

CLUB SPONSOR



MATCH DAY SPONSOR



Gloucester RFC official matchday programme 2001-2002

Gloucester



vs Newcastle Falcons

Saturday 29th December 2001 kick-off 2.00pm

[issue] 10
[price] £2.00

sterrugbyclub.com www.gloucesterrugbyclub.com www.gloucester

Welcome

[from Terry Short]



“The way the team are playing at Kingsholm and the scores that the team are amassing have meant that the Season Ticket pack has been excellent value for money.”

As we fast approach the New Year and prepare ourselves for the remainder of the season, it is a good time to reflect on what has already been achieved and how the Season Ticket Holder has benefited.

The season so far has certainly been entertaining for all Season Ticket Holders. At the time of writing, we are the highest scoring team in the league and, in Ludovic Mercier, we have the highest scoring individual. The way the team are playing at Kingsholm and the scores that the team are amassing have meant that the Season Ticket pack has been excellent value for money.

While the team have maintained their strengths in the pack, we also have a strong three-quarter line and an Academy set up that bodes well for the future. With our win over Bristol in the Powergen Cup a fortnight ago, the future looks good for Gloucester Rugby Club. It is a very enjoyable time at the moment to be associated with the Club and to be a Season Ticket Holder.

Christmas card from the Club, all Season Ticket Holders should have received notice of the forthcoming events. The New Year social calendar kicks off on January 8th at 7:00 with a 'chat to the players' evening at Kingsholm. Entry will only be on the showing of your Season Ticket Book but it promises to be a great evening.

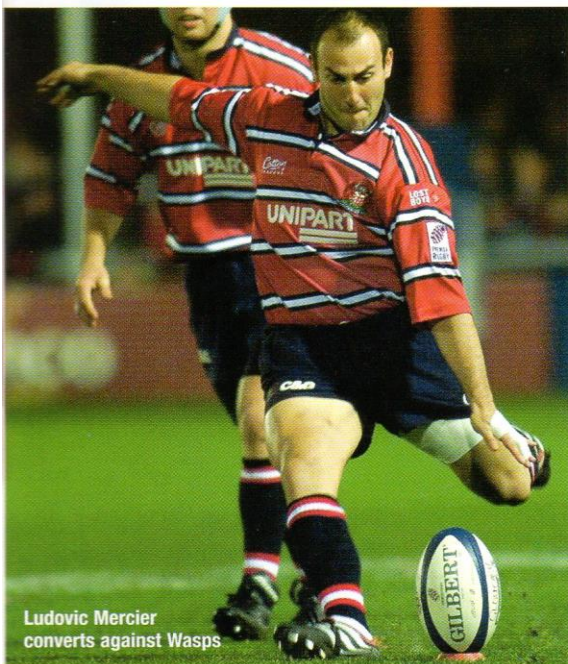
Other events have been planned and information was detailed in the notice that you received with the Christmas Card. Further details will be online, in the local newspapers or announced at forthcoming matches and we all hope that they will be of interest to you.

Finally, writing an article for a match day programme always allows me the opportunity to welcome the visiting supporters. As this is our only home game over the Christmas period, can I wish everyone a belated Happy Christmas on behalf of the Gloucester Season Ticket Holders and wish all supporters a happy New Year and a safe journey home.

The benefits in being a Season Ticket Holder are not just in the entrance to the games on match day.

This last year has seen the set up of The Gloucester Rugby Club Season Ticket Holders Association and the formation of an active committee. Our remit is to act as a liaison between all Season Ticket Holders and Gloucester Rugby Club with the interests being of all concerned.

As promised at the inaugural AGM in October, we will be hosting a number of events throughout 2002 in the hope of giving extra value to your Season Ticket. Within the



Ludovic Mercier converts against Wasps

Coach's Corner

[Philippe Saint-André]



The target before Christmas was to win five out of our last seven league games. At the moment we are at the halfway point of the season, we are third in the league; we are top point scorers and have the third best defence. This is very good.

We have also shown against Bristol that we can win away and score five tries. We have already won four games away, two in the shield, one in the league and one in the cup.

I think we had twenty disappointing minutes at home to Leicester. But apart from that, the confidence of the team is very high at home. We have won a lot of games by big margins and have scored a lot of bonus points. We have also had a big win away at Sale scoring four tries. For me though, it is disappointing that we have lost four games away from home by four points, three points or two points. In the games when we lost to Newcastle, London Irish and Saracens I thought in each game we dominated for long periods. In one though, our discipline was bad, in another we were asleep for the first half, against Newcastle we missed kicks and had tries disallowed and against Bath our lineout was a disaster.

Our aim was to pick up eight more points this season. By scoring the bonus points against Bristol, Wasps and Leeds and getting a bonus point at Bath, we have scored almost as many

points as if we had won one more game. So we can get to our targets with one less win.

Today, it is very important to win against Newcastle. As Newcastle are in such competition with us, it is important to win, but also to do it by more than seven points. Things are so close in the league that we must make sure we take maximum points from this game and they get none. This is the target we must set ourselves.

This year, we have shown that the spirit in the squad is good and the players have all worked hard and given 100%. It is important to have a good atmosphere within the players, but also in the management. In my first year we spent money on players, but it is also important to improve the structure and the organisation of the team. With the introduction of Laurent, Dave Ellis, Bernard and Paul Turner, we are more professional this year. The guys in the team have all the keys to be fitter, better players.

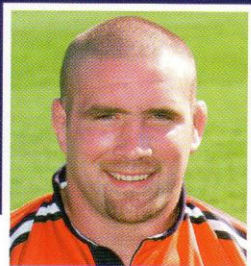
In the two and a half years I have been at the club I think we have improved each year. Now we have an excellent Academy

and development structure that is bringing through players like James Simpson-Daniel, James Forrester, Clive Stuart-Smith, Jon Goodridge and Marcel Garvey. It is important that we focus on the present but we must also think about the future of the club.

It is important to have players here who are between eighteen and twenty-one. Who play top-level rugby and are matched very well with the older guys. We have guys now who join at seventeen, eighteen and nineteen who know that if they are good enough, they will get the chance to play first team rugby for one of the top clubs in Europe. That is important for the players, the club and the area.

As this is our only home game around Christmas, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the supporters for their continued support this year. The support the team have received this year once again has been fantastic and I hope this continues into 2002 and next season. I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.





Match Captain

[phil vickery]

D.O.B: 14/03/76
Position: **Tight Head**
Height: **1.91m**
Weight: **125kg**
Former Club: **Bude/Redruth**
Int'national Honours:
England 15 – Caps,
British Lions

Half way through the season, we find ourselves in a reasonable position; with a new squad that is still gelling you have to be happy with that. I am the first to admit though that it could be better.

When you take everything into consideration, with the results away from home, we have picked up valuable points but they were all games we should have won, and we should be a dead cert second now, pushing Leicester all the way. We mustn't get down about it though, there is still a long way to go and we have had more positives than negatives.

case of playing well to stay in a game; on many occasions we dominated the opposition and should have turned these performances into a win.

should fear no one, we must respect everyone, they are all tough games but there is no reason why we cant win them. We mustn't be afraid to lose. Against Bath, we were afraid to lose so we tried nothing, and we lost anyway. We must always try to win the game.

Unfortunately for us we dominated for only forty minutes in the games. That is the mark of a young inexperienced side. We have shown that we can put thirty, to forty minute spells together, but in tough games, that is not enough. But we are always improving and always trying.

Today the equation is simple we must win. If want to give ourselves the chance of playing in the Heineken Cup next year we must win games like this. There are a lot of teams that will come into form in the second half of this season. We though, must focus on our game and not worry about other results. There have been a couple of drawn games that have gone in our favour, but now it is up to us.

For me, that is why the game at Bath was so disappointing. We came off the pitch having not tried anything to win that game; we hadn't played. At Bristol, we threw caution to the wind and it came off. We need to build on that. We went away from home and won the game well.

