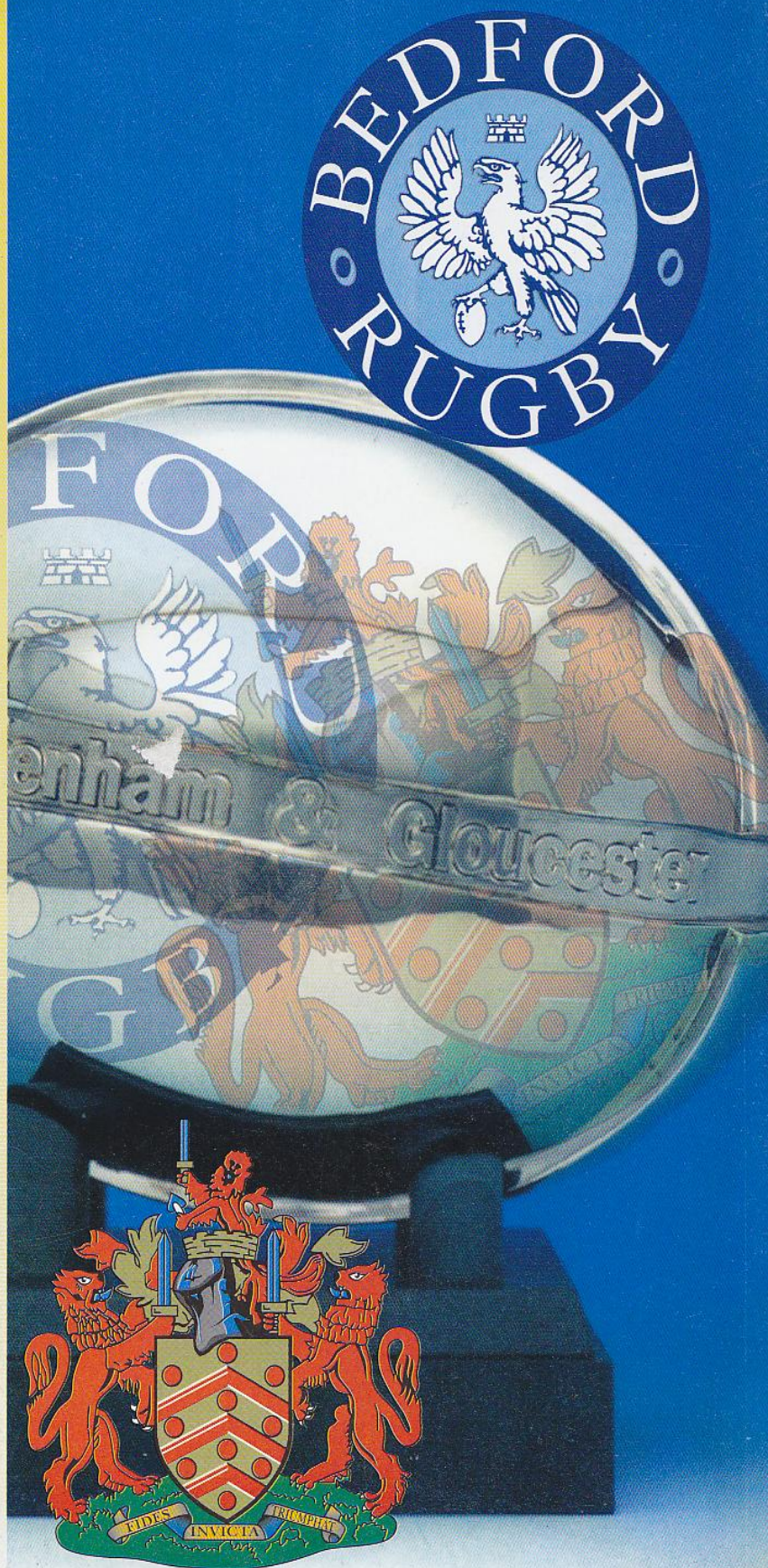
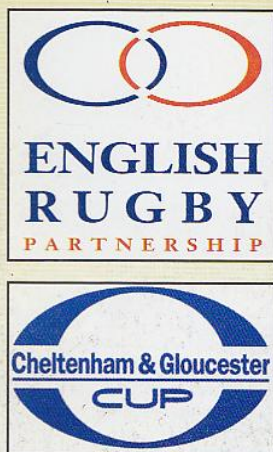


**Cheltenham
and
Gloucester
Cup Final**

**Gloucester
v. Bedford
at
Franklin's
Gardens**

**9 April 1999
ko 7.45 pm**

£2.00



GLOUCESTER

Red & White hoops, Blue collar

BEDFORD (PROBABLE)

Blue

Friday 9th April 1999

15	AUDLEY LUMSDEN	Full Back	SAM HOWARD	15
14	BRIAN JOHNSON	Right Wing	RORY UNDERWOOD	14
13	RORY GREENSLADE-JONES	Centre	BEN WHETSTONE	13
12	RICHARD TOMBS	Centre	ALASTAIR MURDOCH	12
11	TOM BEIM	Left Wing	DARRAGH O'MAHONEY	11
10	MARTYN KIMBER	Outside Half	TONY YAPP	10
9	LAURIE BECK	Scrum Half	CHARLIE HARRISON	9
1	TONY WINDO	Prop	ALTAN OZDEMIR	1
2	CHRIS FORTEY	Hooker	AARON DAVIS	2
3	PHIL VICKERY	Prop	ADRIAN OLVER	3
4	RICHARD WARD	Lock	ALEX CODLING	4
5	DAVE SIMS (C)	Lock	ANDY DUKE	5
6	ADAM EUSTACE	Flanker	JUNIOR PARAMORE	6
7	NATHAN CARTER	Flanker	JASON FORSTER	7
8	ED PEARCE	No.8	ROY WINTERS	8
16	ANDY DEACON	Replacements	JOE EWENS	
17	CHRIS HALL		DAN HARRIS	
18	RICHARD STOTT		RICHARD ELLIOTT	
19	ADAM HARRIS		JIMMY RICHARDS	
20	IAN SANDERS		VIRGIL HARTLAND	
21	SIMON MANNIX		PHIL ELPHICK	
22	ROB JEWELL			

Support Paraplegics in
Rugby Enterprise

SPIRE

SPIRE helps all those injured in rugby in England who have been left paraplegic or tetraplegic.

SPIRE relies on voluntary support and donations to assist those who are long term or permanently disabled. The Rugby Football Union itself has made and continues to make substantial donations to SPIRE from the revenue received from ticket sales for International matches played at Twickenham.

