

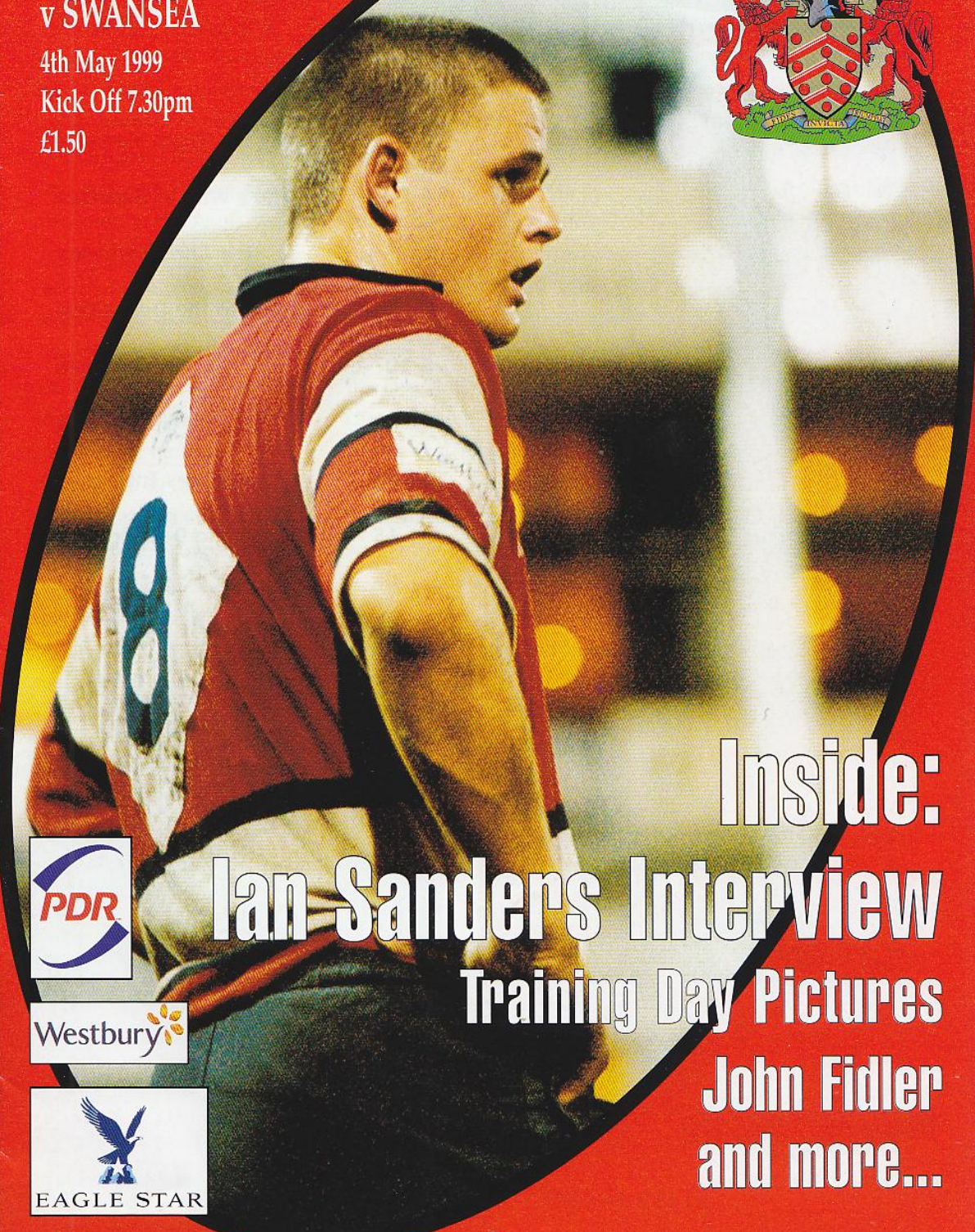
# Gloucester

v SWANSEA

4th May 1999

Kick Off 7.30pm

£1.50



**Inside:**  
**Ian Sanders Interview**  
**Training Day Pictures**  
**John Fidler**  
**and more...**



# GLOUCESTER



15	Simon Morgan
14	Andy Boyce
13	Stephen Ward
12	Rob Jewell
11	Darren Carr
10	Martyn Kimber (c)
9	Elton Moncrieff
1	Adey Powles
2	Chris Collins
3	Andy Deacon
4	Adam Harris
5	Richard Ward
6	Adam Eustace
7	James Street
8	Richard Stott
16	Chris Hall
17	Andy Robinson
18	Dave Knight
19	Carl Rudski
20	Laurie Beck
21	Tom Miklausic
22	Joe Goatley

