



ITALY

v FRANCE

Stade de France

Sunday 9 March 2008

Referee: Alan Lewis (Ireland)

Touch judges: 1 Stuart Dickinson (Australia) 2 Federico Cuesta (Argentina)

TMO: Dave Pearson (England)

2008 RBS 6 Nations

02.02.08

v Ireland Dublin Lost 11-16

15-Bortolussi 14-Robertson 13-Canale 12-Mi Bergamasco 11-Canavosio 10-Masi 9-Travagli 8-Parisse © 7-Ma Bergamasco 6-Sole 5-Del Fava 4-Dellape 3-Castrogiovanni 2-Ghiraldini 1-Lo Cicero

Subs used: Galon, Zanni, Perugini, Festuccia, Marcato, Reato, Cittadini

T: Castrogiovanni (confirmed by IRU) PG: Bortolussi 2

Man of the Match: Eoin Reddan (Ireland)

Referee: Jonathan Kaplan (SA)

10.02.08

v England Rome Lost 19-23

15-Bortolussi 14-Robertson 13-Canale 12-Mi Bergamasco 11-Galon 10-Masi 9-Travagli 8-Parisse © 7-Ma Bergamasco 6-Sole 5-Del Fava 4-Dellape 3-Castrogiovanni 2-Ghiraldini 1-Lo Cicero

Subs: Perugini, Picone, Nieto, Sgarbi, Festuccia, Marcato, Zanni

T: Picone C: Bortolussi PG: Bortolussi 4

RBS Man of Match: Sergio Parisse (Italy)

Referee: Alain Rolland (Ireland)

23.02.08

v Wales Cardiff Lost 8-47

15-Marcato 14-Sgarbi 13-Canale 12-Mi Bergamasco 11-Galon 10-Masi 9-Picone 8-Parisse © 7-Ma Bergamasco 6-Sole 5-Del Fava 4-Dellape 3-Castrogiovanni 2-Ghiraldini 1-Perugini

Subs: Lo Cicero, Bortolami, Buso, Travagli, Zanni, Festuccia

Bench: Patrizio

T: Castrogiovanni PG: Marcato

RBS Man of Match: Lee Byrne (Wales)

Referee: Dave Pearson (England)

TEAM v France

Coach Nick Mallett has made four changes from the team that played Wales for the visit to the Stade de France. Winger Kaine Robertson has recovered from injury and replaces Alberto Sgarbi, Andrea lo Cicero is in for Salvatore Perugini at prop, Marco Bortolami plays at lock for Santaigo Dellape and Alessandro Zanni fills in for Mauro Bergamasco. Sgarbi and Perugini find places on the bench, where there is a newcomer in backrow Jaco Erasmus Italy are still without injured full back David Bortolussi and wing Pablo Canavosio, while flanker Mauro Bergamasco is suspended after an incident against Wales Six of the 22 play their club rugby in France



15 **Andrea Marcato (Treviso)**

- **17.04.83** **1.82m** **80kgs**
- **6th cap - 3C 1PG = 9pts**
- **Debut: 2006 v Japan**
- 1st test v France
- Impressed in his first start at full back against Wales 2008 (1PG)
- Capped as sub v Japan on 2006 summer tour (3C) and then v Portugal in RWC qualifier (83-0) before being named in the 2008 Six Nations squad
- Captain of the Italian U21 side for their World Cup in Scotland in 2004, he went on the full tour under Pierre Berbizier to Argentina in 2005, but only played v Argentina XV, then capped the following year
- Is from Padova and played for the local club, before a recent move

14 **Kaine Robertson (Viadana)**

- **29.10.80** **1.78m** **78kgs**
- **29th cap - 12T = 55pts**
- **Debut: 2004 v Romania**
- 3rd test v France – 1T = 5pts (in 2005)
- Missed the Wales 2008 game through injury
- 3 games at RWC 2007
- Had a good 2007 RBS 6 Nations - missed France, returned for the injured Andrea Masi v England, and scored tries v Scotland and Wales
- Back from autumn 2006 for the RWC qualifiers and autumn series after missing the first part of the 2006 year (inc Six Nations) with knee ligament damage. Scored 3T v Portugal and 2T v Russia in RWC qualifiers
- Auckland born, was a school team mate of Doug Hewlett as a youth, and came to Italy aged 18 to play for Viadana,
- Played in 11 of 12 tests in a row before the knee injury struck, and 16 of 19 but had a couple of injuries in 2007 tests since, he initially progressed through the Sevens squad.