If you can help, please get in touch. Your assistance will be truly appreciated by the trustees and most importantly the beneficiaries of the charity whose needs are great.

from
The Administrative
Secretary, SPIRE

Registered Address:
41 Station Road
North Harrow
MIDDX HA2 7SX
Tel and Fax: 0181 863 0220
Registered Charity no. 1068680



**Howard Thomas, Acting Chief
Executive of ERP, welcomes
you all to tonight's encounter...**

ERP ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE



Welcome to our second Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup final. This year's tournament has produced many tremendous matches; however, we have now arrived at the Cheltenham & Gloucester 'Groundhog Day': a Gloucester v Bedford final at Northampton. It was such a good match last year we thought we would have another one. Gloucester and Bedford, to reach the final on both occasions, have proven their squad depth.

I would like to thank Cheltenham & Gloucester for their magnificent support of this competition. I would also like to thank our hosts Northampton RFC for their contribution to tonight's occasion.

At the time of writing we have just reached agreement on the future of the European Rugby Cup. I believe we have now arrived at an economic and political juncture whereby the future of English club rugby is

viable and can be developed in harmony with our governing bodies. We can look forward to rugby occasions like tonight's final knowing we can enjoy them for what they are – magnificent sporting challenges providing terrific entertainment for a growing army of supporters.

On behalf of Cheltenham & Gloucester and English Rugby Partnership I would like to thank all the supporters who have attended the 34 previous matches in this competition and also wish the supporters of both Gloucester and Bedford an enjoyable and memorable night.

May the best team win!

Howard Thomas





C&G CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A thrilling end to a fantastic competition

Once again, the Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup has proved to be a resounding success. We are proud to be the sponsor of a competition that, in its second year, has built on its inaugural success and continued to promote club rugby at its best. The fans have been even more enthusiastic than last year and benefited from some top-class rugby matches. The teams have been involved in a challenging tournament, and it's allowed C&G to work with dedicated club staff in our association with one of England's greatest sports.

A repeat of last year's final is the last thing anybody expected. With the entrance of three new major clubs into the Cup last November, the fight for the title looked tough, and the ultimate finalists were anyone's guess.

However, we have a rematch. Bedford are out for revenge and appear confident following a rousing climax to their semi-final draw against Newcastle. But Gloucester seem determined to retain their title as Cup holders; they tore through Sale's defence for their place here tonight and will be looking to send Bedford away with the runners up prize for the second year running.

Whatever the result, it's sure to be a

great match - another thrilling end to an exciting competition.

On behalf of C&G my thanks go to all those involved in making it work.



ROGER BURDEN

Managing Director, Cheltenham
& Gloucester





FROM RUDI STRAEULI



Once again we meet Gloucester in the final of the Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup here at Franklins Gardens, a repeat of last year. However, I hope the actual game is not a repeat as we were well beaten. The Premiership One side took the title with an impressive display which, hopefully, we can match today.

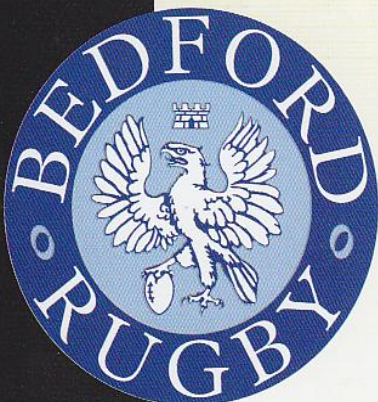
Although we beat Gloucester two weeks ago in the league that should not mean anything, we should not judge today's outcome on that. The teams have changed and we are playing at a neutral ground. We must remember that we lost at Kingsholm earlier in the season and so we have each won one. Although we are both Premiership One teams this year, Gloucester must be the favourites as they are the title holders, but favourites do not always go home the winners. We have beaten many teams to get through to this final, most notably Newcastle in the semi. That was a difficult game, especially considering we had lost twice to them in the league. But we battled well and were determined and never backed down, we continued fighting until the end and were rewarded with a place in today's final.

The competition has been useful for giving some of our youngsters a game, as well as trying out players in different positions. We have tried one of our props out playing in the hooker position, even one of the centres ended up at no 8! It has been difficult with such a small squad but we have used the opportunities available.

Once again I would like to thank all of you who have travelled to support us tonight. Your commitment is outstanding and well valued by the club. Let's hear you all cheering for The Blues.

On a final note, I would like to thank Cheltenham & Gloucester for running this competition. It has been a good focus for clubs when there have been no league games but it will be interesting to see what happens next season on international days. In our times of financial difficulties the cup has been beneficial, as it has provided extra gate receipts as well as the substantial prize money. I hope that tonight's game is as entertaining as last year and that we can change the name of this competition from the Cheltenham & Gloucester cup to the Cheltenham & Bedford cup!

Rudi Straeuli





FROM JOHN FIDLER

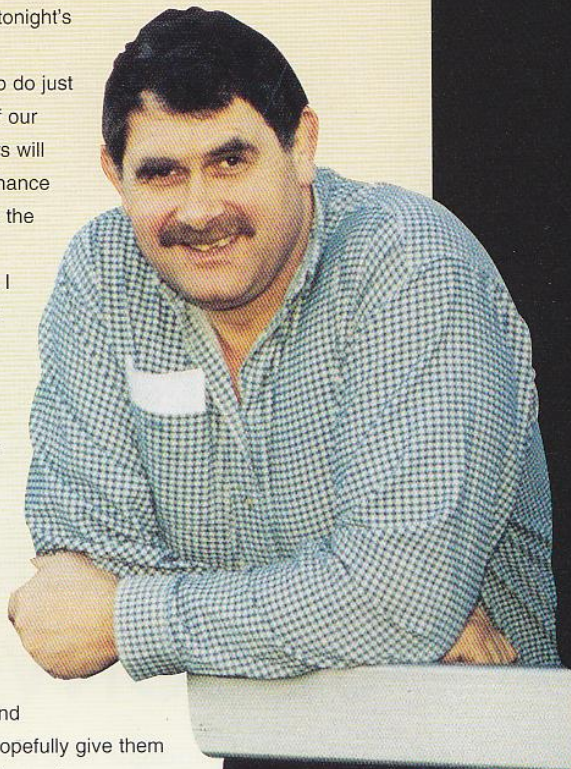
Firstly, I would like to welcome you all to tonight's Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup Final. It is very strange to be playing the same team in the same venue as we did last year - I only hope it produces the same result! Seriously though, Bedford will, I am sure, present very stiff competition. They have played very well in their previous rounds in the cup and have disposed of some very useful sides. More importantly to us though, they beat us in a very tight game a few weeks ago and we will be looking to reverse the outcome of that match. Bedford have some tremendous players of the likes of Ben Whetstone and Junior Paramore and we will have to work extremely hard if we are to retain the trophy which we won here last year.