Full Back  
Right Wing  
Centre  
Centre  
Left Wing

Outside Half  
Scrum Half

Prop  
Hooker  
Prop  
Lock  
Lock  
Flanker  
Flanker  
No. 8

Replacements

# SWANSEA



David Weatherly	15
Matthew Morgan	14
Matthew Back	13
Clinton Van Rensburg	12
Simon Davies	11
Lee Davies	10
Andy Booth	9
Chris Loader	1
Chris Wells	2
Chris Anthony	3
James Griffiths	4
Adam Jones	5
Rob Appleyard	6
Dean Thomas	7
Lee Jones	8
Alex Lawson	16
Rhodri Jones	17
Matthew Robinson	18
Ben Evans	19
Dean Colclough	20
Steffan Edwards	21
Rod Griffiths	22

# From The Team Manager

**W**elcome to Kingsholm for this evening's game against Swansea. Swansea are formidable opponents with a number of impressive international players. We have not had an enjoyable campaign in the Anglo-Welsh friendly matches and will be looking to notch up our first win in these games tonight. Though we were beaten when we travelled to Swansea in October, I believe things may be different here at Kingsholm. In our last game of this sort against Cardiff many of our younger players put in excellent performances on this turf and were, I

thought, very unlucky not to beat a strong Cardiff side containing some world-famous players. We will be looking to put in a similar level of performance this evening.

Whilst talking about Welsh rugby, I feel that I must once again congratulate Graham Henry and the Welsh national side on a fantastic victory in the Five Nations championship. It was a great shame that England lost that game but it has to be said that Wales played extremely well. I think it shows that Welsh rugby is on its way to recovering some of the glory it once had.

Though there are difficulties in the club scene, this proves that the quality is still there. Though the Anglo-Welsh games are highly enjoyable, I feel sure that you, like me, will be looking forward to the day when this situation has been resolved to everyone's

satisfaction.

There will be only one game at Kingsholm after this one - against Northampton. I am sure that this will be a very stiff challenge for us and we will appreciate all the support you are able to give us. I hope to see you there.

Enjoy tonight's game,

**John Fidler**



# Last Out, First In

**W**hen the development of league and, a little later, Premiership rugby, effectively abolished Gloucester's traditional Anglo-Welsh fixture list, the last side to disappear from regular Kingsholm action was Swansea. It's very pleasing, therefore, that they're back here so soon.

It was a considered decision by the then Gloucester Committee, who decided that of all Welsh sides available, they would want to hang on to the St. Helens side for as long as possible. Everyone at the Club was delighted that the Swansea authorities went along with us.

The oracle was worked by shifting the fixture to a very early point in the season, before the

new league season got under way. This meant that the cherry-and-whites could test their mettle against very serious opposition before they got down to the bread-and-butter business of contesting Division One.

This was before the professional era, of course. When the Premiership arrived, there simply wasn't room on the programme for us to contest matters with Swansea any more, and I think everyone will admit that the loss of such fixtures is one of the more unfortunate aspects of today's seasonal structure.

Perhaps all is not lost, however. If the English clubs find themselves back in Europe soon, or the much-discussed British League ever comes to fruition, we could find ourselves contesting matters with Swansea on a regular basis once again - in a competitive situation rather than just a 'friendly' one. One of the reasons why we always valued the Swansea visit was that the big International stars from across the Severn did tend to turn up, unlike, it has to be said, those from Cardiff. In the latter days, you may recall, one Robert Jones made one of his very first appearances for the All Whites, at the age, if memory serves, of seventeen. We spotted the young scrum-half as something special even then, and none of us were surprised when he reached the very pinnacle of the game. He then defected to

Bristol, of course, and shortly afterwards another young Welsh star made the same journey in the opposite direction. Arwel Thomas is a player who can take a game apart, and they tell me that he had an absolute blinder for Wales A against England A, a couple of weeks ago, virtually winning the game for them. Although the departure of our own Mark Mapletoft with a dead leg just before half time probably didn't do the Welsh side any harm.

There are quality players wherever one looks in the Swansea squad, but it wouldn't be right to omit a mention of the Captain, Scott Gibbs, the man who won the Five Nations for Scotland. He is, quite simply, one of the all-time great players, and it will be superb if he runs out on Kingsholm tonight. I see that he is reported as considering a return to Rugby League after the World Cup, and that would be a great pity for those of us who support the real game. Not that the two codes are mutually exclusive these days, so we must await events. It's a nice change to be able to watch a game which doesn't have any Premiership or Cup implications. It's also very good indeed to welcome Swansea after far too long an absence.