13 **Gonzalo Javier Canale (Clermont-Auvergne, France)**

- **11.11.82** **1.82m** **96kgs**
- **40th cap - 5T = 25pts**
- **Debut: 2003 v Scotland**
- 3rd test v France – no pts
- 21st centre partnership with Mirco Bergamasco for new ongoing Italian record
- Played last 3 group games at RWC2007
- Missed first two 2004 RBS 6 Nations tests, then returned and kept his place since except for injury, which blighted his 2005 campaign. Started all RBS 6 Nations tests in 2006, but missed summer tour and RWC qualifiers with a thigh injury, but back for autumn series and 2007 RBS 6 Nations
- Moved in summer 2005 from Treviso to Clermont, where his team-mates included Stephen Jones.
- He is also from the successful national U21 side, played in World U21Cup in England in summer 2003.
- Student when with the Treviso club, he has come through the national U19 and U21 system and played in the junior Six Nations.
- First senior call up for the 2002 NZ tour, and capped v Scotland RWC2003 warm-up game.



12 **Mirco Bergamasco (Stade Francais, France)**

- **23.02.83** **1.80m** **90kgs**
- **51st cap - 15T = 75pts**
- **Debut: 2002 v France**
- 6th test v France – 1T = 5pts (in 2003)
- Along with Perugini and Dellape, he won his 50th cap at Cardiff in 2008 (and on his 25th birthday), after Castrogiovanni reached the landmark v Ireland and Parisse v England
- 21st centre partnership with Canale for new Italian record
- Played 3 of the 4 RWC2007 group games with try v NZ in opener
- 9 starts on wing, 5 starts at No 15, this is 30th start in centre, and 7 tests as sub
- French Championship medal 2004 and again in 2007 with Stade Francais
- His 6T in the Six Nations is a new ongoing Italian record in the competition, and his 3T in 2006 was equal top scorer in the tournament.
- Scored 8 international tries in 2006
- Capped against France in 2002 aged 18 after turning up for the 2002 trial ostensibly to watch his brother in the World All-Stars game in 2002 and went forward from there.
- Both brothers Mirco and Mauro were capped as teenagers, father also played for Italy with 4 caps from 1973-78. The brothers moved to Paris in summer 2003.

11 **Ezio Galon (Overmach Parma)**

- **22.07.77** **1.87m** **93kgs**
- **18th cap - 1T = 5pts**
- **Debut: 2001 v Ireland**
- 1st test v France
- Played in France for La Rochelle, Bourgoin, and Lyon, and played for Italy at all levels.
- 1st test try v Wales in 2006 draw 18-18 but close to deadball line.
- Sub in 3 of the 4 RWC2007 games
- Has started on wing, centre and full back for Italy
- Capped for the first time v Ireland in 2001 as a sub for Corrado Pilat (22-41), then recalled 4yrs later at full back for the 3 autumn series tests in 2005.
- Has been back in the squad since the 2006 RBS 6 Nations
- Formerly with hometown team Treviso, moved to his present club from French rugby in 2005.

10 **Andrea Masi (Biarritz Olympique, France)**

- **30.03.81** **1.83m** **95kgs**
- **39th cap - 10T = 50pts**
- **Debut: 1999 v Spain**
- 4th test v France – no pts
- Fourth test start at No 10 – has now played for Italy at full back, both wings, centre and fly half
- Played twice in centre, twice on left wing at RWC2007 – scored 2T v Portugal
- RWC2003 – all 4 games in an improved display which continued through 2004 and 2005 Six Nations. Missed the 2006 RBS 6 Nations through injury but now back to form in second season with the former French champions
- Surprise late call for Twickenham 2003 after gaining his only previous cap in a RWC99 warm up game v Spain where he scored a try and played at full back. Nearly made the RWC99 squad but was only 18y old at the time.
- 2nd cap at Twickenham 2003 (sub for Dallan) after waiting 3yrs 7months for 2nd cap.
- Born at L'Aquila began with his local club side until moving to Viadana and then a recent switch in summer 2006 to Biarritz. Made his championship debut for the club aged 16y 8m in 1997-98.



9 **Simon Picone (Treviso)**

- **26.09.82** **1.81m** **92kgs**
- **14th cap – 1T = 5pts**
- **Debut: 2004 v Ireland**
- 3rd test v France – no pts
- Missed RWC2007 with a shoulder injury after showing promise through 2006 autumn series, returned in 2008 Six Nations with a charge-down try v England
- First caps as scrum half in 2004, he has filled in at centre and wing for Italy so is useful for a squad, and this is his 4th RBS 6 Nations squad place
- Played for Italy at U19 level and in the IRB U21 championship in 2003 in England (Newbury etc)
- From the 4-times recent Italian club champions, whom he joined in 2002 from Viterbo, and also played for home city club Roma.

