Gloucester

"Adieu Serge!"

Gloucester RFC Official Programme 1999-2000 Season

Issue 7 - £2.00

Saturday 18 December 1999
Kick-off 3.00pm
Welcome from The Editors

It appears that the Millennium Bug has hit the office at Kingsholm where these 48 pages were put together! We should have seen the warnings.

It was two weeks ago when the publishers phoned and dropped the bombshell. Because of the Great British Christmas Closedown in the printing industry, not only did the London Irish programme have to go to press a week before Christmas, but so did the programme for the visit of Bath next century.

If that was not enough, the deadline for this programme was brought forward to before last weekend’s encounter at Bridgwater. We did manage to negotiate a handful of “late pages” which closed on Monday at lunchtime. So if the teams are not as accurate as they usually are, please accept our apologies.

Anyway, the programme was coming along nicely and we were bang on target in production terms.

But we had reckoned without the Sunday Times. A reporter from the “toyshop” (that’s the department more formally known as “sports”) wanted to know just how the average Gloucester supporter felt about the move into the professional era.

He wanted to know what you thought about the “imports” amongst the players — that sort of thing.

So, being a resourceful sort of a guy, the sportswriter posted a short message on the “Guestbook” of the Kingsholm Chronicle, the club’s website.

As we write this, we wonder if the Sunday Times were expecting a couple of people to reply.

Well, did YOU have news for the Sunday Times?

The guestbook carried scores of replies from scores of Claws fans. Virtually all of the replies posted on the guestbook for the world to see said much the same thing.

While we like to see local players in the Gloucester team, we don’t really care if someone is from Mars as long as he wears the Gloucester jersey with pride and plays with passion.

Many did point out areas where there could be an improvement in the “tricks and mortar” and off-field activities of the club.

But the bottom line was really the passion showed by those who responded.

And that there was such an overwhelming consensus of opinion.

Steve Jones, who most of you would rate as their favourite rugby scribe, admitted that the sports desk was taken aback with the response. We had no alternative, really, in doing a “Lou Grant” and throwing out an article to make room for one of the postings to the Sunday Times.

It was hard to make the decision of which one to print — the vast majority could easily have “made it” into print in this programme.

The one that is reproduced in Dear Sunday Times on page 29 reflects, we believe, the majority of what was written.

Nothing has been altered, except for a couple of spelling corrections and the introduction of paragraphs — Guestbooks on the internet, for some reason, puts everything into one long paragraph, just like a newspaper did 100 years ago.

Now, just when we thought it was safe to relax and venture down to Wales to watch Gloucester play, came the news that Philippe Saint-André and Tom Walkinshaw had agreed a deal that would keep our coach at Kingsholm for another two years.

Back to the drawing board? Now!

The French flavour today reflects on a Frenchman who has become almost a Kingsholm icon after less than 10 appearances.

So while we say Joyeux Noël, we also say À Revoir, Serge.
Match Action
Bristol 25  Gloucester 38

Read The News And Air Your Views on the Official Gloucester RFC Website
www.kingsholm-chronicle.org.uk
It's nice to return to this famous ground after a break of five years, and to sample the great hospitality that has always been a feature of the club.

On our last visit to the club on that cold wet Friday night of the 25th November 1994 it was possibly the longest game in the history of both clubs.

The journey started eventfully as we were unable to call on the services of our international players we had to borrow players and also recruit youth players like Nathan Thomas one of the Bath players you love to hate.

The game started on time (7.00 pm) with Gloucester dictating the game and scoring four lucky tries without reply. The referee Mr Paul Margaroudy was completely neutral, as are all English Referees. I was enjoying the game by running the line and getting involved in some good humoured banter with the supporters on the far terracing, then it happened.

Bridgend's wing Gwilym Wilkins, broke out of defence and crossed the half way line for the first time and then the Gloucester's plan "B" came into force as the floodlights failed and stopped our chances of fighting back. Both teams then left the field and after ten minutes some players wanted to call it a day and retire to the bar, but after twenty minutes the lights came back on the game restarted.