We hope you all have a great evening with us at Kingsholm and that you find yourselves back again before too long.





## IT'S OFFICIAL!

I see that a group of Liverpool scientists have been conducting a study into the reasons why home teams win more often than away sides.

Surprise, surprise. They discovered that it all has to do with the crowd. We could have told them that.

However, the boffins don't say that it is the support that friendly noise gives to the home players which is the deciding factor. Oh no. Apparently, it is the pressure put on referees which works the oracle. The study claims that they are more likely to give a hairline decision to the home side when thousands of fans are shouting at them.

There have been a few occasions this season when they could have fooled us.

One does have to point out that it was soccer referees, poor dears, who were under the microscope, and perhaps there's a difference. Be that as it may, it's now official. The Shed has a scientific basis for its endeavours.



# Nice Trip For Neil

Peter Arnold

Having been drinking beer and talking rugby down in

Cornwall for a few days, I didn't pick up the story about Neil McCarthy's trip to Argentina very early. It was nice, therefore to discover that he had been a member of the World party which played a festival-type game out there to celebrate the host nation's Centenary.

Tonight's visitors might like to reflect on the fact that it was the Welsh who introduced rugby to

Argentina, so they have a lot to answer for.

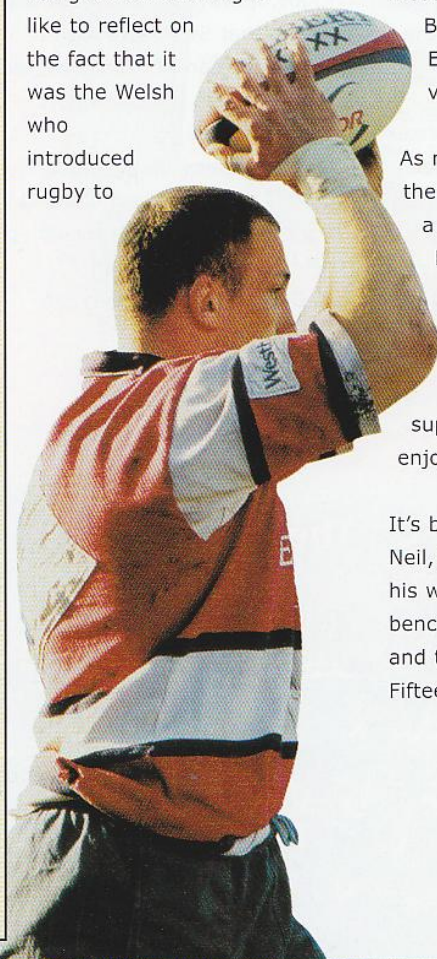
Locally, we can be proud that the first man to skipper an England side in Argentina was our own John A'Bear, going back a long way.

Since then, of course, there have been quite a few Gloucester players visiting that tough rugby country, including Team Manager John Fidler, and most recently, Mark Mapletoft.

Both, I think, won their first England Caps during their visits.

As might have been expected, the World Fifteen lost by quite a margin. A scratch side, however talented its component parts, can rarely beat such a well-drilled outfit as the Pumas. But I don't suppose that spoiled Neil's enjoyment of the trip.

It's been quite a season for our Neil, hasn't it? Leapfrogging his way on to the England benches for the Five Nations, and then playing for a World Fifteen. Can't be bad.



Peter Arnold

# Swansea On Line

Just as 'Shedhead' performs a valuable function as an unofficial commentator on happenings around GRFC, so 'Kingsholm Chronicle', the unofficial web site provides a similar function for the increasingly large number of supporters who are equipped to read it. The advantages that the Chronicle has over the traditional fanzine are that it can be updated daily, or even more frequently, and it can be accessed at any time of the day or night, from whatever part of the planet you happen to be occupying at the time.

For a long time now, Gloucester's 'Kingsholm Chronicle' has been widely regarded as the best medium of its type available - it did, after all, predict Scott Benton's departure about ten days before it became official - and I'm not going to argue with that. However, I do have to say

that Swansea's web site runs it very close.

To be honest, I think that the 'news' section of the Swansea site is a bit better than ours, although the interactive section isn't as lively or well used as is the 'Guestbook' in the Chronicle. One innovation which the Chronicle might like to emulate is a lengthy 'Jokes' page.