8 **Sergio Parisse (Stade Francais, France)(captain)**

- **12.09.83** **1.96m** **104kgs**
- **52nd cap - 2T = 10pts**
- **Debut: 2002 v NZ**
- 5th test v France – no pts
- French Championship winners medal 2007 v Clermont Auvergne in final
- All 4 games at RWC2007, now fourth Italy captaincy in 2008 Six Nations and RBS Man of Match v England
- 27 tests out of the last 28 after 2007 RBS 6 Nations before missing 2007 summer tour as club won French title, after missing 7 tests injured before start of 2005 Six Nations – and that injury was after a run of 10 consecutive appearances.
- Left Treviso in summer 2005 to join the Bergamasco brothers at Stade Francais.
- Born at La Plata (Argentina), his father was a winger in Italian championship wins with L'Aquila in 1960's/1970's and went to play in Argentina
- Selected for World U21 championship in England in summer 2003.
- Prefers No 8 but can play flanker and lock.

7 **Alessandro Zanni (Calvisano)**

- **31.01.84** **1.94m** **102kgs**
- **21st cap - 1T = 5pts**
- **Debut: 2005 v Tonga**
- 2nd test v France – no pts
- In for suspended Mauro Bergamasco who can resume playing on 2 June after gouging incident with Lee Byrne (Wales)
- Played in the three autumn tests in 2005 for first caps, starting the final test v Fiji at Monza, and in 8 tests in 2006 (2 starts) with a try in the last 2006 test v Canada (41-6).
- Returned to play v Scotland 2007 in record win (37-17), for injured Josh Sole, after Zanni withdrew from original squads due to injury
- From the 2005 Italian champions, he began his career with Rugby Udine
- He is viewed as one for the future, and has been monitored through the youth, U21 and A national teams.
- Played in RWC2007 opener v NZ, and was injured



6 Josh Sole (Viadana)

- **15.12.80** **1.96m** **111kgs**
- **27th cap - 4T = 20pts**
- **Debut: 2005 v Argentina**
- 3rd test v France – no pts
- Integral part of the side since gaining first cap, and played in 11 of the 12 tests in 2006 but had a couple of injuries in 2007
- Two games at RWC2007 v Romania and Scotland
- Swapped with Parisse several times between No 6 and No 8 under Pierre Berbizier.
- Injured at Twickenham 2007, missed wins v Scotland and Wales
- Born at Hamilton, NZ, to a family with an Italian background, and a Scottish father.
- Came to Viadana in 2004 after playing in NZ for several seasons for Taranaki at lock and No 8
- Test debut in Argentina in summer 2005, after being called up by Pierre Berbizier, he scored 2T v Tonga in the opening 2005 autumn test and added further tries on the 2006 summer tour v Japan and Fiji.

5 Marco Bortolami (Gloucester Rugby, England)

- **12.06.80** **1.96m** **102kgs**
- **66th cap - 7T = 35pts**
- **Debut: 2001 v Namibia**
- 6th test v France – no pts
- Returned a sub v Wales after missing first two RBS 6 Nations 2008 games after a fractured eye socket
- 37 tests as captain (including RWC qualifiers), and captain in all 12 tests of 2006. Regained captaincy of Italy v Japan in summer 2004, and was Italy's youngest captain aged 22 in 2002 v NZ.
- Captain of Italy and Gloucester – level with on top of the captaincy lists with Massimo Giovanelli (37) for Italy
- Had a run of 18 of 20 tests before a virus in 2003, then a run of 28 caps in the 29 internationals from end of RWC2003 – missed USA 2004- until missing 2007 summer tour
- Born in Padova, made first XV aged 19 - first caps from S Hemisphere tour in summer 2001 aged 20. Played for Padova and now with the French Top 14 club Narbonne.
- Moved to Gloucester for 2006-07 on a 2-yr contract, along with prop Nieto. Formerly with Padova, then 2 years in French Top 14 with Narbonne
- Student of Mechanical Engineering.

