

# Old Spot!

Your Independent Match Day Newsletter  
News and Views, Facts and Figures



(Origins of Rugby c1810)

**GLOUCESTER'S NEXT MATCH**  
**v WEST HARTLEPOOL**  
**Courage Club Championship**  
**Saturday January 18, 1997**  
**Kick off - 3.00 p.m.**

**Issue 1**

January 17, 1997

~~50~~ pence

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# Old Spot's Sheditorial

Welcome to the first edition of Old Spot! Your Independent Match Day Newsletter.

The aim of this newsletter is to give Gloucester supporters what they want – 100% Gloucester! Therefore we will be carrying no material extolling the virtues and past successes of other teams. Exceptions to this may include foreign opposition, but we don't think it is right for Gloucester supporters to spend £2 for pictures of the enemy especially when that enemy is Bath. Those that disagree have underestimated the strength of feeling among true Gloucester supporters.

We don't aim to compete with ShedHead, we aim to complement it. ShedHead has its rightful place as the independent fanzine but there is still a void which we aim to fill. If you haven't already bought a copy of British, if not World, Rugby's greatest fanzine then I urge you to do so without delay!

In this inaugural free issue we have the full transcript of Richard Hill's post-match press conference. Read what he has to say about Gloucester's recent form, Mark Mapletoft's England future and, needless to say, the Phil Greening situation.

We have secured an interesting interview with Andrew Harley who keeps Gloucester RFC statistics. He has strong feelings about the current side's potential. Coming straight to us from his success on the internet Web Site we welcome Ol' Babber as he looks forward to the West Hartlepool match.

We also promise to have up to date match results and league tables and we're going to have an extensive statistics section for all those who get turned on by that sort of thing. We may change the contents from time to time to include interesting facts and figures.

Please feel free to write to us, we welcome your comments. Write to:

Old Spot!

Newbrook House, Queen's Road, Stonehouse, Glos GL10 2QA

or email:

oldspot@glawster.demon.co.uk

## Club News

Tickets for the Pilkington Cup Round 6 match with Bristol here at Kingsholm next Saturday are already on sale. Prices are £12 Grandstand, £8 Ground. As you all know by now Cup games are ticket only.

The postponed fixture with Bristol has been rearranged for Tuesday 18th February. Kick-off is at 7.30pm. The postponed Northampton game is yet to be re-arranged.

## Squad News

The latest reports on the fitness, availability, representational honours, gossip, new arrivals, departures, First XV and United squad members.

Audley Lumsden has a groin strain and will be out for at least another week. Alastair Saverimutto has a calf strain.

Nick Smith's Achilles tendon problem is clearing up at long last. He has resumed light training and hopefully will be available for matches next week.

Dave Timmington is still "AWOL".

Phil Vickery has a hamstring injury and will be out of action for at least another week.

Chris Yelland has a knee problem and will be out of action for at least another week.

Peter Glanville is unavailable due to work commitments in South Africa.

Dave Sims, Chris Catling, Mark Mapletoft, Rob Fidler and Scott Benton have all been included in the England A squad for the January 31 matches against Scotland A and Otago. The squad includes former Gloucester player Richard West.

The West Hartlepool match will probably see an individual milestone. Outside-half Mark Mapletoft is sitting on 498 career points for the club. This has been achieved in just 44 appearances - and comes after he had sat-out virtually a season with a cruciate ligament injury. He needs only 11 points to make it 300 for the season.

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# Match Report

## London Irish 20 Gloucester 21

It didn't seem like 4 weeks since Gloucester played their last Courage League game, coincidentally against the same opposition, as the game appeared to be a straight continuation of the last. Hard hitting, especially from Mike Lloyd and the back row, and neither side being dominant meant that another close contest was guaranteed. We don't really like it this close though!

Straight from the start, Irish were awarded a penalty. No idea why but probably because Gloucester looked too mean and tough. Humphreys made no mistake with the kick. Gloucester replied immediately with some powerful forward play that had us all shouting our heads off. Mapletoft kicked a beautiful drop-goal. The referee signalled but immediately cancelled because of an infringement flagged by the touch judge. A brief discussion ensued and Simon Devereux was yellow carded. No idea why, probably because he's too mean and tough. The Irish announcer gleefully advised the boys at the scoreboard that the score remained 3-0 to Irish.