Turning to last weekend's Tetley Bitter semi-final against Wasps, I have to say that everyone here at Gloucester was very disappointed. I thought we played very well, showing some determined running. We were not intimidated by a very strong and well-organised Wasps side and indeed we may have achieved a different result had a few key decisions gone our way. It certainly seemed to me that Terry had grounded the ball when the referee ruled against him. Despite our disappointment, we cannot allow ourselves to dwell on this and must look at the many positive sides of our cup run, which has given us some fantastic moments during a difficult season.

One such moment was the return of Phil Vickery to the first team in the game against Wasps. As you know, Phil's injury

put him out of action for a long time but he is a determined and committed player who worked very hard to get himself ready to play again. I know that he is very popular with all of you and it is great to see him back again.

We must however look forward and tonight's game is an opportunity to do just that. Many of our young players will be given a chance to perform at the highest level this evening. I am sure that you have been as impressed with many of them, as I have been. Many of these players are tremendous prospects, and tonight will hopefully give them an opportunity to win a professional competition for the first time. It should give them a taste for more!





GLOUCESTER SQUAD

Audley Lumsden

Full-back/Winger

Moved to Gloucester having previously been with west country neighbours Bath. Audley has had an impressive season, switching nimbly between wing and full-back as required.

Chris Catling

Full back

Promising number 15 who previously played for Exeter before his move to Kingsholm. Strong defensive abilities have made him the first choice full back this season, and many Gloucester supporters believe he should be challenging the likes of Perry and Beal for the England shirt.

Brian Johnson

Wing

Brian has been a solid performer for the Gloucester back division this season, managing to lay claim to the no.14 shirt despite some fierce competition. He has collected five England A caps and joined Gloucester from Newbury.

Philippe Saint-André

Wing

Capped 69 times by France and a favourite at Kingsholm since his debut in 1997-98. Philippe became player-coach in February after the dramatic dismissal of Richard Hill. A highly respected figure in France, Philippe is now highly popular in Gloucestershire too. Supporters often wave tricolores and sing La Marseillaise in his honour.

Tom Beim (pictured as a Manchester Sale player)

Wing

Exciting winger who returned to Gloucester at Christmas after a spell with Manchester Sale. Tom has been a prolific try scorer and regular on the wing since his return

Terry Fanolua

Centre

Western Samoan international and sevens captain. Back after a month of World Cup qualifiers. Terry has formed the backbone of Gloucester's three-quarter line this season along with Richard Tombs. Injured medial ligaments in Sunday's Tetley Bitter clash with Wasps.

Richard Tombs

Centre

Capped five times by Australia although born in New Zealand and previously played for Northern Suburbs in Sydney. Richard established an excellent record of appearances for Glos this season, starting every ADP match until March.



Age 31,
Height 6ft,
Weight 93.9kg



Age 22,
Height 6ft 11,
Weight 89.9kg



Age 26,
Height 5ft 11,
Weight 85.2kg



Age 31,
Height 6ft,
Weight 91.5kg



Age 31,
Height 6ft,
Weight 91.5kg



Age 24,
Height 6ft,
Weight 85kg



Age 27,
Height 6ft,
Weight 93kg



GLOUCESTER SQUAD



Age 25
Height 6ft 2,
Weight 13st



Rory Greenslade-Jones

Centre

Another former Newbury man, enjoying his first season in the Gloucester first XV squad.

Age 26,
Height 6ft 1,
Weight 83.5g



Simon Mannix

Fly-half

Once capped by his native New Zealand and previously with Sale before joining Gloucester in the close season. Has played various positions in the backs this season, including centre, as well as his preferred role at stand off

Age 27,
Height 5ft 7,
Weight 83kg



Mark Mapletoft

Fly-half

Gloucester's most prolific points scorer this season, Mapletoft is a creative fly half with agility and vision. He was impressive in the recent England A game against Ireland, scoring two tries. Has one England cap to his name, and previously played for Rugby Lions.

Age 27,
Height 5ft 9,
Weight 85.8kg



Ian Sanders

Scrum-half

Busy half back who began his career with Bath before moving to Kingsholm. The no.9 shirt has not been claimed definitively at Gloucester this season, owing to the skill and competitive nature of the likes of Sanders and Benton

Age 24,
Height 6ft,
Weight 89kg



Scott Benton

Scrum-half

Affectionately known as the 'Meerkat' for his tendency to bob up and down whilst assessing the game from the base of the scrum, Scott's trademark is his ability to punish napping defences with his penetrative darting runs. Also famed for consistently talking to opposition hooker at line-outs

Age 33,
Height 6ft 2,
Weight 107kg



Andy Deacon

Prop

Now in his 10th season at Gloucester having made his debut back in 1989 after joining from Longlevens RFC. The former club captain allegedly took up rugby to get away from his wife and kids but "it got badly out of hand," according to Kingsholm Chronicle website.

Age 29,
Height 6ft,
Weight 125kg



Tony Windo

Prop

Previously with Longlevens and part of England's tour party to the southern hemisphere in the summer. Continuing the great tradition of Gloucester front-row forwards, Tony combines his uncompromising scrummaging style with mobility and a deft pair of hands.

Age 23,
Height 5ft 11,
Weight 107kg



Chris Fortey

Hooker

Another player formerly with Widden Old Boys and Gordon League before coming to Kingsholm.





GLOUCESTER SQUAD

Neil McCarthy

Hooker

Previously at Bath and made Gloucester debut in 1997 against Begles Bordeaux in the European Conference. Now regular second choice behind Cockerill for England.

Rob Fidler

Lock

Two England caps to his name having been one of few successes in the Southern Hemisphere this summer. Started his Gloucester career at no. 6 but has since moved successfully to Lock, where he recently played for England A.

Mark Cornwell

Lock

Formerly with Old Richians and with appearances for England at A level. Mark has been known since childhood as 'Pasty'. Cornwall... Cornwall... Pasty... Geddit?

Dave Sims

Lock

Three times capped by England and has been with Gloucester since 1988 having previously played for Longlevens. Dave is seen by many as a symbol of traditional Gloucester values - commitment, determination and hard as nails forward play. This season's captain.