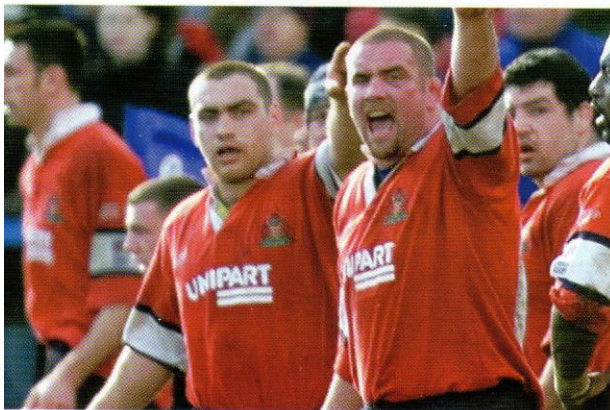
After today's match, we still have Sale, London Irish and Bath to come here. The table may still look strange to many people, but these are the teams making all the running this season so we must make sure we win those games.

Going away from home is all about confidence. As far as I am concerned, playing away from home is an even greater challenge. There is nothing better than going somewhere like Bath or Bristol and winning in front of their home fans. If you look at the squad we have put together, we

This is the last match of 2001 and I hope we can finish the year on a high note.

"We are top bonus point scorers in the league at the moment, which means we are taking something out of almost every game."

We are top bonus point scorers in the league at the moment, which means we are taking something out of almost every game. That is a positive statistic. If you had seen the games though, I think most people would agree they were games we should have won. It wasn't a



For the last 10 seasons I've been lucky enough to cover rugby on BBC Radio Gloucestershire. A lot of it has been at a junior level, so when the boss (Ian Randall) invited me to write today's article it seemed appropriate to take stock of the first half of the season outside the Premiership.

"...to have 3 clubs from the County joining the Cherry & Whites at National League level is a real reflection of Gloucestershire's unique support for the game."

First though, a word about Kingsholm matters. Gloucester are still fighting on three fronts after the memorable win over Bristol a fortnight ago, a match that again flagged up James Forrester as a player with a very bright future. Having only made his first team debut at London Irish on Easter Monday, he's already earned selection for the England Sevens squad for the 2002 Commonwealth Games, and now scored a hat-trick in a local derby - no mean feat

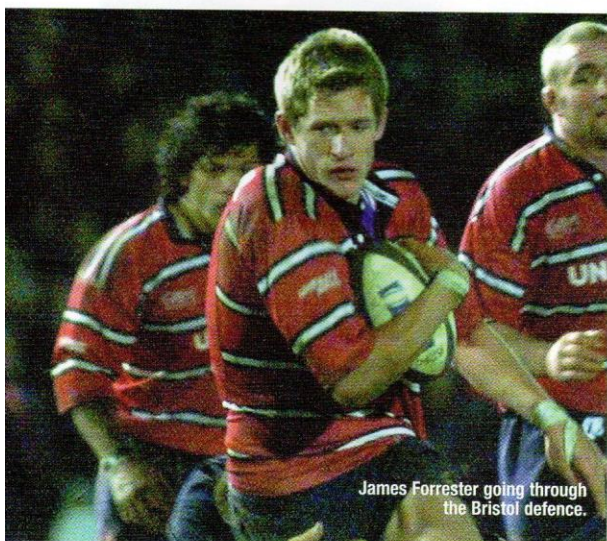
for the young flanker. There's now a Cup quarter final at London Irish, and almost certainly a quarter final in the Parker Pen Shield to look forward to (both next month) as well as the on-going tussle for European Cup qualification next season. There is still a lot to play for.

You have to drop to Division 3 South to find Gloucestershire representation outside the top flight, and that's where I've watched much of my rugby this season, but to have 3 clubs from the County joining the Cherry & Whites at National League level is a real reflection of Gloucestershire's unique support for the game.

For Lydney, the new season raised a particular challenge. After being relegated following an incomplete Spring programme because of foot and mouth and the judgements of "those on high", the Severnsiders have shown they have a young squad with potential. Despite losing the services of several

regulars from last season, the Severnsiders have shown positional flexibility in the pack, while in the backs, Charlie Vine and Chris Dunlop have the pace to worry most defences. Like Gloucester however, they remain erratic away from home, so a promotion challenge this season may be beyond them, despite the experience (but ageing legs) of player-coaches Adrian Knox, Nick Nelmes and Julian Davis.

Half a dozen miles to the north, Cinderford have arrived in Division 3 South from the opposite direction, and they've found it rather more challenging. Already, the Foresters look to be set for a fight to avoid the revolving door back to South West One rugby, despite having a tradition and facilities which many playing above them would envy. Promotion wasn't secured until late May, and the short summer break brought with it a rash of problems - chiefly more player departures and a hurried pre-season. They lost on the opening day at Lydney,



James Forrester going through the Bristol defence.

Lydney



and it's been a game of catch-up since. Now, finally, some new faces and the advice of former Cherry & White Pete Glanville as a coaching consultant has seen them pick up a few results, but the news that talismanic captain Duncan Edwards is leaving shortly for a spell in New Zealand will have again shaken morale. You just wonder whether a return to regional rugby may be looming.

A few years ago, Old Patesians had an image of being a typical rugby club for

the former pupils of a local grammar school - tending to play for the social enjoyment rather than the result, and having a rather snobbish and arrogant manner to boot.....not any longer ! Pats were last season's team of the year in any sport, winning the Intermediate Cup at Twickenham, and then promotion by winning South West One, passing neighbours Cheltenham on their way DOWN the rugby scale.

Much of the playing success must be put down to the

professional approach taken by coaches Chris Raymond and Paul Morris. Pats didn't recruit heavily in the summer, preferring to stick with the players who had taken them up, and after a period of acclimatisation, we've again seen some of the fast, well drilled rugby that has characterised their rise through the Leagues. With enough strength in depth to be able to rotate their squad, and a sloping pitch that makes them very strong at home, I'm expecting them to push on in the New Year, with a top four

finish a real possibility. Launceston and Penzance remain favourites for the promotion spots.

All 3 clubs have a day off today, as Gloucester welcome Newcastle to Kingsholm. The Falcons are also in the Cup quarter finals after knocking out Wasps, and come here having won the meeting at Kingston Park last month thanks to the kicking of Dave Walder. Time to finish the year with a bang and avenge that result.

C'mon Glaws !!

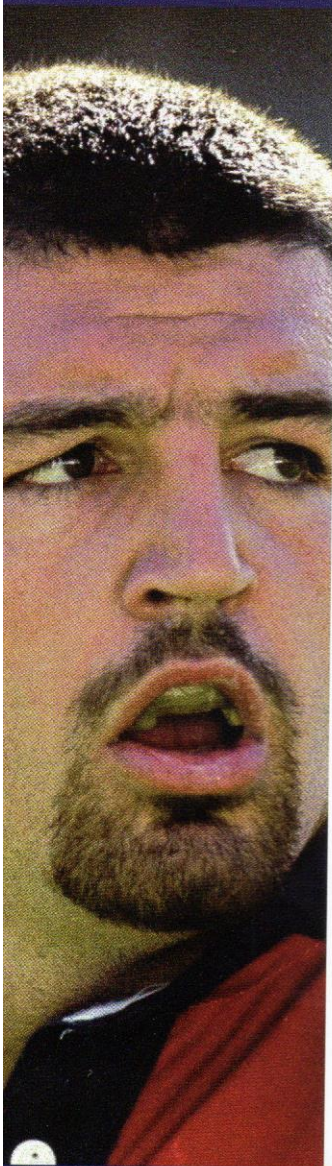
Ticket and Information Hotline - Tel: 0871 871 8781

[from the commentary box]

19

Olivier Azam

[player focus]



Olivier Azam, a graduate from the school of hard knocks. This chest beating, head-banging hooker has achieved cult status with the Cherry and White supporters for his abrasive, never say die attitude and his unquestionable commitment to the Gloucester cause.

He joined the club eighteen months ago from French side Montferrand, as a rugged front rower with a reputation of liking the games physical nature. He joined the club with a few rough edges, but a massive potential.

It would be wrong to suggest that Azam's jagged edges have been smoothed over, but he is working very hard to curb his indiscretions as he realises his effect on the team.

The up turn in fortunes for the club since he joined last year have rocketed Gloucester to the top echelons of the league. This rise in League position does not surprise Azam.