A further indiscretion (as determined by referee Warren) gave Humphreys the chance to extend Irish's lead and he made no mistake. to make the score 6-0. This only served to fire Gloucester up. The quick-witted Benton took a tap and ensured that he was tackled after 9 yards. Not even Mr Warren could let this go and awarded the penalty for failing to retreat the full 10 yards. Mapletoft opened his account easily.

By now it was clear that the Gloucester forwards were dominating the loose. Superb back row play from Glanville and the mean and tough-looking Devereux gave Gloucester possession time and time again, just when it appeared that the Irish backs had managed to recycle the ball. Irish looked very dangerous when going forward, as they had done at Kingsholm, but failure to win second phase meant that scoring opportunities were severely restricted. From Gloucester's point of view, some dogged goal line resistance meant that Gloucester were unable to capitalise on their forward's dominance. After a series of goal line stands, Benton took a quick tap penalty but sent a poor pass out to Mapletoft who could only flap at it. The ball went to ground and the move floundered but referee Warren decided that the Irish defence were in the wrong position and awarded another penalty. Mapletoft converted.

London Irish seemed determined to change round in front and mounted a stern attack which resulted in a Humphreys penalty. Half-time score: London Irish 9 Gloucester 6

It was the considered opinion of my fellow Gloucester supporters that Gloucester should have turned their forward superiority into more points. Perhaps that was the point that Richer Dill made to them after half-time because Gloucester came out storming. Mapletoft dropped a goal which barely went more than 3 feet above the bar. However Irish replied soon after with a penalty to regain the lead, 12-9.

Catling made a rare error after catching a clearance that didn't make touch. Running almost crabwise he was soon caught in midfield but sufficient Gloucester support ensured that he wasn't made to pay.

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The next passage of play was to determine the outcome. Glanville, who combined well with Carter throughout the match, forced his way over in the right hand corner for his second try in as many games. Mapletoft converted well so that Gloucester took the lead for the first time in the match, 16-12. At this point it seemed that Gloucester would turn it on and the floodgates would open wide. A period of severe Irish pressure followed and the whole game rested on the outcome of their attack. With time running out failure to score would almost certainly have taken the heart out of the team, but a score would lift their hearts as well as take them back into the lead. Humphreys failed narrowly with a penalty but Gloucester were unable to effectively clear the ball as Irish pressed forward from the drop-out. A second penalty was awarded and rather than take the opportunity of a relatively simple 3 points, Humphreys kicked for touch just a few yards from the Gloucester line. Irish had been reasonably successful with their line-out and it was no surprise when they won the ball. The Irish pack shoved over the line but excellent Gloucester defence prevented the touch down. However from the 5 metre scrum Conor O'Shea belted through the tackles to score. Humphreys missed the conversion but Irish had restored their lead, 17-16.

All through the match the referee had suffered stick from both sets of supporters but the loudest catcalls were saved for when the thorough incompetent Warren walked backwards for 20 yards as he signalled a Irish penalty under the posts. He clearly hadn't seen the Irish forward lying face down in the mud and fell on his backside. Huge cheers from everyone and a quick bawdy version of "Why was he born so beautiful". Although we all enjoyed this moment, Humphreys converted the penalty.

From the restart Gloucester put intense pressure on Irish and it was inevitable that the ball was won back. In a continuous movement, the Gloucester pack pushed all the way to the try line where Rob Fidler dived over. Mapletoft made his worst kick of the season and the ball was very wide of the post. No matter, Gloucester had regained the lead 21-20.

Mapletoft suffered an injury as he dived for a loose ball. Unfortunately Davidson also went for the ball and the much larger man was successful. As the referee awarded the scrum for knock-on, Mapletoft got up holding his arm. It looked like he had damaged ribs or even a collar-bone problem. But as Richer Dill later confirmed, it was no more than a bad bang on the elbow. Peter Hart came on as replacement and almost immediately missed a simple penalty. Gloucester kept Irish in their own half for five minutes of injury time and we were all so relieved when Warren finally called a halt.

Man of the Match: Simon Devereux. Several crunching tackles when they were needed, some fine line-out work and superb effort in the loose gave Gloucester the forward superiority which was the difference between the two teams

Teams:

Gloucester: Catling ; Peters, Caskie, Roberts, Lloyd; Mapletoft {Hart 78}, Benton; Windo, Greening, Deacon; Fidler, Sims (captain); Glanville, Carter, Devereux.