Ed Pearce

Flanker/No 8

Previously at Bath before signing for Gloucester in 1996. Playing at 6 or 8, he demonstrated his power on the run and, his primary strength, his effectiveness as a link-man between backs and forwards. One of the most daunting physical presences in the squad, Ed is a young man with a big future.

Nathan Carter

Flanker

Another who previously starred for local side Gordon League and now in his third season at Kingsholm. Nathan has been the team's first choice open side this season and has displayed a high work rate combined with tenacious tackling and effective link play.

Steve Ojomoh

Flanker/No 8

12 times capped by England while with Bath and aims to be in the squad for the World Cup. Steve's skill, combined with his sheer power and physical strength makes him a contender for Gloucester's player of the season.

Andrew Hazell (not pictured) Flanker

Promising youngster who has come through the ranks at Gloucester to make a big impression this season.



Age 24,
Height 6ft
Weight 102kg



Age 24,
Height 6ft 5,
Weight 112kg



Age 23,
Height 5ft 11,
Weight 107kg



Age 29,
Height 6ft 6,
Weight 115kg



Age 23,
Height 6ft 6,
Weight 118kg



Age 26,
Height 6ft,
Weight 100kg



Age 28,
Height 6ft2,
Weight 120kg





Gloucester programme editor Peter Arnold looks at the numerous links between this evening's combatants

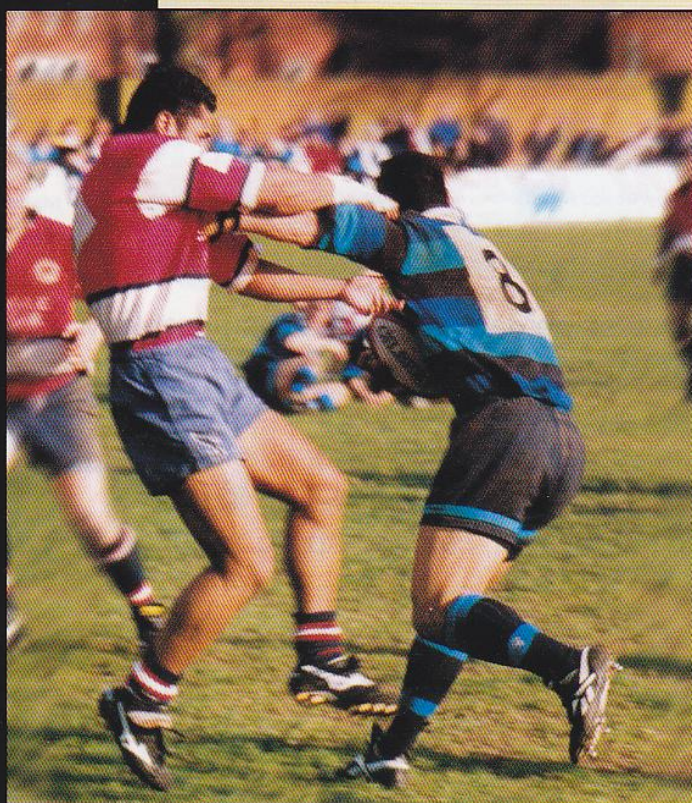
CONNECTIONS



Who'd a thought it? When the new format for the Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup was originally announced, it seemed all Twickers to a second-hand jock strap that it would be much more difficult for last year's Finalists to serve up a repeat performance. There were more matches and more teams entering, including some formidable sides who didn't seem likely to lose too many players to international commitments.

Yet, here we are again. Same two teams. Same ground. All this in spite of the undeniable facts that Gloucester alone have been contributing around ten players to the International cause on each C & G weekend, as well as coping with a steadily lengthening injury list, and that Bedford have been languishing towards the foot of Premiership One. It just goes to show that you can't take anything for granted in this game, if you'll pardon a statement of the obvious. Cup Finals, of course, have their own atmosphere and their own mystique. But there's even more to it than that for both sides on this momentous evening. Bedford and Gloucester have met twice already this season, the game going with home advantage each time. This is the 'third time which pays for all' as the old saying goes, and both sides would be busting the proverbial gut to win, even without the extra stimulus of a chance to win silverware.

Furthermore, Gloucester v. Bedford go back a very long way. A couple of decades ago, Bedford were a major power in the land, a very good side indeed, and one which everyone badly wanted to beat. Their annual visit to Kingsholm always attracted a packed house, mainly because they were usually the first major side to visit Gloucester each season. Added spice was present on these occasions because Bedford



Gloucester's Terry Fanolua tussles with cousin Junior Paramore during last month's clash at Bedford



CONNECTIONS

used to visit Gloucester on the Saturday before Bristol came to Kingsholm, and the home game against the Old Enemy was something extremely special. The Bedford game, therefore, was regarded as a severe try out immediately before the most partisan local derby in rugby. Think of Bedford v. Northampton and multiply it by ten, and you'll get the idea.

In more recent seasons (not so recent as all that), there has been considerable traffic between Kingsholm and Goldington Road. One man who will certainly be here this evening is John Brain, Gloucester's forwards coach, and the man who has, in the main, been shouldering the responsibility for the Gloucester sides which have contested this season's Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup. I've no doubt that many Bedford supporters will recall him with affection from his spell playing at Goldington Road before his job brought him back to Gloucester.

There will be also those who remember John Orwin, who played at lock forward for Gloucester, Bedford, the RAF, Combined Services and England, and I believe, captained all of them. The last I heard of him,

he was still playing at the age of 48, and by all accounts, still thoroughly enjoying himself.

Not all the connections are historic, of course. Fitness permitting, prop forward Virgil Hartland, a good Cinderford lad, will probably be in action for Bedford tonight, and the Forest of Dean has a long history of supplying formidable front row men, as all the world knows. One must not forget, either, that that wholehearted scrum-half, Charlie Harrison, was one of Richard Hill's Emerging Players. There is also a family connection, in that Junior Paramore, whose name was associated with that of Joe Ewens with a possible move to Kingsholm not long ago, is a cousin of Gloucester's Terry Fanolua.

Not that all the traffic has been one way. Richard Pascall, who doesn't miss many games at Kingsholm, became one of the country's most feared props after his move from Bedford to Gloucester. He was very unlucky not to proceed further up the representative ladder than he did after turning out for London Counties.

That other forthright Gloucester forward, Bob 'Dino' Phillips used to say that he couldn't figure Pasc out.

