

From The Citizen, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1972:

### **Top Honour for Dick Smith**

One of the frustrations of this job is writing something in the middle of the week for the Pink 'Un. Not that I'm moaning of course, but occasionally something breaks which makes you have to rewrite every word.

Such is the case this week. Having written that about the only honour – other than an England cap – which had not come Dick Smith's way during his long career with Gloucester was selection for the Barbarians the news promptly came out that this famous prestige club had finally recognised him.

It's an honour both for Smith – who in recent years captained Gloucester through two of its finest seasons – and for his club.

This week he became only the third player in Gloucester's history to make 450 appearances in the senior side.

Ironically enough, one of the other two is Dick's boss, Peter Ford, who holds the record of 506 appearances and who was the last home-produced Barbarian to come out of the city side.

### **Consistent**

Dick joined Gloucester in 1958 and has made his name as Gloucester's regular open-side flanker although he is no mean centre when called into this position.

Although he has never played for England he has proved to be one of their most consistent reserves, receiving well over a dozen reserve notifications during the past few years. Indeed he has been a regular reserve since 1970.

One might say he is a permanent contributor to England's selection committee, for as well as all the reserve placings he had full trials in 1964, 1966 and again in 1969. And yet he never gets called in.

His mesmerising runs which fox so many class oppositions have been familiar for a long time, and it is no surprise that the parabola he traces across the pitch should have been nicknamed the "banana". Not only does it bear a resemblance to one, but it happens to be one of the fruits his business wholesales.

In his 450 appearances up to Wednesday Smith scored 360 points from 88 tries, a lone penalty and three conversions.

Now 30, he is a regular member of the County XV and has made 40 championship appearances for the team since he was first picked. For Western Counties he played against Wilson Whineray's Fifth All Blacks, the Fifth Wallabies, the Sixth Springboks and the Fijians. For the South of England he played against the Sixth All Blacks. He spent two years as Gloucester's captain until last season when Mike Nicholls took over. During his reign Gloucester won 63 of its 109 matches with six

drawn. The long-standing record of 31 victories set in 1905-6 was bettered by one in his first year of captaincy and equalled the following campaign.