"It is not a coincidence. It is the result of all the hard work the whole squad has put in. We are competitive in every game. All

the games we have lost away from home have been by less than five points, which is not too bad. It shows we have a chance to win every game we play. To win games though you sometimes need a little bit of luck and I think that in some games we have been unlucky".

In away games in particular, the collective discipline or rather indiscipline of the Gloucester squad has cost the team dearly. Azam has been singled out on occasions as the chief culprit, a tag he is honest enough to bear but admits that that is the way he is.

"I think I have a reputation and the reputation is fair. But I have tried to improve this year. I don't want to make the same mistakes every weekend. I have tried very hard to do this".

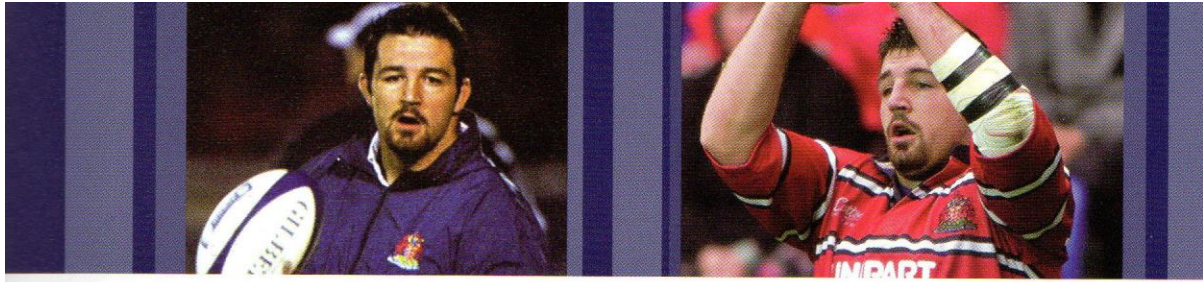
The problem with Azam however, is that he is a very physical person. He likes nothing better than being in the thick of the action. To him rugby is all about confrontations and if you are found wanting in your own personal battle the team will suffer. Azam likes to win his private battles, and likes to dominate against every opponent he comes up against.

"I like to be physical, to be hard, because that is rugby. It is a fight. If you don't want to be better than the guy in front of you, don't play rugby. Also in the front row that is the only way to play".

He is lucky that at Gloucester he has some calming influences around him. Phil Vickery, recently voted the best tight head prop in the World, is a very calm player. He acts as the

[Olivier Azam] Hooker

"I like to be physical, to be hard, because that is rugby. It is a fight. If you don't want to be better than the guy in front of you, don't play rugby."



restraint on the loose cannon that is Azam. Azam recognises the 'Raging Bull's' effect on him, but is quick to point out the virtues of having different personalities within the team.

"I think we have a lot of very good players with a lot of different qualities. The best thing is that we have different mentalities. Vicks is very calm. Me, I am a little bit more abrasive, Patrice too and Trevor who is calm. It is a good balance because sometimes we need both types of mentalities in a game".

As one would expect, Azam does not need any special motivation to prepare himself for any game. At the same time he is quick to point out that he doesn't receive any special attention from the coaches in an attempt to taper his aggression.

"We are a professional team so when we speak about discipline it is in general to all the team. Philippe speaks to the team and does not point out individuals. When we win, we win as a team and the same when we lose".

Azam's motivation to play can be infectious. There were many stories of the French man preparation for big games. At Sale, earlier this year, he took a leaf out of the playbook of a Gloucester team from a previous generation. He was said to be banging heads and punching walls in the greatest Gloucester tradition. Regardless of the authenticity of these stories his presence in the dressing room ensures no-one should take the field anything less than 100% ready.

"At Sale there was a lot of pressure on us. We had just lost to Leicester at home and we had to react. The preparations started in the week leading up to the game. We showed a lot of commitment at training, and focused on the game. Sure, thirty minutes before the match we were ready to fight".

"I don't need special preparation. I am lucky because I can go on the field and play rugby. Sometimes you can see one or two players are not ready, not confident, so I think it is important to speak with these players to prepare them for a game".

"You don't need to shout at people but speak with a guy and try to find the right thing to say to him. I find that difficult because of my English so I use small gestures instead. A nudge, a look into someone's eyes, a nod and a clench fist is usually enough. This is the essence of rugby. Small acts, small gestures, one word, this is rugby".

The game at Kingsholm against Wasps was perhaps Azam's finest hour in a Cherry and White. He scored two tries on the night, and generally left a trail of destruction each time he touched the ball.

Azam however, is pragmatic about his great feats of strength and endurance, saying simply, "I was just in the right place at the right time. I worked very hard before that match though so it didn't surprise me to play at the level I did. At the beginning of the season I was not 100% fit so now I want to get some more games and play at that level consistently".

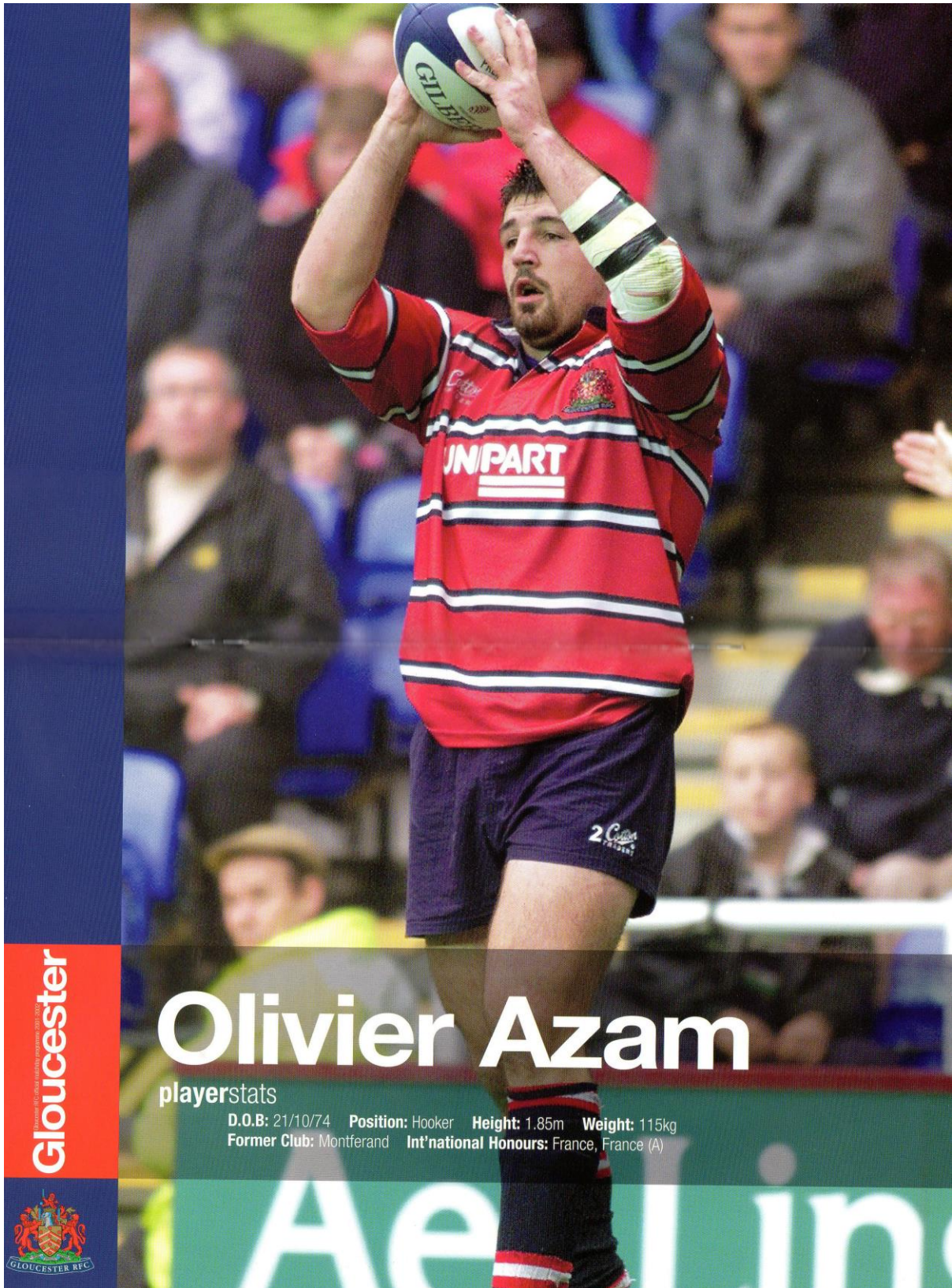
Azam wants to win things. He never undertakes anything

lightly. He realises his importance to the team at set pieces. His line out has come under scrutiny, so along with Chris Fortey he has worked hard to give himself a greater flexibility and adaptability at the set piece.