4 Carlo Antonio del Fava (Ulster Rugby, Ireland)

- **01.07.81** **2.00m** **115kgs**
- **27th cap - no pts**
- **Debut: 2004 v Wales**
- 3rd test v France – no pts
- Played final 2 group games at RWC2007 – started both games – and started all 3 RBS 6 Nations games in 2008
- First season with Ulster after joining from French Top 14 club Bourgoin, formerly with Overmach Parma. Is the captain at Ulster.
- Born in Umtata, the capital of the former South African homeland of Transkei, his father is an Italian from Lucca and his mother is South African.
- Moved to Durban, played for Natal at U21 level and was in the Super 12 squad, and also played for Eastern Province.
- 2 full seasons in Italy, he has played for Italian Universities and A XV as John Kirwan looked at him, and then promoted.



3 **Martin Leandro Castrogiovanni (Leicester Tigers, England)**

- **21.10.81** **1.88m** **110kgs**
- **53rd cap - 9T = 45pts**
- **Debut: 2002 v NZ**
- 6th test v France – no pts
- Started all 4 games at RWC2007, then 50th cap v Ireland in 2008 RBS 6 Nations opener
- Joined Leicester Tigers for 2006-07 from Calvisano, the 2005 champions, and has shown fine form.
- Won the Premiership Player of the Year award in 2006-07 and has extended contract for a further 3 years
- Early career brought a run of 21 caps in 23 tests, then a run of 22 caps in 26 tests since start of 2005 Six Nations to end of 2007 RBS 6 Nations
- Born in Argentina at Parana.
- 1st cap on summer tour to NZ in 2002. Cemented place from the 2003 Six Nations.
- From Italian national U21 set up.

2 **Leonardo Ghiraldini (Calvisano)**

- **26.12.84** **1.84m** **99kgs**
- **10th cap – no pts**
- **Debut: 2006 v Japan**
- 1st test v France
- One game at RWC2007 v Portugal (his first test start), initially replaced Fabio Ongaro (Saracens) in the squad. Then started 2008 RBS 6 Nations opener v Ireland
- Hooker, who gained his first two caps as sub for Carlo Festuccia on the 2006 summer tour to Japan (52-6) and Fiji (18-29)
- Joined Calvisano in summer 2005 from Padova, and took the hookers jersey from the international Giorgio Intoppa
- Has come through the Italian system via U21 and A levels, and mobile enough to have featured in the Hong Kong Sevens

1 **Andrea Io Cicero (Racing Metro Paris, France)**

- **07.05.76** **1.85m** **117kgs**
- **75th cap - 8T = 40pts**
- **Debut: 2000 v England**
- 9th test v France – no pts
- Played v France in all previous RBS 6 Nations meetings
- Italy's third most capped player, and tour captain to Uruguay and Argentina in summer 2007. Will beat Diego Dominguez on 74 caps and is behind only Alessandro Troncon (101) and Carlo Checcinato (83)
- All 4 games at RWC2007 – two starts
- Played 28 of Italy's 29 games before missing the last 2005 autumn international v Fiji and opening 2006 Six Nations test with a knee injury, and then won 50th cap from bench v England.
- But has played in 24 of Italy's last 27 tests for a record of 53 caps out of the last 59 games
- Toured with the Barbarians in 2004 and 2005
- Now plays for Racing since RWC2007 after joining from L'Aquila after being on loan at Lazio of Rome, a Div 2 club, when a contractual dispute with Stade Toulousain, the French champions, blew up.
- From Sicily, he originally played for Bologna, Rovigo and then with RDS Roma from 1999-2001 before moving to France.



Substitutes

16 Fabio Ongaro (Saracens, England)

- **23.09.77** **1.83m** **104kgs**
- **53rd cap (if he plays) - 4T = 20pts**
- **Debut: 2000 v Canada**
- 6th test v France – no pts
- Played twice at RWC2007 but not in coach Nick Mallett's first three squads
- Played 21 successive tests and was captain in the 2004 autumn test v USA until missing the 2005 summer tour, but back for 2005 autumn tests, and 2006 RBS 6 Nations. Played in 11 of the 12 tests in 2006
- Then lost his No 1 hooking role in 2007 to the improved Festuccia
- Had taken over from the long-serving Andrea Moscardi in the national team. Moscardi is an architect and designed the changing-rooms of the new Wembley stadium.
- 7 seasons with Treviso, comes from Venice, and won 3 championships in 4 years before move to Saracens in summer 2006. Back row forward converted to hooker.