Tries: Glanville, Fidler; Conversion: Mapletoft; Penalties: Mapletoft (2)

Drop Goal: Mapletoft

London Irish: O'Shea; Woods, Henderson, Burns, Bishop; Humphreys, Ewington; Fitzpatrick, Kellam, Halpin; Fulcher, Davidson; O'Connell, Dawson, Walsh.

# Richard Hill

OS. Pleased with the win?

RH. Yes, yes. It would be nice to have one not quite that close. A lot of our games go into injury time and a lot of nail-biting goes on. From my point of view with the Gloucester team, we've now been playing games where we've been under the cosh, on the rack a bit and we've actually dug deep and found some reserves. And the mark of a good side is one which doesn't capitulate when the pressure comes on. When we beat London Irish in the last League match at home, they scored right at half-time, which last year we would have been very depressed and I think heads would have gone down and mistakes would have crept in. But we went back in 16-all at half-time and we won 29-19. And today I was a little bit concerned when O'Shea scored and the crowd lifted and I could see the Irish were obviously well lifted by it. Again last year I think our heads would have gone down and we wouldn't have had the belief. But now the belief is in us and that's a big key to it. If you actually believe you can still win and the players pull together, to come right back and score a try is a big credit to them.

OS. Would you say it was a four point win?

RH. Yes it was. We've had a strange fixture list, I suppose a lot of people have. We played the top sides in the first quarter. In the second and third quarter we're playing the bottom sides almost back to back. So really when you look at the fixture list its the matches in the second and third quarters where we've got to pick up our points. We did the job in the second quarter - we beat Wasps, Orrell, West Hartlepool and London Irish. Now this is the vital third quarter when we play those sides again. It was a good start to this part of the season especially with Bristol losing as well. Its opened a four point gap. Today was make or break for Irish and we knew what we would face and they came at us with a lot of passion and a lot of effort and we managed to contain them at 6-0, which I was reasonably comfortable with, 9-6 at half-time and we were in with a chance.

OS. In some ways it was a make or break game for both teams

RH. Yes in some ways. We've still got a few games but Bristol would have had the incentive but with a bit of luck we might break the back of Bristol with this win. We've got West Hartlepool next week and that's a game we must win as well. We've looked at it and we're in a good position with 8 points up until today and quite honestly its down to us, the ball is in our court. We've had this one here and we've got West Hartlepool home, Orrell home and Bristol home and away. If we win those we'll stay up. If we don't win those then we don't deserve to stay up. We'll only have ourselves to blame. We've started the third quarter well. We were a bit rusty not having played for three weeks and I think it certainly showed, a lot of errors crept in, decision making was poor at times, a lot of handling errors crept in but I think the key factor today was actually defence. At least that was good. If anything, the thing that won the game was the big hits in defence. Mike Lloyd put in some big tackles right the way through, Simon Devereux put in a couple of crunchers in and that's what won us the game I think.

OS. London Irish kicked a penalty and you needed a try which you got straight from the restart and it seemed to come very easily. How do you see that try?

RH. Well if you can get into those positions, and that's why its very dangerous when they had two or three line-outs and five metre scrums and they came away with the points, you should score. Do your drills well and you should score. They had a couple of chances and fortunately were held up at the line. How they didn't score I don't know. Those would be positions we expect to score from and we must have done some good work there to keep them off the floor. We had very few opportunities in their 22 in the second half and I think that was only maybe a handful of times we were up there. John Brain who is coaching the boys has done his stuff and that worked a treat.

OS. With so few fly-halves around available to Jack Rowell what's in store for Mapletoft?

RH. As you say there aren't that many up there, that's why he's in the England A squad and with the influx of foreign players coming in probably even fewer. We won't be getting a foreign outside half at Gloucester so Mark Mapletoft won't have to worry about that. If we play like that we'll stay in division one and we won't need one.

OS. What about Phil Greening? Did it upset the squad?

RH. I think it's a lot for him to take in and I feel very sorry for him. But there was a comment that we're looking to go on tour next year and we're trying to find the money to do it and somebody said "Sell Phil Greening and we can go on tour!". So the lads have had a pop at him and I think they'll get rid of him so that we can go on tour.

OS. Where will the tour be?