His desire to win is paramount and with this mental approach he will never compromise in his approach to a game. He will continue to motivate himself to give 100% every time because he knows that for Olivier Azam to be at his robust best he needs to play on the edge. He realises he walks a fine line but says that it is the only way he can play.

"As a player at this level, you have to be ready to give everything. You need commitment and discipline. It is the only way to play. I would rather Philippe had to speak to me to tell me to calm down rather than have nothing to say to me because I was doing nothing. I don't fancy that".

It is sure that with this approach, opponents won't fancy him much either.



Gloucester



Olivier Azam

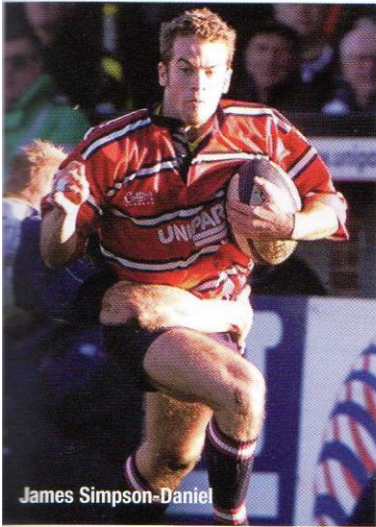
playerstats

D.O.B: 21/10/74 **Position:** Hooker **Height:** 1.85m **Weight:** 115kg
Former Club: Montferand **Int'national Honours:** France, France (A)

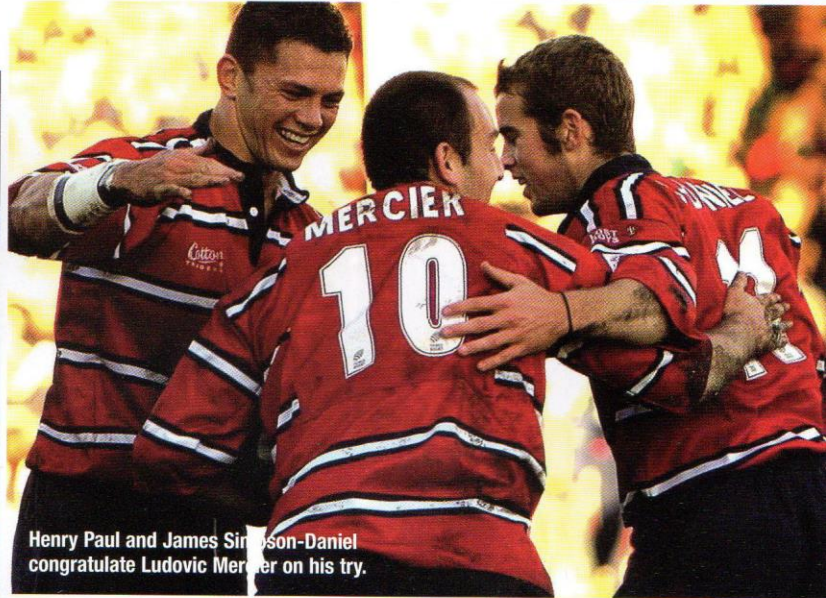
Ae Lin

Match Action vs Leeds Tykes [home]

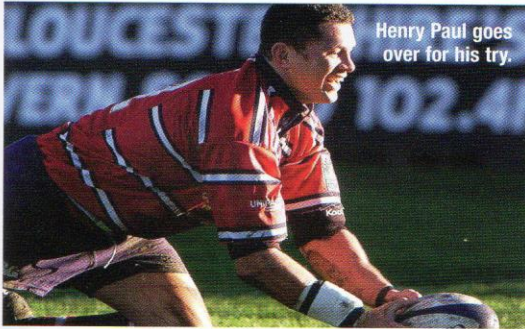
Zurich Premiership
01-12-01



James Simpson-Daniel

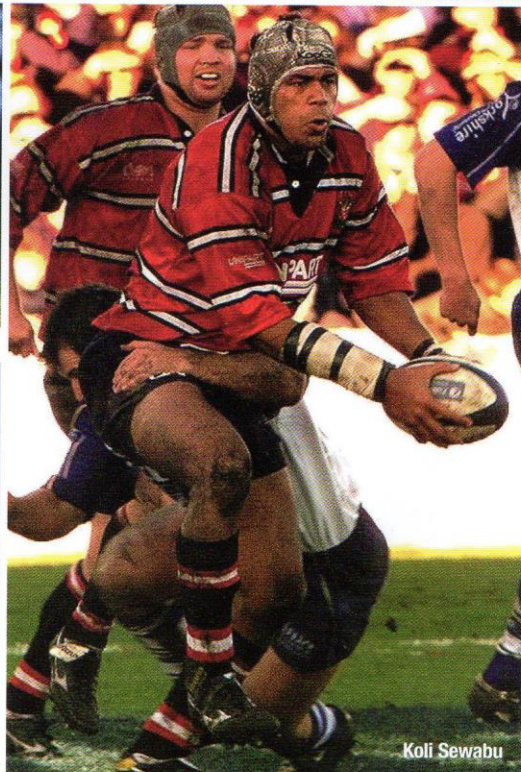


Henry Paul and James Simpson-Daniel congratulate Ludovic Mercier on his try.



Henry Paul goes over for his try.

Photography Supplied by Brue Seabrook GPA



Koli Sewabu

matchstats

Attendance 7516



58

Gloucester: **58 points**
Tries: Mercier, O'Leary, Paul, Simpson-Daniel (2), Garvey, Todd, Eustace

Conversions: Mercier (5), Paul
Penalties: Mercier (2)



17

Leeds Tykes: **17 points**
Tries: Bachop, Emmerson
Conversions: Benson (2)
Penalties: Benson

Zurich Premiership

Ticket and Information Hotline - Tel: 0871 871 8781

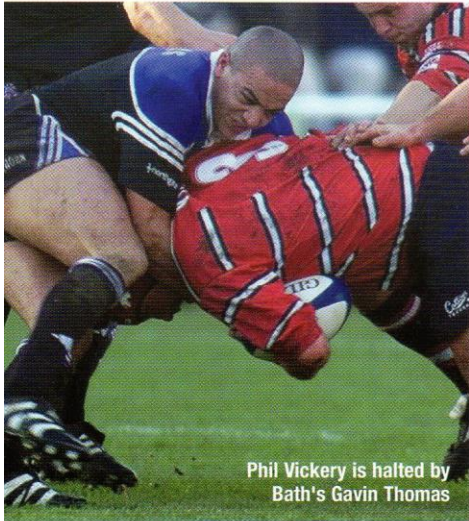
[match action]

31

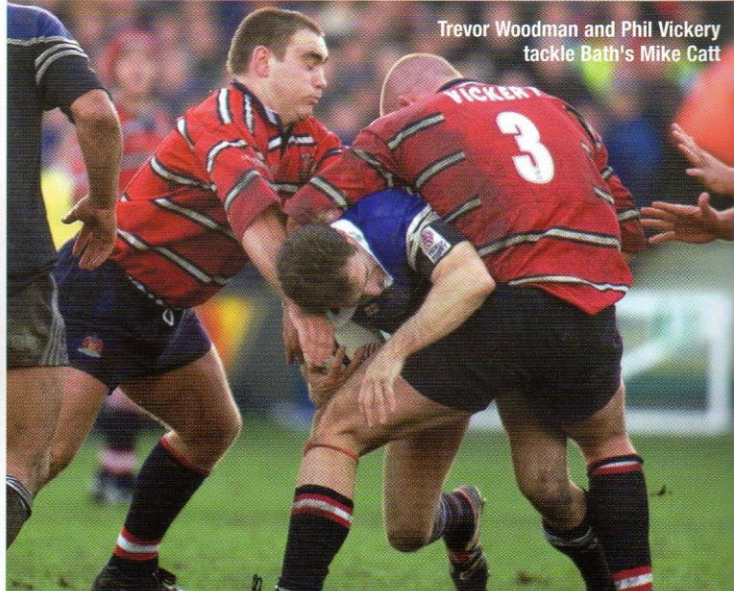
Match Action vs

Bath Rugby [away]