17 Carlos Nieto (Gloucester Rugby, England)

- **25.06.76** **1.85m** **112kgs**
- **23rd cap (if he plays) – no pts**
- **Debut: 2002 v England**
- 3rd test v France – no pts
- Returns to squad after missing Ireland game due to death of his father, and returns for Lorenzo Cittadini (Calvisano)
- Capped v England in 2002 (9-45), he was recalled after 3 years in the wilderness by Pierre Berbizier for the 2005 summer tour to Argentina and Australia, and then the autumn tests. Is now an integral part of the squad
- Argentina-born at La Plata, and arrived in Italy in 2000 to play for Gran Parma, now with Viadana.
- Was with the A team in his three year absence from the full national team.
- Moved to Gloucester for 2006-07 to join Bortolami, and his former Italian clubs were Parma (2001-04) and then Viadana (2004-06)

18 Salvatore Perugini (Stade Toulousain, France)

- **06.03.78** **1.80m** **110kgs**
- **51st cap (if he plays) – no pts**
- **Debut: 2000 v Ireland**
- 6th test v France – no pts
- Along with Dellape and Mirco Bergamasco, he won his 50th cap at Cardiff 2008, after Castrogiovanni reached the landmark v Ireland and Parris v England
- 3 games at RWC2007
- Squad member now of the last 8 Six Nations series, every series played by Italy.
- Test debut v Ireland in 2000 when selected by former coach Brad Johnstone, he had come through the U19 and U21 set-ups
- Joined Calvisano in 2002 after 5 seasons with L'Aquila, left Calvisano in summer 2006 to join Toulouse, after winning the 2005 Italian Championship
- Semi finals of 2007 French Championship



19 **Jaco Erasmus (Viadana)**

- **31.07.79** **1.98m** **107kgs**
- **First cap (if he plays)**
- Promoted from the A team, scored tries v Scotland A and England Saxons in 2008
- South African born back row who has been in Italy since 2001 and played for Bologna, Silea and Treviso before joining Viadana in summer 2006
- 7th season of Italian rugby, and has recently played well against British teams in the Heineken Cup

20 **Pietro Travagli (Overmach Parma)**

- **28.04.81** **1.78m** **87kgs**
- **6th cap (if he plays) – 1T = 5pts**
- **Debut: 2004 v Canada**
- 1st test v France
- Recalled for 2008 Six Nations after nearly 4yrs absence – replaced Alessandro Troncon (101 caps), started v Ireland and England
- Is a scrumhalf, but made debut as sub on the wing v Canada and scored try.
- Capped v Canada and NZ as sub in November 2004 incoming tours – missed 37 tests before return v Ireland 2008
- Was a youth player with hometown Treviso, then switched to play for Viadana, with whom he won the 2002 championship. Now with Overmach
- Also had a spell with Bath Rugby
- Has played for Italy at six levels, and was an outstanding member of his recent national U21 and A sides.

21 **Enrico Patrizio (Padova)**

- **15.01.85** **1.88m** **95kgs**
- **2nd cap (if he plays) – no pts**
- **Debut: 2007 v Uruguay**
- 1st test v France
- Has come through the Italian coaching system via the national U17, U18, U19, and U21 systems, and made full debut when starting in the No 13 jersey v Uruguay on the 2007 summer tour to South America.
- Had a fine 2006-07 with his club, and in 2007-08 has been in continued good form, and played for Italy A v Scotland A (15-37) on 04.02.08
- Training squad for RWC2007, but just missed final selection

22 **Alberto Sgarbi (Treviso)**

- **26.11.86** **1.91m** **99kgs**
- **3rd cap (if he plays) – no pts**
- **Debut: 2008 v England**
- 1st test v France
- Came onto the bench to replace starter Ezio Galon v England 2008, won first cap as sub for Canale after 65 mins. Then started v Wales after Robertson was injured
- Emerged via the national U21 and A teams in 2007, and was in the 40-man original training squad for RWC2007
- Also caught the eye in Treviso's 2006 and 2007 Championship wins, and in his 3rd season in the Treviso 1st XV squad



Coach

Nick Mallett

- **30.10.56**
- Took over from Pierre Berbizier after RWC2007 (03.10.07)
- Coaching career: Rovigo (1984-85), St Claude (France)(1985-90), Boland (1995-96), South Africa (1997-2000), Stade Francais (2000-04), and now Italy from October 2007.
- Playing career: Western Province 1977-85, Oxford University 1979-80, Rovigo and St Claude. Two caps for SA v 1984 South America XV
- Oxford Blue in Rugby and Cricket – once hit Ian Botham for 3 sixes in an over
- Coached SA to world record equalling 17 straight wins from 1997-98 but failed to retain RWC in 1999
- Coached Stade Francais to 2003 and 2004 French Championship
- Born at Haileybury, England, moved to Rhodesia when six weeks old, and to South Africa at 7yrs