RH. Somewhere nice if we sell him! We would like to go to perhaps Italy and have a week out there and prepare properly. We didn't have the chance as we didn't have the money this year and consequently we had a slow start. But Phil's got a hell of a lot to cope with. He's got superstar status in Gloucester because it's a passionate city. He's not had a direct offer himself. His agent, quite naturally, has had to show him the offers he's received. He's got an obligation to tell Phil what offers are on the table. I told Phil he may as well see what the offers are just as an interest to see what you're worth. But he's a Gloucester man, he enjoys himself at Gloucester and he's got no intention of leaving and I think with a bit of luck we'll get a few more of our players receiving substantial offers from elsewhere. It's a testament to the quality of the players that have already moved to Gloucester. He lives very close to the ground, they all do, they hang around the club all day - you can't get rid of them!

OS. Do you think he has a chance of making the Lions squad?

RH. I think that Phil has got to play more club rugby. He's still developing as a player. Everyone says he's got potential and he really has. But he needs more games at the top level and he certainly needs to play some international rugby at some stage before you start talking about that. Whilst we ought to fast-track people I think it's early days yet and if he's managed properly he'll be a very good player. I think the worst thing that could happen is that he's not managed properly. He's just about keeping his feet on the ground and trying to be level-headed. It's hard when there's so many things going on around him. He carries the burden of being the only international, apart from Ian Smith who is injured, that we've got at the club. It's a credit to him that he can actually do that. He likes to get on with life.

OS. Have you resigned yourself to losing him?

RH. No. No. Far from it. We hope not to lose him at all, no. I'd like to see him see out his career at Gloucester. He very much features in our long term plans at Gloucester. He was one of the catalysts for bringing in a number of players to this club. He has a big infectious effect on people, people enjoy his company and there's a lot of camaraderie. I would like to think he will be the catalyst to attract other people to us. I think you'll find that as the numbers of English players drops in other clubs around the country there will be a lot of English players looking for a home to play some rugby.

OS. Do you think there should be a limit on the number of foreign player per club?

RH. There's got to be a limit. Even at Gloucester we get faxes every single day of the week from foreign players. Shane Howarth, the New Zealand full back, is touting himself around the clubs, Sale are very interested in him. He wants £100,000 to come over here. Any overseas player and some clubs are clamouring over them. They just spend money after money. I think it's absolutely crazy and if we're not careful in a year's time virtually all English sides will be full of foreign players. We'll hold out as long as we possibly can.

# Letter

One of the most popular sections on the Web Site is the Letters Page. I've taken this opportunity to use some of the best of the most recent letters.

From: Mike Weaver

Concerning a message to the team for the Bristol game - how about something short and to the point...

Good luck lads - You're well capable of giving these boys a pasting - round off the year the way you mean to go on ! By the way, - there's a few pints in it if anyone can "accidentally bump into" Kris Fullman. His mates think it's about time he started wishing he had never left Kingsholm!  
Cheers !

From: Chris Rochford

I first came across your web site in October and have been regularly dropping in. I had only intended to drop in occasionally but found the reports and letters humours and interesting and now check the web sight at least every couple of days. I am truly impressed for a couple of reasons.

Firstly the team. From what I have read, Richer Dill and the Club have got it right. There is nothing better than seeing 15 man Rugby played by a young enthusiastic team. Particularly in Britain where from memory (I had a season at Lancaster University) standing on the sideline (or in the Shed) can be a real test of a team's supporters. Not to mention the possibility of hypothermia. Watching good Rugby can give you a warm glow (then go and get p\*\*\*\*d on medicinal Rum and coke in the Club Bar).

Secondly the club supporters and article writers. I look forward to the comments on the games, Barf, Orrible et al, and general comments. I know what it's like to be a long way from home and to get no news of your Rugby Club. At Lancaster it was impossible to get news of my club in Brisbane, Oz (Eastern Districts RUFC) and there was no Web sites in those days (1985/86). I now live in Sydney and have retired from playing.

From: Gary Beale

The Marketing Manager of Hamiltons RFC in Cape Town South Africa would like to wish your club the seasons greetings.

Please would you let me have your clubs postal address so that a card may be sent

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# s Page

From: Laura Moore

Congratulations on such an excellent page. I'm at University in Durham at the moment, so I don't really get much chance to see Glos play, but the Web page is excellent, so there is some consolation! I can't wait to get home and watch some decent rugby.

On a parting note, can you tell me why when Gloucester play anybody, it's always a "scrappy relegation battle" or that most national newspapers don't even seem to have heard of Gloucester, unless they are playing Bath?!