Having propped against him on a regular basis during training, 'Dino' reckoned that Richard didn't give him any trouble at all. Yet when he got out on the field in anger, he "did the business" against anyone he happened to come up against, whatever his status in the game or reputation. Perhaps 'Pasc' needed the stimulus of real competition to take things really seriously.

So the connections between Gloucester and Bedford are long-standing, many and various. Those of us from Gloucester have always enjoyed Bedford's company, and even in the days when they were in the deepest of doldrums, used to give them the respect due to such an old and traditional club.

Not that there will be much respect being shown out on the Northampton turf this evening, and the result is anyone's guess. We're just happy that history has repeated itself in such a thoroughly satisfactory way.

Have an enjoyable evening, everyone.



**A
total of 24
clubs took part
in this year's
competition**



THIS YEAR'S COMPETITION



**The
drop goal
decider in tied
C&G matches is a
world first**

**This
year's final is
an exact repeat
of last year's -
same teams, same
venue**

**The
total prize
money this year
is £172,000**

**Cheltenham
and Gloucester
is the UK's biggest
residential
mortgage lender**

A young rugby fan I know recently expressed to me no surprise that Gloucester were last year's winner's because "they're obviously the best team in either Cheltenham or Gloucester." I laughed at the young fool's misunderstanding and pointed out to him that the competition is not contested between Cheltenham and Gloucester but sponsored by the Cheltenham and Gloucester building society. The C&G are now in the second year of their sponsorship, a deal worth about £1 million over the three years of its duration. The winning club receives £25,000, the runners-up £15,000, losing semi-finalists £10,000, losing quarter finalists £8,000, second round losers £6,000 and first round losers a consolation £4,000.

The competition is organised by English Rugby Partnership and has two main aims: one is to provide competitive club rugby on international weekends and the other is to provide a knockout cup competition exclusively for the top 24 English teams: those in ADP 1 and 2. This year's competition was augmented by the decision to take part of Newcastle, Saracens and Bath. Of the ADP 1 and 2 clubs, only Harlequins, Wasps, London Irish and West Hartlepool did not take part this year, and the trend is for more and more clubs to enter.

To the untrained eye, it may at first appear difficult to follow the structure of this year's competition, but really it is quite simple. The first round is played over two legs, home and away; the winner of each tie is the club with the highest points total over the two legs. Gloucester, as holders, and Newcastle, Saracens and Bath all have byes through this round. The ties in the second round are drawn from the 10 winners in the first round, the four clubs with byes and the two gipsierical first round losers with the highest points totals; these teams play each other. From here on in, the competition is a straightforward knockout affair. The only complication this year arose in the semi-final between Bedford and Newcastle. This game finished 27-27, but Bedford won by virtue of having scored the highest number of tries. There were several neutral supporters I know hoping to see a game tied and with the number of tries scored equal: in this event, the game would have been decided by a drop goal competition from the 22-metre line! You can see the full breakdown of results for this year's competition on p.30.

Martin Jones



PHILIPPE SAINT-ANDRE



Philippe displays all the qualities Englishmen in search of stereotypes usually attribute to the French: his hair is ruffled, clothes worn and comfortable, demeanour casual. He isn't the first person you notice on entering the room. Yet, start talking to him about rugby, about Gloucester and the fire in his eyes lights up and his rugby mind springs into action. Philippe believes fiercely in his adopted town and team of Gloucester, and he isn't about to let anyone take his trophy away without a fight. He played in last year's cup final, and this year he'll be the brains behind the Cherry and Whites' operation, giving a chance to some of the six younger wingers he has to choose from.

As an example of his conviction, I ask him if he thinks Gloucester are playing better now, under his leadership, than at the beginning of the season.

PSA: I think we are getting better each week and the players understand the game plan more and more. We are scoring a lot of tries - five against West Hartlepool - but sometimes we haven't been kicking well enough. We kick maybe 50% or 30% and the other team kicks 90%. Like against Bedford... I am very sad and very cross because when you are better than a team and you lose I can't accept it. I think we were the better team. If we had played that match ten times, we would have won nine times.

Mind you, as Philippe readily acknowledges, the conditions of this competition will mean that Gloucester's team is a very different one

from the one which faced Bedford in the league last month. The England 'A' team will effectively be a kind of Gloucester invitation side, with Chris Catling, Mark Mapletoft, Scott Benton, Trevor Woodman, Mark Cornwell, Rob Fidler and Steve Ojomoh all called up. Neil McCarthy will be on the bench for the full England team. But this doesn't phase Philippe:

PSA: But we can still win; it's not a problem. We have a lot of young guys who have a lot of confidence. We won away at Waterloo, we won at home to Sale and they'll be motivated for the final. I think it's a good competition for this. I think it's good for the young guys. Unlike in the league, I will be seven or nine players short, because they're involved with England A. But it's good because we're in the final and we've played the quarter final and the semi-final with a lot of young guys. It's a good way for Gloucester's young players to learn quickly because one game in the first division is better than two or three months training. We'll play the final to win and we'll play with the best team I can put out. But we have a few injuries and we have nine or ten players out with England. But this doesn't matter... we won the semi-final at home to Sale even though I didn't have my first choice.

Having said this, Philippe acknowledges that things will be tough for Gloucester tonight. PSA: I think we'd be favourites if we played with the same team we put out against Bedford last week in the league. But with so many players not available, it will be a different team. Bedford's team will be almost all their first choice team. I think that Bedford will be favourites and we're



INTERVIEW

outsiders. But it's the final... it's eighty minutes of rugby and it will be a big opportunity for the young guys to prove something in time for next season. In the earlier rounds I tried a lot of players out at different positions. For example, Ed Pearce at number 8. I think it's a good competition for this sort of thing. We have to try to find new solutions.

Which of those players are you most impressed with at the moment?

PSA: There are so many... I know he's not all that young but I'm impressed with Richard Ward. Stott, Eustace, Rory Greenslade-Jones has played well at both centre and wing, Laurie Beck at 9, Kimber at 10, Pearce at 8. There's a lot of good things... I want competition in my team. It's good to see people having to play well each week to meet a new challenge and to compete for their place. It's good for the young guys to know they have an opportunity play in the first team. Eustace played well and Stott played well in the C&G semi-final so last week in the league against Bedford, Eustace played 60 minutes and Stott was on the bench. I think this is good because when I started playing in the first division I was 17 and this was good for me; after that I always played in the first division. I don't think it's good that a player should have to play six or seven years in the reserves before they get into the first team. That's crazy.

