

# BREAKTHROUGH

The British breakthrough finally came in June 1986.



Glen Webbe (left) came on as a replacement for Wales against Tonga. In doing so he became the second black British international player.

**“I would say racism is present at the top of the administrative hierarchy, but selection is another matter.”**

*Paddy Dunston, Wasps, 1993*

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## FIRSTS

Other firsts followed in quick succession during the following decade.

The first black British Isles (Lions) players were Jeremy Guscott (below left) and Chris Oti (below right) when both took the field together on the 1989 Lions tour. Guscott only had one England cap to his name at the time and would score a try on his Lions test debut.

Guscott (65 caps) and Victor Ubogu (24 caps) were integral members of England’s successful 1991, 1992, 1995 Grand Slam teams.



**“I don’t feel any racism at any level.”** *Victor Ubogu, 1994*

We are now very used to seeing black players wearing the white England jersey. Between 1988 and the beginning of the 1999 Rugby World Cup, England played close to 100 test matches. In only nine of those matches did a black England player not feature.

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## CAPTAINCY

The first black British rugby captain was Andrew Harriman in 1993 when he captained the England Rugby Sevens side. This was only two months before Paul Ince would become England’s first black soccer captain.

Although Colin Charvis first captained Wales in April 2002, there has still never been a black Irish or Scottish international player.



*Image courtesy of Rugbymatters.net*

**“Rugby’s been very clean and it’s a myth that there’s any discrimination.”**

*Andrew Harriman*

England’s women’s rugby team has been captained for the last four seasons by black women:

Paula George (left)  
2000-2002

Maxine Edwards (right)  
2003-present



*Image courtesy of Rugbymatters.net*