From: Andrew Clyde

Embarrassing moments in the Shed.

Back on that glorious Sunday afternoon, October 6th, I spent one of the best 80 minutes of my life watching Warps being stuffed by a supreme Glaws performance. I seem to recall our ever optimistic Shedhead expecting a drubbing - oh well boys, ye of little faith.

You have to understand that I was in the midst of the shed with my mother, a certain Mrs. Catling. Glaws were top drawer and my brother, the vastly over-rated Chris Catling (!) had one of his not-so-bad days.

However, the fun and games started when a rather porky warps Full Back pushed Chris over out of play. You should have seen (and if you were in the shed you probably did) my mother. She went mad. She screamed "you animal, I know who you are, you B\*\*\*\*y cheat (etc.)". The thing was, Pie-man's challenge wasn't actually that bad, just a bit of hand-bags at noon. The Shed was quite bemused by my mother's little diatribe. Of course, yours truly was more than a little bit embarrassed by the whole affair, so I quickly placed my hand over my mother's mouth to silence her screams. She only bit half the skin of my hand off. All I can say is that the pie-man better watch out next time he comes to Kingsholm, they'll be one woman with an eye on him.

By the way, if you're going to interview Chris, ask him why Surrey didn't think he was good enough to play for them for the U15's? (too small apparently - but that never stopped Micro.)

**SEND YOUR LETTERS FOR PUBLICATION TO:**  
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or email: [oldspot@glawster.demon.co.uk](mailto:oldspot@glawster.demon.co.uk)

# Fixtures and Results

|           |      |                      |                   |   |   |       |
|-----------|------|----------------------|-------------------|---|---|-------|
| August    | 23rd | Friendly             | Pontypridd        | H | W | 15-5  |
|           | 31st | Courage League       | Harlequins        | A | L | 19-75 |
| September | 7th  | Courage League       | Sale              | H | L | 12-16 |
|           | 11th | Anglo-Welsh          | Newbridge         | A | W | 26-17 |
|           | 14th | Courage League       | Saracens          | A | L | 11-41 |
|           | 21st | Courage League       | Bath              | H | L | 29-45 |
|           | 28th | Courage League       | Leicester         | A | L | 14-32 |
| October   | 2nd  | Anglo-Welsh          | Dunvant           | H | W | 64-16 |
|           | 6th  | Courage League       | Wasps             | H | W | 28-23 |
|           | 12th | European League      | Ebbw Vale         | H | W | 59-7  |
|           | 16th | European League      | Begles Bordeaux   | H | L | 10-17 |
|           | 19th | European League      | Swansea           | A | L | 9-62  |
|           | 27th | European League      | Bourgoin          | H | L | 9-24  |
| November  | 2nd  | European League      | London Irish      | A | W | 29-13 |
|           | 5th  | Friendly             | Combined Services | H | W | 32-7  |
|           | 9th  | Courage League       | West Hartlepool   | A | W | 23-14 |
|           | 16th | Courage League       | Orrell            | A | W | 49-3  |
|           | 19th | Friendly             | RAF               | H | W | 33-7  |
|           | 23rd | Friendly             | Wakefield         | A | L | 24-29 |
|           | 30th | Anglo-Welsh          | Newbridge         | H | W | 76-0  |
| December  | 7th  | Courage League       | London Irish      | H | W | 29-19 |
|           | 10th | Anglo-Welsh          | Ebbw Vale         | A | W | 22-15 |
|           | 15th | Friendly             | Moseley           | A | L | 7-22  |
|           | 21st | Pilkington Cup R5    | Leeds             | H | W | 55-20 |
| January   | 4th  | Courage League       | Northampton       | H | P | P     |
|           | 11th | Courage League       | London Irish      | A | W | 21-20 |
|           | 18th | Courage League       | West Hartlepool   | H |   |       |
|           | 25th | Pilkington Cup R6    | Bristol           | H |   |       |
| February  | 8th  | Courage League       | Orrell            | H |   |       |
|           | 14th | Friendly             | Newport           | A |   |       |
|           | 18th | Courage League       | Bristol           | A |   |       |
|           | 22nd | Pilkington Cup Q-F   |                   |   |   |       |
|           | 25th | Anglo-Welsh          | Ebbw Vale         | H |   |       |
| March     | 9th  | Courage League       | Wasps             | A |   |       |
|           | 14th | Friendly             | Bedford           | A |   |       |
|           | 18th | Friendly             | Army              | H |   |       |
|           | 22nd | Courage League       | Leicester         | H |   |       |
|           | 29th | Courage League       | Bath              | A |   |       |
|           | 29th | Pilkington Cup S-F   |                   |   |   |       |
| April     | 2nd  | Anglo-Welsh          | Dunvant           | A |   |       |
|           | 5th  | Courage League       | Saracens          | H |   |       |
|           | 12th | Courage League       | Sale              | A |   |       |
|           | 19th | Courage League       | Harlequins        | H |   |       |
|           | 26th | Courage League       | Bristol           | H |   |       |
| May       | 3rd  | Courage League       | Northampton       | A |   |       |
|           | 10th | Pilkington Cup Final |                   |   |   |       |