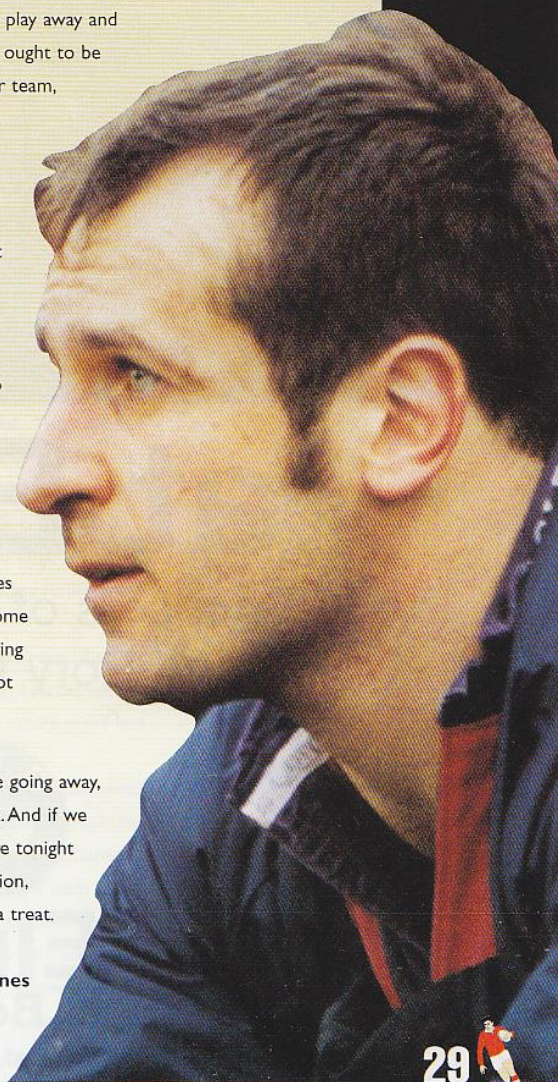
Gloucester have suffered from another bout of poor away form this season, winning only twice anywhere other than Kingsholm. So, does this count as an away

game for Gloucester? Philippe reacts angrily. He sits forward in his chair and raises his voice.

PSA: No. It's not an away game, it's a final. It's not at home or away. It's eighty minutes of rugby and if you win, you win the Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup, if you lose you are nothing. We must stop this thing about how we play away and how we play at home. It ought to be that if you are the better team, you win and if the other team are better than you, you lose. This is reality. We must stop this thing of if we play at home we win and if we play away we lose. Next season I want us to win 11 games at home and 6 or 8 games away. Any guy who does not give me 100% away will be on the bench the next week. I won't accept it if someone gives 200% while playing at home and then 40% when playing away. This is rugby; it's not holidays.

He said it. They might be going away, but they can never relax. And if we have 30 players out there tonight all with this kind of passion, we're in for one hell of a treat.

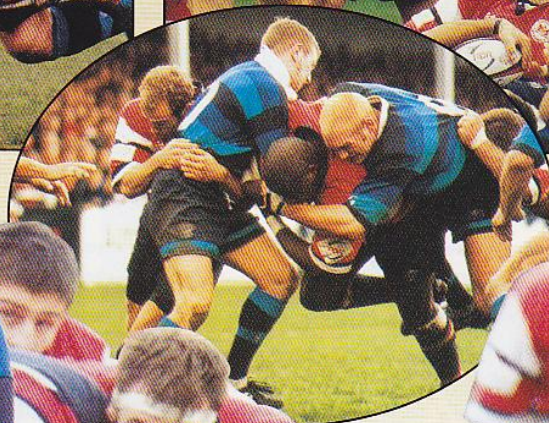
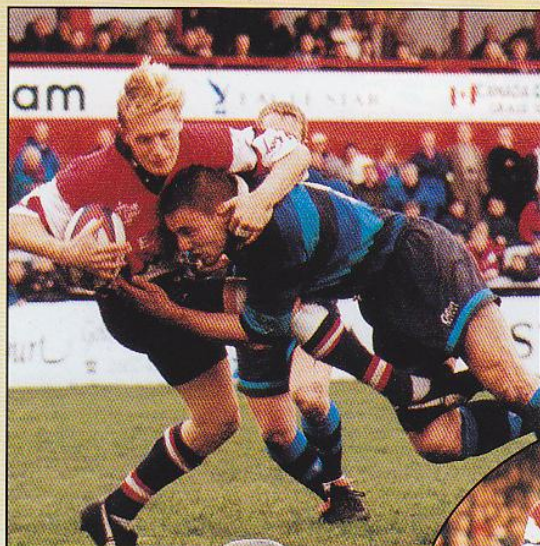
Martin Jones





Full colour action from the meeting between Bedford and Gloucester at Kingsholm last November

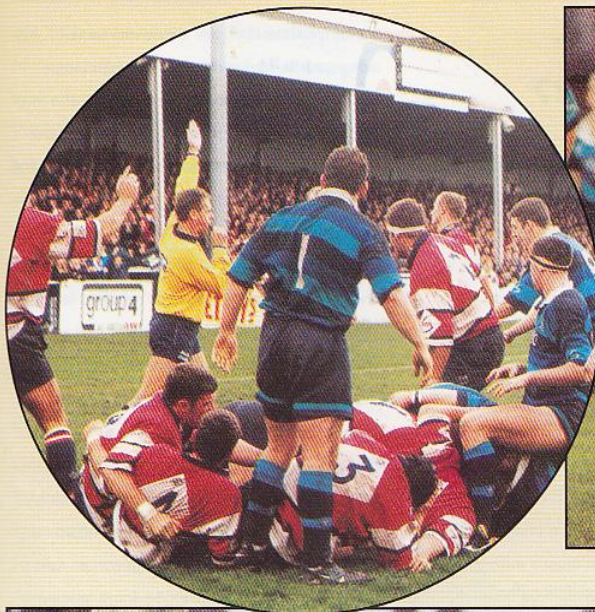
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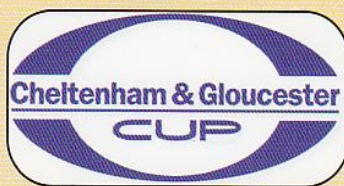


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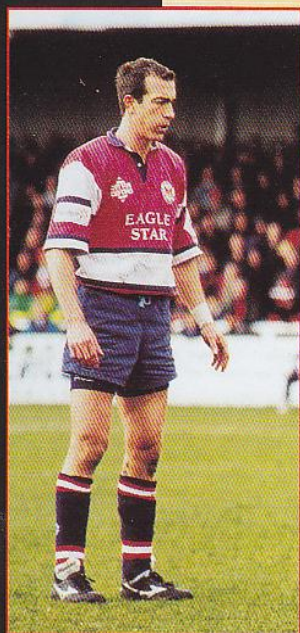
GLOUCESTER V BEDFORD





Steve Hawker of the Kingsholm Chronicle website reports on the Cherry and Whites' semi-final against Sale

SEMI-FINAL REPORT



Martyn Kimber

Gloucester 45 Sale 37

Gloucester took another step towards retaining the Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup with the squeakiest of wins over a very determined Manchester Sale side. The Cherry and Whites played the greatest psychological trick ever as they slumped to a 20-6 half-time deficit and then ran in six second half tries knocking the stuffing out of Sale in the process. They certainly had the spectators fooled!