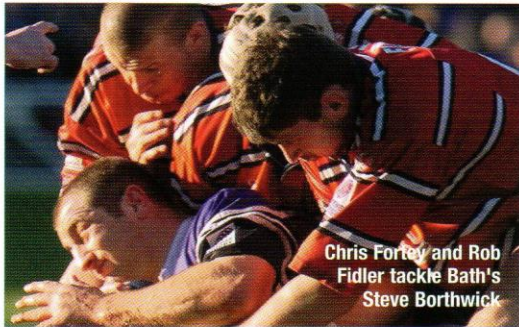
Zurich Premiership
8-12-01



Phil Vickery is halted by Bath's Gavin Thomas

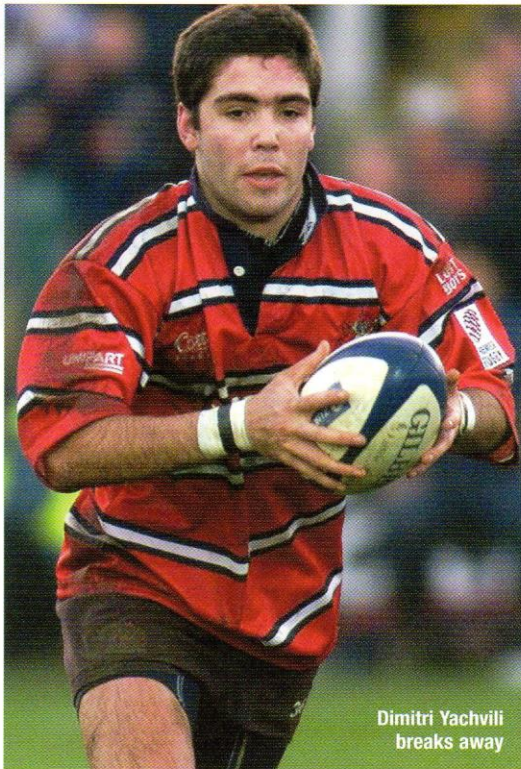


Trevor Woodman and Phil Vickery tackle Bath's Mike Catt





Chris Forley and Rob Fidler tackle Bath's Steve Borthwick

Photography Supplied by Brue Seabrook GPA



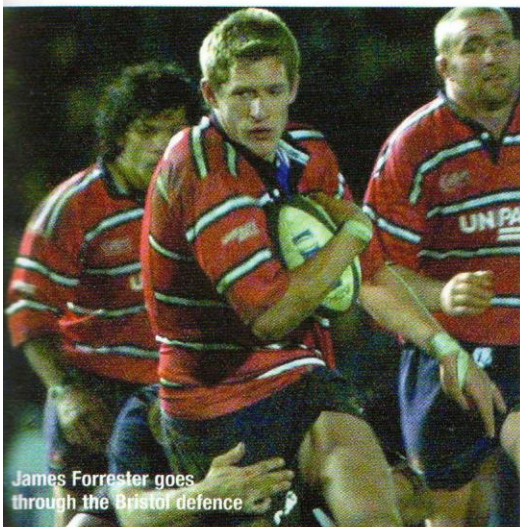
Dimitri Yachvili breaks away

matchstats	
Attendance 8200	
	12
Bath Rugby:	12 points
Tries:	-
Conversions:	-
Penalties:	Perry (3)
Drop Goals:	Balshaw
	09
Gloucester:	09 points
Tries:	-
Conversions:	-
Penalties:	Mercier
Drop Goals:	Mercier (2)

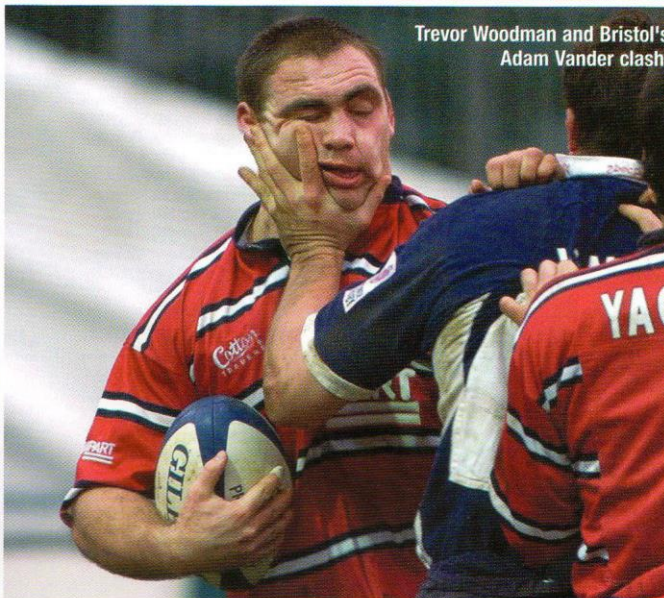
Zurich Premiership

Match Action vs Bristol Shoguns [away]

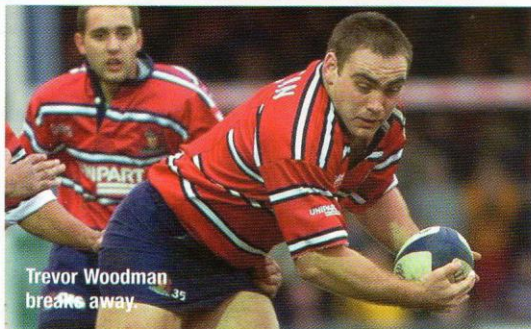
Powergen Cup
16-12-01



James Forrester goes through the Bristol defence

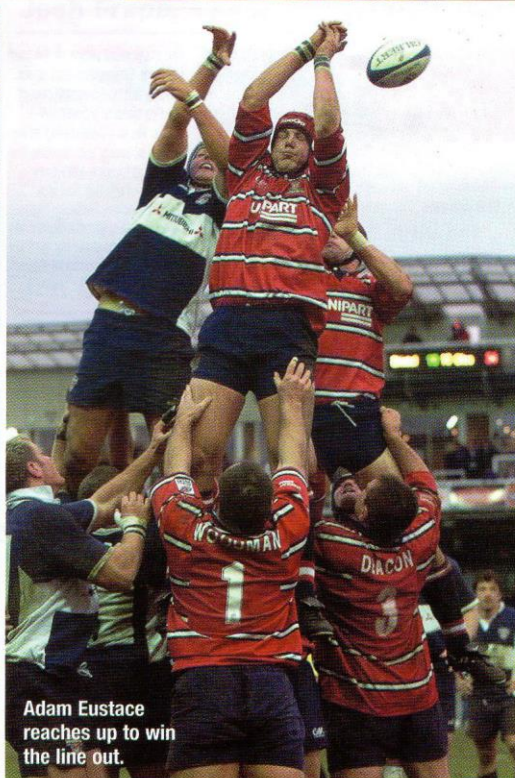


Trevor Woodman and Bristol's Adam Vander clash.





Trevor Woodman breaks away.

Photography Supplied by Brue Seabrook GPA



Adam Eustace reaches up to win the line out.

matchstats		
Attendance 5363		
	Bristol Rugby: 23 points Tries: Rees, Best Conversions: Contempomi (2) Penalties: Contempomi (3)	
		Gloucester: 37 points Tries: Fanolua, Forrester (3) Garvey Conversions: Paul (3) Penalties: Paul (2)

Powergen Cup

Ticket and Information Hotline - Tel: 0871 871 8781

Gloucester

[squad 2001-2002]

Diego Albanese

D.O.B: **17/09/73**
Position: **Wing**
Height: **1.74m**
Weight: **78kg**
Former Club:
San Isidro
Int'national Honours:
Argentina – 36 caps



Albanese was signed from Argentinian side San Isidro in the close season. Recorded the most recent of his international caps whilst representing the Pumas on their tour of New Zealand. Although slightly built his pace and agility have made him hard to stop.