Mind you, I couldn't find a joke which is specifically related to rugby, however, I was fascinated to find that Swansea's high regard for Cardiff is on a par with the esteem in which we hold Bath. Example;

**Q.** If you come up behind a Cardiff supporter cycling along in front of your car, why should you never swerve to hit him ?

**A.** Because it might be your bicycle.

There's no answer to that.

## TAILPIECE

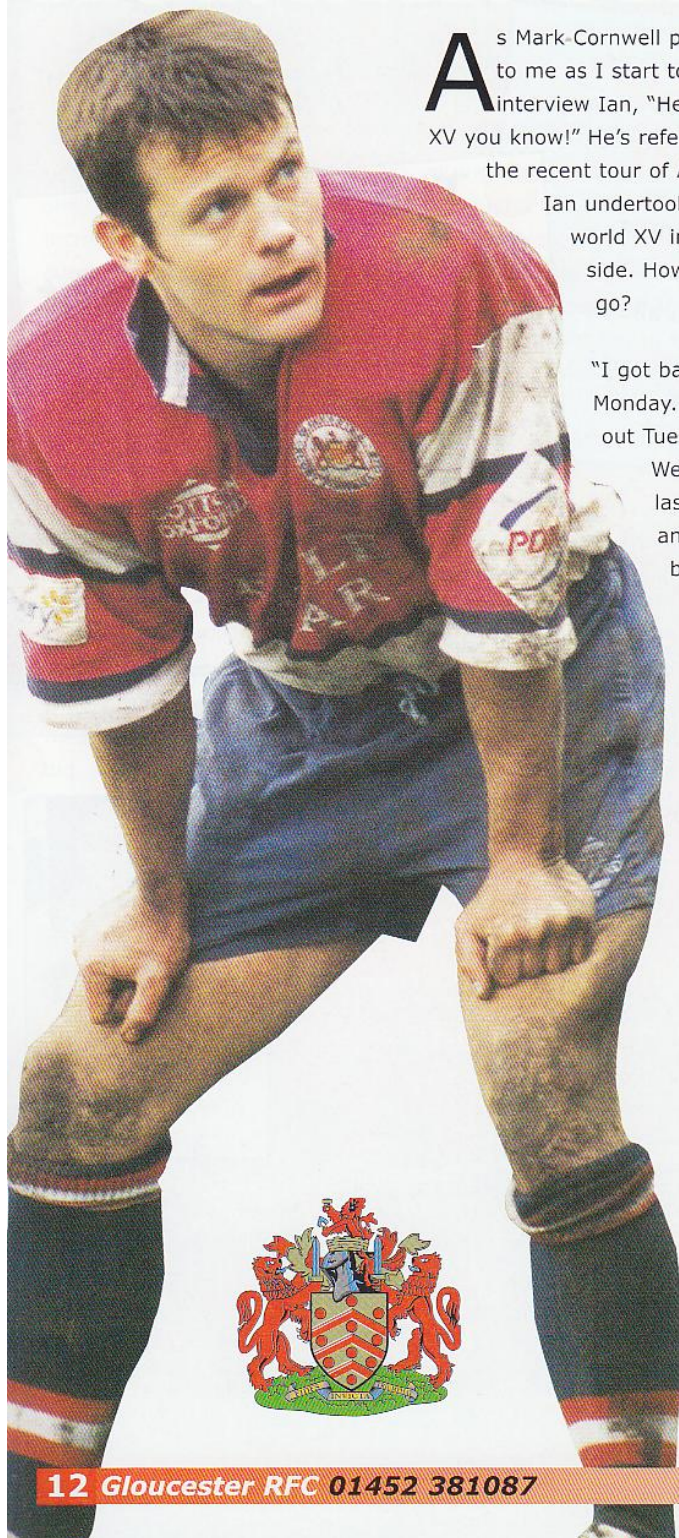
I was in Cornwall when Gloucester Old Boys visited Launceston recently. Got my leg pulled rotten, too, but had the last laugh in the end. Here's the situation: Launceston and Penzance and Newlyn were only separated by points difference at the top of the League table. Penzance needed to score 14 points more than Launceston to nip in and win promotion. A couple of lads were waiting in the pub anxiously for the Launceston result to come through. Much was the joy and hilarity - and leg pulling - when the news arrived that the home side had put 87 points on the Old Boys. Euphoria was short lived, however. A later call told us that Penzance had scored an unbelievable 132 points against Torquay ! As Max Boyce famously said, "It quite cast a gloom over the whole proceedings." Penzance are no doubt eternally grateful to Gloucester Old Boys for keeping Launceston down to a miserly 87 points.