Gloucester handed the first half to Sale, with the assistance of the referee who gave a penalty try when Sale collapsed a scrum right on the stroke of half-time. But the Cherry and Whites stepped up a gear or three in the second half and threw everything into attack - especially Terry Fanolua who played most of the half as a flanker! This left gaping holes in the Gloucester defence, aided by some non-existent tackling, which allowed the visitors to score three tries.

For the most part the first half was a dull, drab affair. Joe Shaw and Kimber exchanged penalties before Sanderson opened Sale's try account. Shaw and Kimber again exchanged penalties before Sale were awarded their penalty try (incorrectly, of course).

The only bright spot for Gloucester supporters was the break made by Rory Greenslade-Jones. Fed the ball on the Gloucester 10-metre line, the Welsh winger shrugged off a few tackles before making ground speedily towards the Sale 22. Only a

strong tackle by full-back Jim Mallender prevented a certain try, though one had to wonder why the chip and chase wasn't employed as there wasn't any cover defence to speak of.

If this match was a meal, then we'd just eaten the napkins....

Either Philippe or John Brain had got the speech just right or some other agency was at work because the Gloucester pack that played the second half was the caged animal released that we all know it can be. When was the last time you saw Gloucester score six tries in one single half against opponents from the same division? If ever?

Mould-breaking? It would be a definite stretch of the imagination to go that far, indeed one could argue this was "back-to-basics" in a sense as the Gloucester pack managed to get their pick-up-and-drive tactic well and truly into top gear. One could almost sense the apprehension whenever a Cherry and White back got the ball, and for that apprehension to be replaced by relief when a forward took it back.

That's not to say that the backs played poorly, but to emphasise the level of control the Gloucester forwards - to a man - had over the game. Chris Fortey, whose battle with Fat Phil Greening was a joy to behold as the Calton Road boy showed the real meaning of belligerence, started the try-fest as the pack pushed him over from a lineout on the Sale line.

Holding the advantage in the lineout, with

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GLOUCESTER V SALE

Richard Ward proving his worth as a deputy - one wonders what more this man has to do to get a "proper" first team start, Gloucester once more started pushing the maul line-wards only to be stopped in their tracks as the referee determined that Andy Morris's entry to the maul from the wrong angle prevented a certain try and the penalty try count was thus equalled!

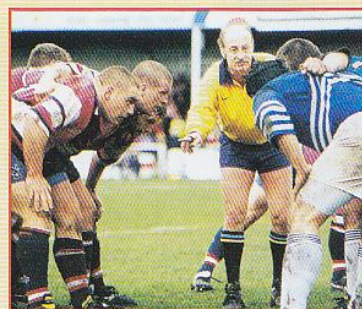
Kimber enjoyed the most wonderful of lucky bounces when his chip landed in front of Mallender - and bounced away from the Sale man, right into Kimber's arms and the 22 meter trot was greeted with jeers, cheers and joy from the Gloucester faithful.

But while Gloucester were scoring these hard-earned points, Sale were being gifted tries at the other end. Ed Pearce in particular was guilty on more than one occasion of waving the man through instead of putting his body in the way. And with only five minutes left, the cup holders trailed by nine points and looked to be certain losers. But the Cherry and Whites continued with their game plan and yet again came up trumps as the pack pushed Adam Harris over for a try. With injury time 10 seconds old, they repeated the feat with Ward being the recipient of a well-deserved try. Although Kimber struggled and failed to get the conversion attempts anywhere near the posts due to the vicious wind, Gloucester were now in the lead, incredibly, for the first time in the match.

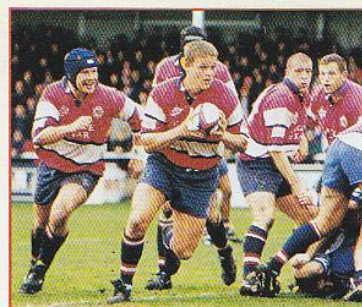
And that was when Sale pressed the self-destruct button. Instead of plodding on as they had done, waiting for Gloucester to roll out the red carpet, they tried to play expansive, Champagne rugby and gifted Gloucester a try. Chucking the ball high infield found the advancing Richard Stott, who intercepted, and finding Kimber et al in support, went charging off to the Sale line. Indeed the Cherry and Whites held such a manpower advantage one would have to be extremely imaginative to find a way not to score, but Gloucester recycled the ball and Eustace looked initially stunned and shocked, and then delighted as the Sale defence decided not to tackle him until after he had crossed the line and touched the ball down. Kimber converted and the cup-holders were through.

The celebrations started immediately and even Philippe came out of the tunnel to acknowledge the curtain calls. But even he looked bemused as his team played the get-out-of-jail-free card in a big way. Thirty-nine points in one half? It really did happen!!!

Best Moment? Terry Fanolua celebrating Ward's try as if he himself had scored the winning try in the World Cup. He's one of us!!



The Gloucester and Sale front rows prepare to clash heads



Ed Pearce takes the game to Sale





PRP rugby writer Juan Kennaugh looks back at this year's events at Kingsholm - and away from it!