# Club Statistics

## Courage League Division 1 - as of January 12

|                 | P  | W | D | L | F   | A   | Pts | Diff |
|-----------------|----|---|---|---|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Wasps           | 11 | 9 | 0 | 2 | 303 | 233 | 18  | 70   |
| Harlequins      | 11 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 418 | 220 | 16  | 198  |
| Leicester       | 11 | 8 | 0 | 3 | 309 | 183 | 16  | 126  |
| Bath            | 11 | 7 | 0 | 4 | 422 | 242 | 14  | 180  |
| Northampton     | 11 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 258 | 204 | 12  | 54   |
| Sale            | 9  | 5 | 1 | 3 | 251 | 186 | 11  | 65   |
| Saracens        | 9  | 5 | 1 | 3 | 235 | 204 | 11  | 31   |
| Gloucester      | 10 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 235 | 288 | 10  | -53  |
| West Hartlepool | 11 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 226 | 350 | 6   | -124 |
| Bristol         | 11 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 213 | 342 | 6   | -129 |
| London Irish    | 11 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 265 | 392 | 4   | -127 |
| Orrell          | 10 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 131 | 422 | 2   | -291 |

## Gloucester First XV Playing Record Summaries

| 1996/7 Season | Total | Home  | Away  |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Played        | 23    | 12    | 11    |
| Won           | 13    | 8     | 5     |
| Lost          | 10    | 4     | 6     |
| Draw          | 0     | 0     | 0     |
| Points F      | 632   | 396   | 236   |
| Points A      | 511   | 186   | 325   |
| Win %         | 56.52 | 66.67 | 45.45 |

| Since 1891 | Total | Home  | Away  |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Played     | 3922  | 2248  | 1674  |
| Won        | 2400  | 1666  | 734   |
| Lost       | 1250  | 436   | 814   |
| Draw       | 272   | 146   | 126   |
| Points F   | 55282 | 37679 | 17603 |
| Points A   | 33368 | 15824 | 17544 |
| Win %      | 64.66 | 77.36 | 47.61 |

# First XV Appearances and Scores

|                 | 1996-7 Season |     |     |     |    |     |      |
|-----------------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|------|
|                 | App           | Try | Con | Pen | DG | Pts | PPG  |
| Eral Anderson   | 10            | 3   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 15  | 1.50 |
| James Bashford  | 1             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Laurie Beck     | 10            | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.50 |
| Scott Benton    | 15            | 4   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 20  | 1.33 |
| Warwick Bullock | 3             | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 1.67 |
| Nigel Cane      | 1             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Nathan Carter   | 9             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Don Caskie      | 11            | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Chris Catling   | 14            | 3   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 15  | 1.07 |
| Nick Cooper     | 1             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Mark Cornwell   | 6             | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.83 |
| Howard Dawson   | 1             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Andy Deacon     | 12            | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.42 |
| Simon Devereux  | 14            | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 10  | 0.71 |
| Scott Edwards   | 3             | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 1.67 |
| Craig Emmerson  | 5             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Gareth Fenwick  | 1             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Rob Fidler      | 18            | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.28 |
| Chris Fortey    | 3             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Lee Fortey      | 2             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Alex Gallagher  | 1             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Pete Glanville  | 12            | 3   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 15  | 1.25 |
| Phil Greening   | 17            | 3   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 15  | 0.88 |
| Chris Hall      | 2             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Peter Hart      | 7             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| John Hawker     | 5             | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 1.00 |
| Paul Holford    | 7             | 4   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 20  | 2.86 |
| Martyn Kimber   | 4             | 0   | 2   | 1   | 0  | 7   | 1.75 |
| Andrew Jarrett  | 2             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |

# First XV Appearances and Scores

|                      | 1996-7 Season |     |     |     |    |     |      |
|----------------------|---------------|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|------|
|                      | App           | Try | Con | Pen | DG | Pts | PPG  |
| Tim Lacey            | 1             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Mike Lloyd           | 13            | 8   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 40  | 3.08 |
| Audley Lumsden       | 11            | 6   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 30  | 2.73 |
| Mark Mapletoft       | 18            | 13  | 43  | 44  | 2  | 289 | 16.1 |
| Andy Metcalfe        | 8             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Alex Morris          | 4             | 0   | 8   | 5   | 0  | 31  | 7.75 |
| Charlie Mulraine     | 7             | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 10  | 1.43 |
| Bill Nicholls        | 2             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Lee Osborne          | 1             | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 5.00 |
| Nick Paisley         | 1             | 0   | 1   | 0   | 0  | 2   | 2.00 |
| Ed Pearce            | 11            | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Sam Pearman          | 2             | 2   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 10  | 5.00 |
| Mike Peters          | 12            | 5   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 25  | 2.08 |
| Adey Powles          | 5             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Martin Roberts       | 14            | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.36 |
| Alastair Saverimutto | 13            | 9   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 45  | 3.46 |
| Dave Sims            | 18            | 3   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 15  | 0.83 |
| Ian Smith            | 9             | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.56 |
| Nick Smith           | 2             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Andrew Stanley       | 9             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Dave Timmington      | 4             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Phil Vickery         | 10            | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.50 |
| Richard Ward         | 4             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Kester Wilkinson     | 1             | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 5.00 |
| Tony Windo           | 18            | 1   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 5   | 0.28 |
| Trevor Woodman       | 5             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Chris Yelland        | 2             | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 0   | 0.00 |
| Rob York             | 7             | 3   | 0   | 0   | 0  | 15  | 2.14 |

# CodPiece!

We were talking the other day to the club's keeper of statistics, Andrew Harley. Now, he is rather upbeat since Gloucester beat London Irish. His analytical mind somewhat surprised us. You see, he is not talking about Gloucester avoiding relegation like most of us, but about Gloucester having a possible top four finish!

Andrew is really adamant that Gloucester will be in the top half of the table – and “will in all probability finish ahead of Bath.

“I think that Wasps win last weekend condemns Bristol to finishing below Gloucester,” Andrew said. “And I think that it is also on the cards that Bath will end up below Gloucester.”

What is behind his reasoning? “The table is important, but it has to be looked at differently - and looked at in context of trends,” he said.

“The two most important columns in the table are the losses and the games played. Forget the wins and draws - it's the losses that really matter.”

We suddenly grasped the point. He who doesn't lose, wins!

“Bath, by their standards, are having a terrible season - four losses from 11 matches. Gloucester have five losses from 10 games. Gloucester have now had five wins in a row, and to a certain extent that is habit-forming.

“Say that the game against Bristol was played after Christmas and that Gloucester won. The table would show Gloucester and Bath level.”

We have to admit, the idea is rather nice. There is, of course, a rider...

“Gloucester players have to remain addicted to winning,” Andrew said. “They started to believe in themselves on October 6, the day they knocked off the league leaders. “The world had totally written Gloucester off by that stage - and with five losses from five games the outlook was bleak. Then all of a sudden the rugby writers changed their tune.

“Now they are preparing their end of term reports about how it IS possible to survive in the so-called professional era without oodles of money and wall to wall high profile players from foreign parts demanding pay and perks that resemble American telephone numbers.”

Andrew should know what the national rugby writers are thinking. He looks after them at home matches. A top half finish? Is he really serious?

“Yes – and it only needs a few crazy results in the coming months for a top four finish,” he insisted.

Now we keep thinking of the point he made about finishing above Bath.

And here we are dreaming. Come on, Gloucester is in serious danger of winning something this year. We still have a big fat zero in the loss column of the Anglo Welsh Wotsits.