The plan had worked Bridgend failed to cross the half way line for fear of fusing the lights again and were unlucky to concede three more tries to loss by 45 pts to 0pts when the referee blew his whistle at about 9.00 pm.

All jokes aside it's great to back at this famous ground and if the two sides aside it's great to back at this famous ground and if the two sides play in the way they played in Bridgend last Saturday we will all be in for a wonderful game.

There was a pleasant surprise for Gloucester club officials at Bridgend last Saturday.

Jeff Coleman, a long-time Bridgend supporter, was there to greet such club luminaries as Bob Clewes, Mike Potter and Alan Brinn.

The three all played in the Gloucester team that visited Brewery Field on Friday January 23, 1970.

And Jeff had the programme for that game, which he gave to us – a gesture that is greatly appreciated.

For Brinn, that game was his 299th Gloucester appearance, and Bob Clewes was a strapping 20 year old in his second Gloucester season.

As for Potts, the programme lists him as playing in the 14 jersey!

Potts at right wing?

No, just the programme listed Gloucester in the old numbering system!
The Allied Dunbar leaders produced a below par performance against Welsh side Bridgend but still managed to come home with a point, which took them back to the top of the European group table.

Bridgend were up for the game and scored three tries before Gloucester even woke up. Dannie Francee opened the scoring with a try not long after the start which was converted by Paul Williams.

Simon Mannix got Gloucester on the board in the sixth minute with a penalty. But anything Gloucester tried Bridgend seemed to have the answer.

Williams hit back with two penalties of his own. British Lions centre John Devereux and Bridgend captain Owain Lloyd gained a try apiece without a reply from Gloucester who trailed 23-3 after 20 minutes.

Gloucester started to show their form that beat Bristol so convincingly seven days previously with a try from young centre Joe Ewens after 38 minutes. Then in time added on, the French referee awarded Gloucester a penalty try when Bridgend collapsed a five metre scrum.

Mannix converted both tries, and this late rally from Gloucester brought the score at half time to Bridgend 23, Gloucester 17.

Early in the second half Bridgend extended their lead with two penalties from Williams. But then the Gloucester defence got into gear and held firm.

A controversial try from Samoa replacement Terry Fanolua and the conversion from Mannix lifted the side. The home crowd showed their anger at Fanolua's try which fell short of the try line. The anger of the crowd was fuelled by the try being showed on the large screen from the live television coverage.

Even after Fanolua's try Gloucester were still short of Bridgend's 29 points. With both teams trying to extend their points, the match became end to end rugby.

With time virtually up Ian Sanders divided over in the corner to level the scores, Mannix's long range touchline conversion attempt just drifted left of the posts.

Gloucester had been let off the hook and were able to share the points with Bridgend.
The Sunday Times posted a request to Gloucester’s growing number of supporters who surf the internet for views on Gloucester Rugby Football Club, the "foreign invasion" and professionalism. Here is what one supporter said - it is typical of the scores of replies posted for the world to see.

Nothing has been altered, except that paragraphs have been added.

Mr incognito Sunday Times reporter:

Gloucester have ALWAYS fielded players from further afield.

Well remember the days when we snaffled players from Sydney, Stroud and Cheltenham to name just three clubs outside the environs of this city.

Seriously though, Gloucester have never discouraged players from outside the city from wearing the fabled Cherry & White jersey. Rather the emphasis has changed in that, for the last couple of seasons, the club have actively encouraged it.

Previously it was incumbent upon the player concerned making the first approach which frequently fell upon deaf ears. And, at the end of the day, the club will always be bigger than the players, irrespective of who they are.

An enormous kerfuffle was made about Phathboy Phil Greening (being a local lad and all that) but he ultimately paid the price for trying to become bigger than the club (in more ways than one) and that was quickly accepted by all genuine supporters.

On the other side of the coin, because he’s still a local lad, most Gloucester followers would, and do, cheer Phil to the rafters in every game he plays - apart from against Gloucester of course.

You see, unlike some clubs, Gloucester have always had the luxury of a huge groundswell of support which encourages local youngsters to dream of running onto the turf at Kingsholm. And that will, most assuredly, continue - even now there’s probably a young lad playing at school who will be the next Mike Teague, Mike Burton, Digger Morris, or Tom Voyce ... let’s just hope he doesn’t look like any of them... "taff".