Olivier Azam

D.O.B: **21/10/74**
Position: **Hooker**
Height: **1.85m**
Weight: **115kg**
Former Club:
Montferand
Int'national Honours:
France, France (A)



Strong French forward who enjoys the games physical nature. Can play comfortably in any of the front row positions and his versatility was tested to the extreme throughout the season. One of Azam's greatest assets is his strength in the loose. Is a recognised ball carrier who makes the hard yards.

Tom Beim

D.O.B: **11/12/76**
Position: **Wing**
Height: **1.83m**
Weight: **86.6kg**
Former Club: **Sale**
Int'national Honours:
England 2 caps



Although his season was disrupted by injury Tom finished top try scorer with ten. Showed his finishing ability with fantastic solo effort against Bath in the TBC and scored a Heineken Cup record with five tries against Roma in the pool stages. A shoulder injury may keep him out until Christmas.

Jake Boer

D.O.B: **01/11/75**
Position: **Flanker**
Height: **1.87m**
Weight: **103.4kg**
Former Club:
London Irish
Int'national Honours:
-



Joined Gloucester after being named London Irish's player of the season 99/00. Bullocking South African who took a while to settle but then earned the respect of players and fans alike with his honesty and commitment to the Gloucester cause. Strong tackler who works tirelessly in the loose. Will want the international recognition he strives for soon.

Chris Catling

D.O.B: **17/06/76**
Position: **Full Back**
Height: **1.87m**
Weight: **90kg**
Former Club:
Exeter
Int'national Honours:
England (A)



The supporters player of the year last year. Catling has had spells at wing but has become one of the Premiership's finest full-backs. He is a devastating strike runner in attack and his defence is second to none. Very safe under the high ball and is a fearless tackler. Remains highly rated by many good judges and is desperate to show his obvious ability on an international stage.

Patrice Collazo

D.O.B: **27/04/74**
Position: **Prop**
Height: **1.85m**
Weight: **108kg**
Former Club:
Stade Francais
Int'national Honours:
France



France Strong, gnarly French loose-head prop who has been signed on a one year deal from Stade Francais. His inclusion in the Gloucester Squad will provide healthy competition in the already combative front row.

Mark Cornwell

D.O.B: **22/03/73**
Position: **Lock**
Height: **2.01m**
Weight: **110kg**
Former Club:
Old Richians
Int'national Honours:
England (A)



Local boy who came up through the junior ranks. Has had to play second fiddle to Ian Jones for the last two seasons but now has the chance to shine on a more permanent basis. Had excellent games in Jones' absence and will want to make an impression on the international selectors this season.

Nick Cox

D.O.B: **01/01/82**
Position: **Prop**
Height: **1.82m**
Weight: **111kg**
Former Club:
GRFC Academy
2000 – 2001:
GRFC Academy



Joined Gloucester after starring for the England U18 group. Because of his size and strength, Nick's promise was identified early and he made the break through into the first team against Roma in the Heineken Cup. Has worked hard on his scrummaging all season and will push for selection this year.

Andy Deacon

D.O.B: **31/7/65**
Position: **Prop**
Height: **1.88m**
Weight: **108kg**
Former Club:
Longlevens
Int'national Honours:
England (A), Barbarians



Former dray man who is currently enjoying a Testimonial year. Few players have made the transition from amateur to professional status so successfully and Deacon admits to being fitter than ever. Signed a one year extension to his contract and will provide excellent support in the front row.

Adam Eustace

D.O.B: **09/01/79**
Position: **Lock**
Height: **1.96m**
Weight: **102kg**
Former Club:
Widden Old Boys
Int'national Honours:
England U19 U21



Former Colt who is one of the new breed of strong mobile second rows. Moved from the back row to his new position so successfully he was invited to join up with the English development squad last season. Will want to build on last years successes and make a serious challenge for a starting position.

Joe Ewens

D.O.B: 16/12/77
Position: Centre
Height: 1.80m
Weight: 89.8kg
Former Club: Bedford
Int'l national Honours: England (A)



Burst on to the scene with Bath as a teenager but stagnated at Bath behind Guscott and De Glanville. At the second attempt he was signed from Bedford at the beginning of the 99/00 season. Plays mainly at centre but because of his pace was used effectively as a winger a lot last season. He ended the season with a trip to North America with England but his trip was cut short by a shoulder injury.

Rob Fidler

D.O.B: 21/09/74
Position: Lock
Height: 1.96m
Weight: 112.5kg
Former Club: Cheltenham
Int'l national Honours: England



Excellent number two jumper who has started to come of age in the last two seasons. Overlooked by the England selectors for the summer tours, despite playing in many of the England A game's. Gloucester will look to Fidler to continue their great work in the line out and in the tight.

Chris Fortey

D.O.B: 25/08/75
Position: Hooker
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 106kg
Former Club: Gordon League
Int'l national Honours: England A, Tour Squad 2001



Local born hooker who made the 2001 England Summer tour to North America. His accuracy at the line-out will help Gloucester retain valuable possession and as long as he and Azam stay fit, the competition to be the number one, number two will be intense.

Marcel Garvey

D.O.B: 21/04/83
Position: Wing
Height: 1.77m
Weight: 80.3kg
2000 - 2001: GRFC Academy
Int'l national Honours: England Schools



A current schools international whose power and pace belie his size. His greatest asset is his pace and has been described by the Academy coaches as 'A natural try scorer'. He will provide essential cover in a position Gloucester struggled with last season.

Andy Gomarsall

D.O.B: 24/7/74
Position: Scrum Half
Height: 1.77m
Weight: 86.2kg
Former Club: Bedford
Int'l national Honours: England 7 Caps



Joined Gloucester at the beginning of last season from relegated Bedford. Joined Gloucester to re-establish himself with the England selectors. His progress was slowed at Gloucester by a back injury that plagued him throughout the season. Towards the end of the season however, Gomarsall began to show the sniping runs and quick thinking that brought him to the fore before.

Terry Fanolua

D.O.B: 03/07/74
Position: Centre
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 87kg
Former Club: Auckland Otahuhu
Int'l national Honours: Manu Samoa



One of the cult figures of the Gloucester side. His distinctive dreadlocks have become his trademark, as has his commitment in the tackle. Has played in every position in the Gloucester back line except scrum-half although prefers a role at centre. His versatility has saved Gloucester on many occasions.

James Forrester

D.O.B: 09/02/81
Position: No.8
Height: 1.95m
Weight: 98.4kg
Former Club: Bicester
2000 - 2001: GRFC Academy



Lists his career highlight to date as scoring a try under the posts on debut against London Irish last year. A tall, agile player who can play in any of the positions in the back row. James is an excellent ball handler who can provide the essential link between forwards and backs.

Josh Frape

D.O.B: 23/02/80
Position: Wing
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 90kg
Former Club: GRFC Academy
2000 - 2001: GRFC Academy



Josh's bid to make the break through was held up last season but judges say it will not be long. Has a unique ability to play at either scrum half, or because of searing pace, on the wing. His versatility will serve him well this year.

Jon Goodridge

D.O.B: 26/02/81
Position: Full Back
Height: 1.86m
Weight: 84kg
Former Club: Swansea Uni
2000 - 2001: GRFC Academy



Rangy Full Back who made his debut last season against London Irish. Played his early rugby at Fly-Half but made the very successful switch whilst playing for the GRFC Academy last year. Is very strong in defence and under the high ball but also has the ability to counter attack effectively, given space.

Andy Hazell

D.O.B: 25/04/78
Position: Flanker
Height: 1.83m
Weight: 92kg
Former Club: Gloucester Old Boys
Int'l national Honours: England (A)



Former Gloucester colt who finally emerged from the shadow of former Captain, Kingsley Jones. His explosive pace around the paddock and ability to scrap on the floor alerted the England selectors who rewarded Hazell with a tour place to North America. This season will be a big one for Hazell, so opponents beware!

Ticket and Information Hotline - Tel: 0871 871 8781

[gloucester squad]

35

Gloucester

[squad 2001-2002]

Ludovic Mercier

D.O.B: **01/11/76**
 Position: **Fly Half**
 Height: **1.79m**
 Weight: **85kg**
 Former Club: **Aurillac**
 Int'l national Honours: -



Left footed French Fly-half who joins Gloucester from little known Aurillac with a glowing reputation. Finished as top points scorer in the French league last season as he proved to be a prolific goal kicker with an excellent success ratio. Philippe has admired his talent for some time and was very pleased to get his man this pre-season.