## 01' Babber Looks *Forward*

Even without any divine intervention on the part of the RFU, West Hartlepool look to be hauling themselves away from the abyss beyond the foot of the table and performing an escape act worthy of Houdini himself. Predicted by many to suffer a repeat of last season's whitewash, West Hartlepool were seemingly typecast as the whipping boys of Division One's aristocrats – yet, with 3 wins under their belts (i.e. 3 more wins than predicted) – including an impressive demolition of Bristol a couple of weeks ago, this feisty, passionate club has good reason to be optimistic about their future amongst the elite.

Although West's side doesn't boast too many familiar names, they have a few aces up their sleeve which any side underestimates at its peril. New Zealander Connolly is combining effectively with West's only household name – Botham – in the centre to provide Roberts and Caskie with plenty of food for thought, and experienced fly-half Stabler – 33 years young – seems to be gaining a new lease of life. Most importantly though, the whole side now has belief in its own ability not only to compete with, but beat the best – and Gloucester had better be careful that they do not take today's opponents lightly.

Despite an excellent run of results in the league, Gloucester will need to get the rustiness out of their system after missing two league fixtures which miraculously didn't cost them 2 points against the Irish last week. To put the threat of West in perspective, cast your minds back to last season, when West would have broken their duck at Kingsholm had Tim Stimpson not missed a relatively simple penalty chance with the final kick of the game...

However, with the Gloucester pack in rampaging form with the ever-threatening Benton poised to take advantage of the quick ruck ball the forwards have been producing lately – not to mention the reliable boot of Mapletoft who is poised to reach a career 500 points for Gloucester – then it looks like Gloucester start favourites. But, to use the old cliché? – the game will be won by the team that wants victory most – and West will be targeting this game as a "must-win" if they are to kindle their growing hopes of survival in the "credibility league" – despite whatever happens in the ever-changing "Fantasy" Courage League.

In short, Gloucester will have to summon all their determination and break West's resolve if they are to get the 2 points from what for them also, is a "must win" fixture. By potentially opening up a 6 point gap between themselves and the trapdoor below them, Gloucester can start to focus their attention towards the top half of the table – no less than Richard Hill, the team and the supporters deserve.

# How They Will Line Up

Saturday 18th January 1997    Kick off 3.00 pm

| GLOUCESTER     |
|----------------|
| Cherry & White |

| WEST HARTLEPOOL      |
|----------------------|
| Green, White and Red |

|    |                |            |                |    |
|----|----------------|------------|----------------|----|
| 15 | Chris Catling  | Full Back  | Matthew Silva  | 15 |
| 14 | Mike Peters    | Right Wing | Michael Wood   | 14 |
| 13 | Don Caskie     | Centre     | Liam Botham    | 13 |
| 12 | Martyn Roberts | Centre     | Jamie Connolly | 12 |
| 11 | Mike Lloyd     | Left Wing  | Stephen John   | 11 |

|    |                |              |              |    |
|----|----------------|--------------|--------------|----|
| 10 | Mark Mapletoft | Outside Half | John Stabler | 10 |
| 9  | Scott Benton   | Scrum Half   | Phil Harvey  | 9  |

|   |                 |         |                  |   |
|---|-----------------|---------|------------------|---|
| 1 | Tony Windo      | Prop    | Wayne de Jonge   | 1 |
| 2 | Phil Greening # | Hooker  | Stuart Whitehead | 2 |
| 3 | Andy Deacon     | Prop    | Paul Whitelock   | 3 |
| 4 | Rob Fidler      | Lock    | Chris Murphy     | 4 |
| 5 | Dave Sims *     | Lock    | Kevin Moseley *  | ♣ |
| 6 | Ed Pearce       | Flanker | Jon Ions         | 6 |
| 7 | Nathan Carter   | Flanker | Mark Roderick    | 7 |
| 8 | Simon Devereux  | No. 8   | Ivan Morgan      | 8 |

|    |                  |              |                |    |
|----|------------------|--------------|----------------|----|
| 16 | Charlie Mulraine | Replacements | Andrew Peacock | 16 |
| 17 | Martyn Kimber    |              | John Painter   | 17 |
| 18 | Warwick Bullock  |              | Charles Yeoman | 18 |
| 19 | Mark Cornwell    |              | Chris John     | 19 |
| 20 |                  |              |                | 20 |
| 21 |                  |              |                | 21 |

|         |                 |              |
|---------|-----------------|--------------|
| Referee | # International | Touch Judges |
| TBA     | * Captain       | TBA          |

♣ Kevin Moseley wears no number. This is in respect of the late John Howie who died during the club's match against Morley in the spring of 1992.