To be honest, the "winds of change" would’ve been gusting through the club many years ago if it hadn’t been for local kids having this dream. Gloucester were certainly culpable of adopting an ostrich mentality during the Eighties when it became apparent that local schools/clubs were not producing players of sufficient quality. And the club’s only active recruitment policy was to invite "interested players" to a couple of trials each August. This huge support for the club is the main reason why Gloucester can quite rightly claim to be the "Manchester United" of rugby union - try asking the other ADP clubs how much our away support adds to their bottom line each year!

And each one of those supporters knows exactly what they want - players that live and breathe the ethos of Gloucester rugby; i.e. an inner-face readiness to put their body on the line for those who’ve paid good money to watch them week in and week out, and a sense of belonging to the local community. Providing they exhibit those qualities we’ll be quite happy for Martians to come and play for us. Unfortunately, while it’s undoubtedly true that the massive injection of capital that Tom Wilkinson provided has probably kept Gloucester Rugby Club in the upper echelons of English rugby, there is a sense of unease that the club no longer belongs to the community that supports it.

And, as has already been pointed out below [in previous messages - editor], the supporters seem to be second class citizens in this relationship. They are treated very much as inexcusable cash cows what with the inexcusable increases in admission prices, all too frequent changes of strip; very little spent on facilities; etc.

Despite this, and a few thousand others, will still travel home and away to follow our team of nationalised Gloucestrians. And finally - any responsible reporter would’ve left an e-mail address to confirm their bona fides as it were ... and even taken the opportunity to drum up a few extra readers by leaving the Sunday Times URL.

Gink UK - Wednesday 9 December 1998 22:52:21 (GMT)
As Gloucester look towards the New Year hoping for success both at home and in Europe, four junior clubs across the County have their thoughts firmly on surely the pinnacle for any amateur player - getting to Twickenham.

Gloucestershire has a proud tradition in what began as the Provincial Insurance Cup, and since the RFU split the pyramid into three tiers and created the NPI Cup, we've had our first club match HQ since Gloucester went there almost ten years ago.

Our survivors this season - Gloucester Old Boys and Longlevens in the NPI Cup, and Painswick and Tewkesbury in the Tetley Vase - have a lot to live up to, with the city having been well represented since the competitions were formed. Tewkesbury were first to make their mark - ironic bearing in mind their recent problems in raising any sort of side at all. The Lancers was a regular haunt during the 1992-3 season, when Tewkesbury reached the semi-finals of what was properly known as "The Junior Cup." Fientwood beat them at The Reddings on a snowy day marred by crowd trouble. The Molesley club had put a stack of canned beer on pallets outside the club house to try and ease the demand inside. With hindsight, perhaps it wasn't the best decision.

Hazelgrove's Dave Smith will for ever be remembered for his last minute penalty on which the match depended. The kick was missed, and Malvern made the final. Post match interviews on such occasions are never easy and former Gloucester favourite Steve Purdlove needed only two words - "We're devastated."

In March 1997, we hoped for a Gloucester double. On the day Gloucester lost at Bath, Old Cireneians travelled to another ground Gloucester know well, College Grove, Wakefield. The Old Boys were stopped by a real character, Tony "Blazer" Baker, but even his motivation couldn't get his side past Midlands, a student side from Newcastle. Tony was great value in terms of PR, and his reaction at the final whistle to the home win over Enfield was the quote of the season, "It isn't much in yet... (pause)...it's just like ya mum giving birth, isn't."

The great value of Gloucester rugby have got as close to Twickenham since, but Painswick are in the last 32 of what is now the Tetley Vase for the second time in four seasons, and the club, with its semi rural backdrop, offers a contrast with the more early in the season.

Painswick had a role to play in Gloucester’s history too, or so the story goes.

Founded in 1872, the club needed a pitch to make its colours distinguishable, so the village came up a pair of his wife's cherry curtains, hence Painswick's claim to be the original Cherry & Whites. Gloucester of course, were formed the following year...and legend has it that 126 years of history was founded on Gloucester borrowing Painswick's kit.

