all. Now you've got dedicated jumpers, having the lifters can make the thrower-in's job harder or easier. It could be dangerous if you have people challenging each other and props driving in, but you just need confidence that you have support.

How important do you feel a hooker's throwing in is to him in the modern game?

Now, very important. There are big pressures on the throwers-in. You can make one mistake and it could cost you the game. You've got to work hard at it. Richard said that you've got to practice your skills,

## **Chris Fortey Interview**

because if you don't you fall by the way-side.

# How does your week normally pan out with respect to training? What balance is there between individual and team training?

It varies, say on a Monday we may do weights, and then on Tuesday skills. We also do power work, agility, flexibility and then team sessions. We get given a time-table for the week and we stick to that.

How is your form at the moment with respect to general fitness and injuries?

I feel that I'm playing well, and I've been a bit unfortunate not to play in the last 3 games. Richard has picked Neil and I've just got to agree with him on that or maybe not agree, but you've got to knuckle down and work a bit harder to make the side. There's no point moaning, you've just got to take your chance when you get it.

Do you have any representative ambitions?

This year I'd like to progress on to

England A, and get my name circulated on the England circuit. I want to play for England basically. I need to hold down the Gloucester no.2 shirt and hopefully England A will follow, and then go from there

Gloucester drew Henley

Kingsholm in round 5 of the cup yesterday. How do you feel about playing against lower division opposition in both rounds of the cup so far? Obviously, I'm delighted

that it's not a Premiership club, but you can't take anything for granted. Henley beat Bedford at Bedford, which is a good win for them. You can't underestimate lower division clubs, and cup rugby is totally different to league rugby. You've got one crack of the whip and they're going to chuck everything into the game.

We've got to play well and not take anything for granted and win.

### What do you imagine doing when your rugby playing days are over?

I'm not sure at the moment. I've got a trade behind me in carpentry and joinery, but hopefully I'll have many more rugby playing days ahead.

Interview conducted by Tom Bradly and Oliver Sills

Questions by Martin Jones



#### AND WELL DONE 'LYD'

enley's defeat of the hapless
Bedford apart, Lydney's last-gasp
win over Moseley in the Cup last
weekend simply has to be the result of
the round. How times change! I would
remind you that Moseley was the side
Gloucester beat to win the first-ever
Cup, and also tied with to share the
silverware some years later.

The result does raise the spectre of a Gloucester-Lydney draw at some stage. Now there's a prospect to give one goosepimples.

Nevertheless, Well played Severnsiders!

And best wishes from here on in.

#### **GOOD ON YOU, SIMON!**

In last Saturday's
Worcester
programme, I had
the melancholy duty of
recording the death
of Syd Dangerfield,
who played for,
and indeed,
captained,
British
Police

as

Gloucestershire. It's nice to be able to cap that with news of a happy coincidence which would have

delighted the amiable Syd.

We now hear that Simon Morris, who of course, played for Gloucester before moving on to Worcester, has been selected for the British Police squad which is to undertake a daunting eight-match tour of Australia next May.

Our congratulations to Simon who, many of us have long thought, deserves more recognition than he has so far received.

#### TAILPIECE

One day last week, having been to the Library, I was caught in a sudden downpour in Brunswick Road. As one does, I stepped smartly to my right into the nearest pub to get out of the weather. That's my excuse, anyway.

The hostelry concerned happened to be the new Hogshead, and very pleasant I found it with a good range of guest ales, single malts and wines. But the first thing I clapped eyes on as I came in, dripping, through the door was a Gloucester shirt, signed by all the players. In a far subordinate position is a Watsonians shirt bearing Gavin Hastings' signature.

The place had been open for about three days. Didn't take them long to find out what's what around Gloucester, did it?

Gloucester

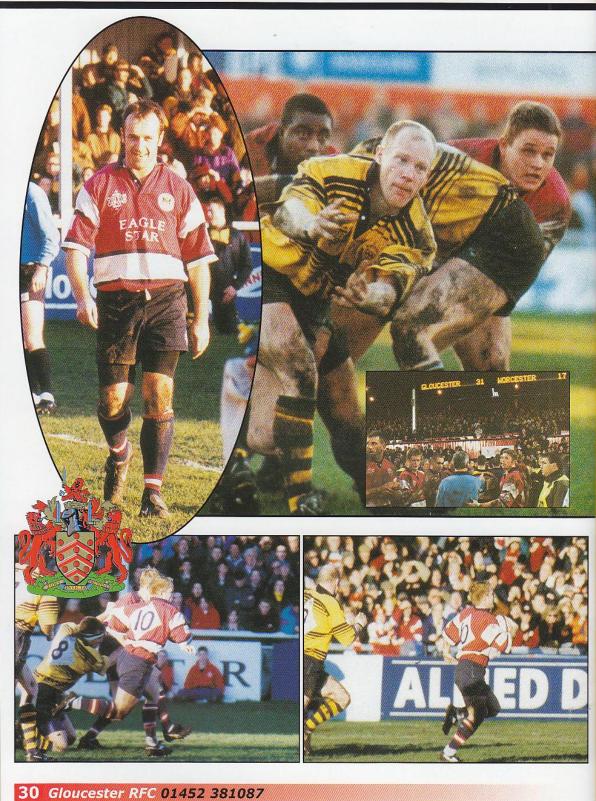
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out for

# **Action Special**



### Gloucester v Worcester