## Swansea RFC - The Great Whites 1998/99 Season



**10 Gloucester RFC 01452 381087**

# Interview



**A**s Mark-Cornwell points out to me as I start to interview Ian, "He's world XV you know!" He's referring to the recent tour of Argentina Ian undertook with a world XV invitation side. How did it go?

"I got back on Monday. We went out Tuesday or Wednesday last week and got back on Monday. Neil

McCarthy went from Gloucester, Barrie-Jon Mather of Sale and England, Craig Chalmers played 10, Gordon Bullock the Scottish hooker went, Laurent Cabannes... yeah, it was good to be involved in. There was only one game against Argentina and we lost 49-39 or something like that. It was really good experience. It was nothing else other than an invitation side. I played England A about 3 years ago, but I haven't been in the frame since then. I'm looking at the moment to pledge my allegiance to Ireland because I've got an Irish grandfather so I'm looking down those avenues at the moment and I think it could be promising."

The number 9 shirt has been pretty hotly contested this season. Sanders and Benton have been the first choices at scrum half, but Nigel Cane has played a few games too. Does Ian think that his difficulties with international selection are anything to do with the competition for places at Gloucester?

"Well, it didn't do Scott [Benton] any harm when he was here. No, I think it's more to do with the management structure at England. They're looking for younger guys to come in and to develop them for the future. I was there three years ago and within that three years haven't



# Ian Sanders

played at that level a great deal, either at Bath or here. You just get out of the picture a little bit and your main priority is your bread and butter, your week-in, week-out club games."

What's your attitude towards competition for places?  
"Yeah, it's something I enjoy. You'd be pretty complacent if you thought you should have your shirt week in week out without any competition. Competition is definitely, definitely a good thing. I think my main skills are my passing and my kicking; my box kicking is fundamentally pretty good. I like to play for the team and to put other people in gaps and make the right decisions. Those things are paramount as far as I'm concerned."

Everything's pretty much up in the air at the moment at Gloucester, perhaps most notably with the announced departure of Scott Benton. Diplomatically, Ian doesn't want to talk about that situation but does he think he'll be playing for Glos next season?  
"Yeah, I'd like to think so. I know Gloucester are looking for a scrum half and possibly having two full-time scrum halves, but the way Philippe uses his squad, there will be times when you're not going to play every week. The number 10 shirt is the same, hooker's the same. That's just the way professional rugby is these days. You'd be naïve to

think you could play 35-40 games in a season. You need a break. I would like to think that I would be predominantly in for the big games, but as long as I'm here and involved in Gloucester's success, that's what's important to me. This season - touch wood - my injury situation is fine. I had a bad year the first year I was here - I had muscle problems in my legs but I seem to have sorted that out now."

Tonight's game against Swansea is the last of Gloucester's four Anglo-Welsh friendlies this season. The games themselves haven't been too friendly but they have been odd: while Swansea and Cardiff field strong if not first choice sides, Gloucester - particularly against Cardiff at Kingsholm - put out what some have unkindly described as a United reserve team. What does Ian make of the situation?

"These games will take on a whole new meaning if and when they become part of a British league. The problem for them is that these are their bread and butter games and they're fielding full-strength teams against the English sides, yet the English sides are using it as an opportunity to rest players. If it ever does get resolved and they come into our league, they will be a force to be reckoned with. I don't really know too much about what's going on at the top levels

so I can't comment too much on that but I hope it does get sorted out."

How would you sum this season up?

"From the point of view of league position, we're all disappointed not to qualify for Europe. It's been a transitional year and we are definitely playing better rugby now than at the beginning of the season. That is beyond question. We went to West Hartlepool and scored five tries yet still lost the match and we were disappointed at Bedford too. Personally I was pleased to stay injury free and to pose a threat for the number 9 shirt. I think both me and Scott have played about 18 or 19 games each this season. There are a lot of younger players coming through and it's promising for the future. Also, I've got my daughter who was born just about the time I arrived at Gloucester."

On the subject of Ian's paternal devotion to his daughter, when I interviewed Steve Ojomoh earlier in the season, he said that he'd played a practical joke on Ian, replacing the picture of his daughter in Ian's keyring with a picture of Richard Ward's ears. "It wouldn't have been so bad," he complains, "If he hadn't bust the keyring in the process. But I haven't forgotten, and I haven't got him back yet..."