Daren O'Leary

D.O.B: **27/06/73**
 Position: **Wing**
 Height: **1.82m**
 Weight: **91kg**
 Former Club: **Harlequins**
 Int'l national Honours: **England A, 7's, U18, Students**



O'leary's record speaks for itself. 114 tries in 186 appearances is a Premiership record, proving that, not only can he score tries, but that he can do it consistently. His main attribute is raw pace, an excellent characteristic in today's game. Couple that with an uncanny knack of being in the right place at the right time to finish off moves make him an excellent addition to the GRFC squad.

Henry Paul

D.O.B: **10/02/74**
 Position: **Utility back**
 Height: **1.80m**
 Weight: **94.6kg**
 Former Club: **B'ford**
Bulls
 Int'l national Honours: **New Zealand (League) 23 caps**



Rugby League legend who has won almost every honour in the league game. Joins Gloucester at the end of this season's Super League competition. Expectations are high and Philippe Saint-Andre will hope he is the spark to ignite the Gloucester backs this season.

Federico Pucciariello

D.O.B: **24/06/75**
 Position: **Prop**
 Height: **1.75m**
 Weight: **108kg**
 Former Club: **Narbonne**
 Int'l national Honours: **Italy - 3 caps, Argentina U21**



Pucciariello is another in a long line of world-renowned strong scrummers from his country of birth, and is quickly becoming the rock on which Italy are building their pack for the future. Can play equally well in all three positions in the front row and his versatility will stand him and the formidable Gloucester pack in good stead this season.

James Simpson- Daniel

D.O.B: **30/05/82**
 Position: **Fly-half**
 Height: **1.82m**
 Weight: **78kg**
 2000 - 2001:
GRFC Academy
 Int'l national Honours: **England U19**



Identified as a precocious talent early on and was snapped up by the Gloucester Academy. Recently toured with England U19's showing his versatility playing centre and fly-half. Has an exceptional turn of pace and the ability to do the unexpected. Was used sparingly as a winger last season but made a big impact, scoring from 50m on debut. Is a star of the future.

Duncan Murray

D.O.B: **22/10/81**
 Position: **Centre**
 Height: **1.84m**
 Weight: **94kg**
 Former Club: **GRFC Academy**
 Int'l national Honours: **Welsh School U18(c) U21 squad**



The former Welsh Schools captain has continued to go from strength to strength. The culmination of a season of hard work, came when he made his 1st team debut against London Irish. Has a physical approach to the game and his willingness to fight for the hard yards when attacking and defending have certainly impressed. Reads the game well and can create space for those around him.

Junior Paramore

D.O.B: **18/11/68**
 Position: **Back Row**
 Height: **1.99m**
 Weight: **104kg**
 Former Club: **Bedford**
 Int'l national Honours: **Manu Samoa - 19caps**



Talisman of the Gloucester pack. Huge Western Samoan who has been converted from centre to hold the pack together. Is very strong in the loose but his driving play in tight situations make him an excellent person to have in the squad.

Ed Pearce

D.O.B: **02/09/75**
 Position: **Back Row**
 Height: **2.01m**
 Weight: **118.5kg**
 Former Club: **Bath**
 Int'l national Honours: **England (A)**



A giant of a man, who found himself the odd one out for much of last season. Has worked extremely hard over the summer and has returned fitter and stronger than ever. Is determined to make an impact this year and may revel in a new role of lock.

Koli Sewabu

D.O.B: **15/1/75**
 Position: **Back row**
 Height: **1.90**
 Weight: **106kg**
 Former Club: **Begles Bordeaux**
 Int'l national Honours: **18 caps Fiji**



Big, physical, Fijian who has joined Gloucester this season in a stop, start transfer deal. Seen as a more than able replacement for Steve Ojomoh who can play either flanker or number 8 in the back row. A powerful runner in open play whose impact will be felt all around the league.

Clive Stuart-Smith

D.O.B: **17/05/83**
 Position: **Scrum Half**
 Height: **1.73m**
 Weight: **80kg**
 2000 - 2001:
GRFC Academy
 Int'l national Honours: **England U18**



A local boy who signed professional terms this pre-season. His strengths lie in his dedication to the arts of scrumhalf play. His service is excellent and his box kicking and sniping at the base of the scrum have made him a formidable opponent. A current England U18's international, much is expected of him in the future.

Robert Todd

D.O.B: **19/04/71**

Position: **Centre**

Height: **1.80m**

Weight: **96.6kg**

Former Club:

London Irish

Int'l national Honours: -



Left London Irish with a growing reputation but unfortunately, missed much of last season with a foot injury that took an age to heal. His efforts to come back fitter and stronger were rewarded with two substitute appearances and a start against his former club. Was struck another cruel blow as a hamstring injury forced him out of the seasons finale.

Trevor Woodman

D.O.B: **04/08/76**

Position: **Loose Head**

Height: **1.83m**

Weight: **115kg**

Former Club: **Bath**

Int'l national Honours:

England



Missed the beginning of last season with a neck injury but came back stronger and fitter than ever. The addition of his powerful play in the tight gave Gloucester one of the most feared front row's in world rugby. Has also worked on his play in the loose and can be a direct and destructive runner with ball in hand. His mobility belies his size.

Phil Vickery

D.O.B: **14/03/76**

Position: **Tight Head**

Height: **1.91m**

Weight: **125kg**

Former Club:

Bude/Redruth

Int'l national Honours:

England 15 – Caps,

British Lions



Monster of a prop born in Cornwall. Was part of the British Lions tests team in Australia in 2001, and has further enhanced his reputation as one of the best Tight Head's in the game. Doubts about his scrummaging ability were quickly quashed and his handling and running skills in the loose would make the best three-quarter jealous.

Dimitri Yachvili

D.O.B: **19/9/80**

Position: **Scrum Half**

Height: **1.83m**

Weight: **81kg**

Former Club:

Paris University

Int'l national Honours:

France U21's



Young scrum-half who has impressed coaches in France with his service and all round game. Has recently represented France U21's in Australia where they finished third in the U21 World Cup. Will gain valuable experience in the Premiership and provide real competition to Andy Gomarsall for the number nine jersey this season.

Phillippe Saint-André

Director of Rugby



Gloucester

Rugby Football Club



Ticket and Information Hotline - Tel: 0871 871 8781

[gloucester squad]

37

Peter Arnold [contributor]

HAVE A GOOD TIME, DID YOU ?

I sincerely hope you did have a good Christmas, during which you over-indulged quite shamelessly. I wish I could tell you that I did, but at the time of writing it simply hadn't happened yet.



Always the same at this time of year. The imminent onset of the Festive Season means that normal publishing schedules go out of the window, so I find myself penning my notes very much earlier than I would like in a perfect world.

As I write we haven't even got our decorations up yet. In fact, just at the moment, my Beautiful and Talented Wife is ascending a somewhat questionable step ladder to retrieve said decorations from the loft. So if these scribbles come to an abrupt halt, you'll know that the aforesaid BTW has descended to earth, in a shower of baubles, at 32.2 feet per second per second, according to the immutable laws laid down by one Sir Isaac Newton, who probably never played a game of rugby in his life.

But now is the time to eschew all the festive frivolity. We're back to stern reality, and you can't get sterner, or more real, than a test against Newcastle Falcons, against whom we've been trying conclusions ever since they played under their

maiden name, which was Gosforth. Some pretty celebrated occasions they were, too, often in the Cup.

To give you an idea of just how fiercely those games were approached, Gloucester's former Member of Parliament, Sally Oppenheim, as she was then known, once turned up to address a meeting in Newcastle, in her capacity as Minister for Consumer Affairs. To the bemusement of the congregation, she had sewn together two cherry-and-white scarves and wrapped them round her neck, leaving no room for doubt about her sympathies in a forthcoming encounter.

Many more senior supporters will also recall a gaffe made by Nigel Starmer Smith. He once had the effrontery to describe a Gloucester victory over Gosforth as a "real shock", live on the radio. He never lived that down, and had to endure jibes about it every time he attended Kingsholm thereafter.