GLOUCESTER'S SEASON



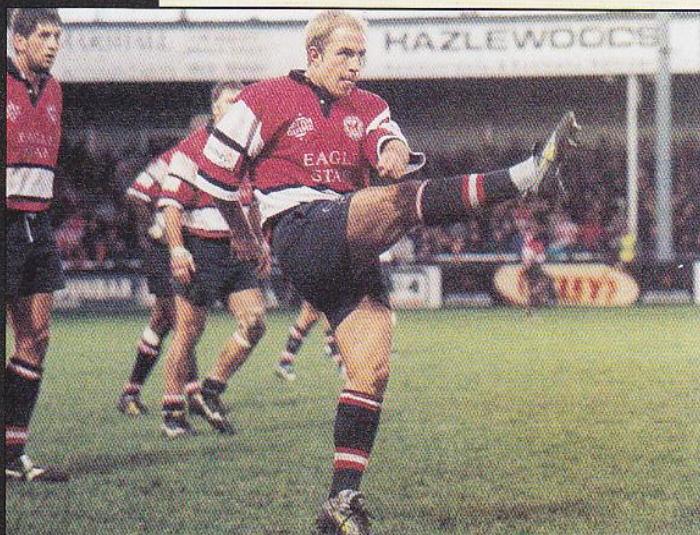
There's no doubt that it has been a difficult season for Gloucester so far. Back in autumn, the club promised supporters a top four place in the Allied Dunbar Premiership. For a club which has a very traditional support and whose players had previously been almost all local lads, to bring in Australians (Richard Tombs), New Zealanders (Simon Mannix) and even a Western Samoan (Terry Fanolua) made it seem that the club were confidently moving into a new era.

However, after a promising start to the season, with wins away to the likes of Richmond, things started to go a little pear shaped. The next away trip was at old enemies Bath and Gloucester went down 16-21. They have not won away in the league since. As the winter set in, so

did a feeling of deep discontent at Kingsholm. That promised top five place was clearly out of the question but more importantly, the fans felt that the team just wasn't playing with the kind of passion they demanded and displayed themselves in The Shed. There were a couple of good wins at home, against Saracens and a particularly gleeful trouncing of Bath, 23-7 but still unease reigned.

Gloucester's lack of performance in the league has been attributed by some to poor refereeing decisions. For example, disgruntled Shedheads muttered that the length of the injury time in the game at home to Wasps was determined only by how long it took Wasps to score. However, everyone knows that you have to abide by whatever refereeing decisions are made - however bizarre - and that you can't use this as an excuse for not getting results.

And then, in February, the bombshell dropped. Languishing down near the bottom of the table, Gloucester decided enough was enough and that something had to give. That something was the soccer-style sacking of coach Richard Hill, 3.5 years into his five year contract. In another move more reminiscent of the FA Carling Premiership, former French captain Philippe Saint-André was appointed as Hill's successor. It was a case of 'The King is dead, long live the King' at Kingsholm, as the popular Hill was replaced by the even more popular



Mark Mapletoft, whose kicking and decision-making have been vital for Gloucester this season





SEASON REVIEW

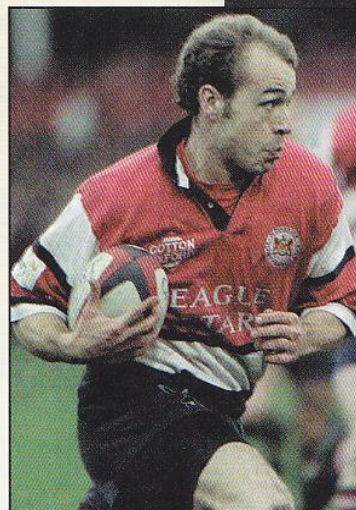
Saint-André. Gloucester went France-crazy; the Shed sang La Marseillaise and waved tricolore flags before him. Even the scabrous fanzine Shedhead indulged in a little franglais renaming itself Shedtete for the Tetley QF against Harlequins. The two teams had met at the same venue two weeks previously and Gloucester, under Richard Hill, had lost 20-31. Under Philippe they won 15-13. It was Saint-André's second game in charge and the best start he could have hoped for.

So the Gloucester team which visits Bedford today are a rejuvenated one. Their performances have been stronger and stronger, as exemplified by their runs in both cup competitions. Gloucester put in a good performance against Wasps last Saturday but were unable to overcome the organisation and superb handling skills of Dallaglio's men. It was a grand day out for the cherry and white fans, and it seemed from some angles that all of Gloucester had decamped to London for the day. The Glos fans made more noise than the Wasps and were a sight more colourful. It was a shame from their point of view that they didn't have just that bit more to shout about. However, Gloucester will still be smarting from that defeat, and in particular from the injury to Terry Fanolua. You can be sure they'll be looking to retain their silverware tonight.

Juan Kennaugh



Philippe - the flying Frenchman



Brian Johnson - a regular on the wing this season





MATCH PREVIEW

Tonight's game will be dominated by one single factor: the number of players missing from their respective sides owing to international duty. However, given that club-level entertainment on international weekends is the avowed intention of the C&G Cup, this is hardly surprising.

Gloucester will be missing a number of players in particular to the England 'A' team, Bedford will be without only a handful of key players. In some respects this might seem to make Bedford favourites, as Gloucester will undoubtedly field a young side without as much experience at the top level as Bedford. However, coaches Straeuli and Saint-André, claim the opposing side is favourite. Perhaps there's a little psychology going on there!

Clearly, both sides have done well to put themselves in the position they are in tonight. This year's competition was arguably tougher one than last year's, having been was augmented by the fact that Newcastle, Saracens and Bath all took part whereas they did not do so last year, citing fixture congestion. However, despite their big name status, those clubs have not fared so well in this cup. The reason is clear: that this is a competition in which clubs who do not rely on major international stars can prosper. True, Gloucester and Bedford may lose some players to international duty, but they are not hit as hard as the others.

There is clearly little to choose between the two teams. Both have embraced the professional era recruiting stars from home and abroad. The Blues have Junior Paramore, Scott Murray and Rory Underwood; the Cherry and Whites boast Richard Tombs,

Paramore's cousin Terry Fanolua, Simon Mannix and others. Both clubs aim at an exciting, expansive style of rugby even though neither club's league results this season has fairly reflected the style and verve with which they play the game.

The two teams have met twice already this season in another competition: the ADP; the score here is one apiece. At Kingsholm in November, Gloucester triumphed 31-21. On that occasion Gloucester raced to a 22-0 lead by half time but some determined and skilful play from Bedford brought them back to 28-21. Tries from Yapp, Richards and Zaltzman nearly secured them a win before Gloucester pulled away again towards the end. The teams' second meeting was only a few weeks ago, on March 27th and the game was a very different affair. As in the previous encounter, the number of penalties conceded and the ability of Yapp and Mapletoft to convert them was crucial. Again, Gloucester had a lead at half time, but this time, a break from Junior Paramore leading to an Aaron Davis try put Bedford in the lead and a Yapp conversion and later penalty sealed the result. The honours have gone with home advantage as far as these league meetings are concerned, so it seems all to be all to play for on this neutral territory.

Martin Jones