Their semi final also ended in defeat against Cireneian & Mortimer, but they'll hope to reach the final this year with a home win at Lansdowne, where another Gloucester side are, having an excellent season in Gloucestershire Division 2, and they will fancy their chances of upsetting the odds against Gloucestershire's side from the Birmingham area.

Somewhat Twickenham appearance against Headfield Athletic in the NPI Cup the season before last broke the run of Gloucestershire sides falling in the final, but not the run of Painswick. Now Newlyn were conquered at Frome Hill Park in the semi's, and Richard Hill gave them a session at Kingsholm before the final, along with a few words for another familiar face, Dave Spencer. It very nearly worked, if, only losing in extra time.

Trying to emulate them this season are Longlevens, whose forwards ought to know a thing or two under Andy Deacon's watchful eye, and Gloucester Old Boys, who've hired Coach Bobby Fowke from Spumers. The Old Boys will have the Morton Road slope to help them against Bournemouth, while Longlevens are away to Old Merchant Taylor's, regular Boxing Day visitors to Kingsholm in days gone by.

On your way home from the Spain game here on January the 8th, listen out for the 4 results involving our local clubs. Success at a junior level is just as sweet as it is at the top.

Ian Randall is Sports Producer at BBC Radio Gloucestershire.
Let it be proclaimed throughout the land that on the last Christmas Day of the Second Millennium since the Birth of Our Lord, Gloucester are at the top of the Premiership table.

Tidings of Comfort and Joy and then some.

How long we shall remain Lords of the Universe remains to be seen, but if we can beat London Irish at home on Boxing Day, and Bedford away, on December 29, then we shall be the Championship leaders when the year 2000 dawns, and whatever happens thereafter, they'll never be able to take that away from us.

And it all happened courtesy of that stunning win over the Old Enemy down at the Memorial Stadium, which makes it all the sweeter.

I don't take much notice of the abusive citing affair. It's nice to see that wise counsels prevailed in the end, and the whole thing was allowed to expire gracefully.

As one British cynical supporter said to me: "Can't see what all the fuss was about. If I were to see a Gloucester and Bristol match without a punch-up in it, I'd ask for my money back."

A reprehensible view, you may feel, but it doesn't demonstrate the weight of history there is behind that fixture.

But today, we're concentrating on European matters. More than that, we're saluting the arrival of Bridgand after far too long an absence. In the dear, dead days when we had the best Anglo-Welsh fixture list in the two countries, the Bridgand games were always eagerly awaited. Always hard fought and full of incident, they certainly used to represent one of the highlights of the Gloucester season.

In fact, the restoration of friendly hostilities between our two great clubs is one of the best arguments for membership of the European Community I've come across. So it's good to see the lads from over the Severn back again. I expect they'll be glad to be here, too.

WHERE'S THE LOGIC?

The more time goes on, the more the regulations for registration of players make my brain hurt.

As we all know, when the World Cup had been and gone, clubs were constrained into playing only two non-European players in Premiership games. Fair enough, but it's the fine print which gets me. When the team for Bristol was announced, Terry Faintuva and Eian McIntosh were declared to be two "foreign" players. I reflected that the Home Office had moved the goal posts during the close season dashing our understanding that Faintuva would be classed as a "local" player by virtue of his Scottish grandparents. That was a pity, but gee-ee, sons, as they say down Trewzo way.

Then I thought to myself: "Ang about! What about Ian Jones?" So I enquired.

It seems that Ian's wife, Jeanette, has Irish parents and is the proud possessor of an Irish passport, so the legendary lock classification is "local".

So now we have the ridiculous situation where one of the finest All Blacks of all time, with millions of Caps for New Zealand, and no discernible blood ties with a European country, escapes the net, while a scrum-half who has never played for his country at senior level, and whose ancestry qualifies him to play for Scotland, has to be classed as a "foreign" player.

I ask you - can anyone see the logic in that?

As Andrew Harley said when I enquired, "I once ate some Turkish delight. Does that mean I'm Turkish?"

Don't bother, Andrew. Even if Turkey were to join the EU, you wouldn't pass the fitness test.