There's nothing new about tough matches at this

particular point in the calendar, however. Having negotiated the happy, and fondly-remembered, Boxing Day run arounds, we often used to find ourselves opposing a strong Newport side on this particular day, and no quarter was ever asked or given. I still get hairs standing up on the back of my neck when I recall the meeting between Mike Burton and Colin Smart, who had just taken Mike's spot in the England team. Not one for the faint hearted, that.

Thinking about it, Colin might even be here, today. If so, Festive Greetings to you 'Smarty' !

But my favourite memory of that fixture concerns a classic piece of Kingsholm repartee.

One of the numerous Newport supporters, taking exception to one decision, shouted, "Jesus Christ, refereee !" The reply came from a posh voice in the stand: "No. That's the English half of your affiliation, old boy !"

I won't even try to cap that.

LOOKING FORWARD

For reasons not unassociated with pre-Christmas activities, I was reduced to clamping my ear to the radio while Gloucester were visiting Bristol in, what we must now learn to call, the Powergen Cup. The result, of course, is history. However, the commentary itself was not without interest.

BBC Radio Gloucestershire had problems with their link to the Memorial Ground, so had to rely on words of wisdom from the Radio Bristol commentary team, one of whom was 'Corky' Harding, who you might remember as a nuggety scrum-half with a respectable number of England Caps. Some of those might have gone to Marcus Hannaford, but that's another story.

You wouldn't expect such commentary to be completely impartial, and I don't expect Radio Gloucestershire's presenters are any better or any worse in that respect. Neither should they be, but it was interesting to hear how the other half viewed the

proceedings as the game progressed. There was a tendency to blame Bristol's mistakes, rather than give any credit to Gloucester. There was one occasion when there was a reference to Bristol's 'tremendous support', when all I could hear over my radio was roars of 'Glawster'.

All this is very understandable, of course, and couldn't disguise the fact that it was Gloucester's Academy graduates who were stealing the limelight, and posing continual threats to the opposing defence.

All of them, John Goodridge, James Simpson Daniel, Josh Frape and, of course, James Forester caught the eye (or in

my case, the ear) at some point. Even Marcel Garvey, who only had ten minutes in which to announce his presence, went over for a try, and it was the second time in two starts from the bench that he has done so.

I found this particularly satisfying, especially as the victims were Bristol, who must really have fancied their chances when they saw the Gloucester team sheet. Not to mention the fact that their Argentinean half-back pairing was back and raring to go. Revenge must have been in the air, too, after the drubbing they had received at Kingsholm.

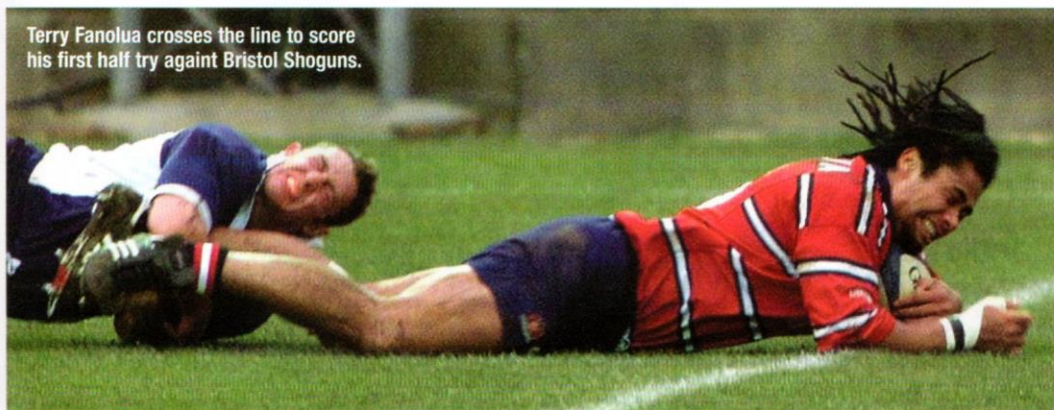
So it's nice to see that the England authorities haven't

been slow to recognise the potential of the Gloucester Young Guns (among whom I think I can count Andy Hazell) and have picked them in either the national 'Elite Squad' or in the Commonwealth Games Sevens party. Well done, lads.

There's one fly in the ointment, though. Apparently, anyone picked in the final Sevens squad won't be selected for the England summer tour of Fiji, Tonga and Samoa.

There's a poser for you. Rainy Manchester or Balmy South Sea Islands? Gee that's a tough one.

Anyway, enjoy the rest of the holiday. See you next year.



Alastair Downey

[contributer]

Well, one thing is certain: It has not been boring. In the programme notes I wrote before the Leicester game on Saturday, September 15, I said: 'So much has emerged from the volatile Kingsholm brew it is impossible to predict what might happen next.' I would stand by those comments now...

"There have been flashes of superlatives and troughs of under-achievement. It means they have not yet reached the heights they should have done."

...but alongside volatile, I would add the word unstable.

Coaches and players have come and gone, games have been won and lost and the Kingsholm rumour mill has produced its usual torrent of hushed whispers.

So where has it all left us? A superbly assembled squad has so far performed for the majority of the time in middle gear. There have been flashes of superlatives and troughs of under-achievement. It means they have not yet reached the heights they should have done. Philippe Saint-Andre has assembled a splendid squad, perhaps, on its day, one that could rival champions Leicester. For all his insecurities and

suspicions, Saint-Andre is a superb spotter of players. For me, the outstanding purchases have been Patrice Collazo and Federico Pucciarriello. These are not second choice props. They have created perhaps the best collective front row in Europe and have combined dextrous ball control with rock hard assurance in the best traditions of Gloucester forward play. They have been outstanding and have taken the Premiership by a thumping storm. For performance, the Frenchman and Italian have even eclipsed the astonishing points record accumulated by Ludovic Mercier - perhaps the finest striker of the ball ever seen at the club.

Dimitri Yachvili is raw but competitive and when you sprinkle in the rest of Saint-Andre's purchases, it is a Gloucester squad that should be second in the league. Once again, their home record has been highly impressive with thumping victories over everybody except Leicester and the forwards in biting control.

Gloucester are confident and control their aggression within

the walls of Castle Grim and that has been the backbone of their efforts. But once again, it has been their sluggish form out of the city limits that have disappointed. At times they have appeared one-dimensional and predictable and have made too many basic errors to be successful. The overall level of opposition has been disappointingly poor and that has made Gloucester's four fruitless attempts to win away from home all the more frustrating. It means they have constantly been playing catch-up in order to re-cover lost ground on Leicester. They must split the reliance of their gameplan equally between the forwards and backs because, at present, the pack are being asked to win too many games almost single-handedly.

If Paul Turner can be allowed a more hands-on role, then it will only be a matter of time before this squad starts delivering. It will only be a Happy New Year if they can do that and a victory today against a highly organised and well structured Newcastle side would be the perfect start.
C'mon Glaws.



Gloucester VS Newcastle Falcons

<input type="checkbox"/>	Daren O'Leary	<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Dave Walder	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Joe Ewens	<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Inga Tuigamala	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Terry Fanolua	<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Jamie Noon	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Todd	<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Tom May	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diego Albanese	<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Michael Stephenson	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Henry Paul	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Jonny Wilkinson	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Andy Gomarsall	<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Gary Armstrong	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Phil Vickery	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Micky Ward	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Olivier Azam	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Nick Makin	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Patrice Collazo	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Marius Hurter	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rob Fidler	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Hugh Vyvyan	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mark Cornwell	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Stuart Grimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Jake Boer	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Epi Taione	<input type="checkbox"/>	i
<input type="checkbox"/>	Andy Hazell	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Pat Lam c	<input type="checkbox"/>	ic
<input type="checkbox"/>	Junior Paramore	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Jon Dunbar	<input type="checkbox"/>	

[replacements]

<input type="checkbox"/>	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	16	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	17	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	18	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	19	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	20	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	21	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	22	T.B.C	<input type="checkbox"/>	

[teams correct at 20/12/01]

i [denotes international]

c [denotes captain]

[today's officials]

[referee] Roy Maybank RFU

[touch judges] Steve Leyshon RFU, Ashley Reay RFU