Have a great Christmas, everyone. See you on Boxing Day.
IS IT THE SOCKS?

We all remember that first glimpse, which stirred something inside us. A strange figure shuffling along behind goal at the Hospitality End. It seemed a struggle to put one foot in front of another, the style of his hair was as individual as the beard; his shirt was pulling at his shoulders and the delicate drape outside his shorts, and his socks around his ankles was reminiscent of a six year olds attempt to dress himself.

This was no pitiful vagrant in search of butts of Gauloise or sips of partially finished ‘House Red’. That look on his face, the eyes; yes! the eyes said it all: focus, ‘I have control’, it was all there. Then, the finishing touch for a prop forward HIS KNUCKLES WERE TAPED!!

At that moment, we the supporters, the ‘Kingsholm Faithful’, ‘The Shed’, whoever we were, whoever we were, knew that he was our hero and he wasn’t even on the field of play yet. He was obviously a Gloucester boy through and through, it’s just that he had a French name and a French accent. (Some say that the front row talk in a universal language anyway). We could imagine him in any front row at Gloucester, with any of Nichols, Button, or Blakeway - and somehow you could see him and Digger Morris arm in arm leaving the field to celebrate another successful day.

Of more recent times and recent heroes Teaguey and Philippe ... wasn’t their hair always immaculately coiffured, didn’t their shirts have an individual drape, didn’t they always look at their most drained (hands on hips) just before a blistering contribution, weren’t their eyes saying ‘I have control’? And didn’t they have their socks rolled down too?

So there you are Serge (we’ve even learnt to pronounce that too), you’re one of us you’re a Gloucester Boy and you’re going to leave us. We hope that it is adieu not au revoir, but hey! Frank Sinatra officially retired nine times; you’re only up to four. Get the Cherry and White shirt on, drape it outside your shorts, tape your knuckles, amble onto the field and ROLL DOWN THOSE SOCKS - you’re a real GLAVERSTER BOY

The Gloucester Rugby Supporters Association (GRSA) was formed to provide a focal point for all Supporters with the club on important issues - by arranging events, providing a forum for discussion with the Club, increasing our knowledge and understanding of the game and giving all supporters a voice.

An Independent Voice, Run by Supporters - For Supporters

For more information or stories for inclusion, please phone Trevor on 01452 857077
## Today's Line-Ups

### Gloucester

| 15 | Richard Tombs              |
| 14 | Chris Catling             |
| 13 | Joe Ewens                 |
| 12 | Chris Yates               |
| 11 | Tom Beim                  |
| 10 | Simon Mannix              |
|  9 | Ian Sanders               |
|  1 | Trevor Woodman            |
|  2 | Neil McCarthy             |
|  3 | Andy Deacon               |
|  4 | Mark Cornwell             |
|  5 | Ian Jones                 |
|  6 | Steve Ojomoh              |
|  7 | Pete Glanville (c)        |
|  8 | Adam Eustace              |

### Bridgend

| 15 | Adrian Durston            |
| 14 | Owain Thomas              |
| 13 | Gareth Jones              |
| 12 | John Devereux             |
| 11 | Dewi De Caux              |
| 10 | Paul Williams             |
|  9 | Andrew Jenkins            |
|  1 | Matt Filipo               |
|  2 | Chris Ferris              |
|  3 | Dinile Franchise          |
|  4 | Owain Lloyd (c)           |
|  5 | Paul Clapham              |
|  6 | Ceri Davies               |
|  7 | Maama Molitika            |
|  8 | David Hodges              |

### Replacements

| 16 | Ian Sanders              |
| 17 | Rob Jewell               |
| 18 | Terry Fanola             |
| 19 | Adey Powles              |
| 20 | Neil McCarthy            |
| 21 | Adam Eustace             |
| 22 | Andrew Hazell            |

| 16 | John Funnell             |
| 17 | Lloyd Davies             |
| 18 | Steve Wake               |
| 19 | Andrew Joy               |
| 20 | Andrew Williams          |
| 21 | Richard Webster          |
| 22 | Chris Bugen              |

This programme went to press on the 14th December making these best guess team line-ups