

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME // 2016/17 SEASON // GLOUCESTER RUGBY



**GLOUCESTER  
RUGBY**

VERSUS

# GLASGOW WARRIORS

ISSUE 1 // PRE SEASON FRIENDLY  
FRIDAY 26 AUGUST 2016 // £2





GOOD EVENING AND  
WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM FOR  
THE FIRST TIME THIS SEASON

# WELCOME

**W**here did the Summer go? The final home game of last season against Northampton is still very fresh in the mind, yet here we are again, ready to kick off the new season.

But, even though the time has passed quickly, an awful lot has happened since a ball was last kicked or tackle made here at Kingsholm.

We staged two more hugely successful concerts here, as Jess Glynne and Lionel Richie entertained more than 30,000 fans in fine style, as we continue to establish the stadium as a top class venue for music here in the county. Work has already begun to identify acts for next summer and we'll make those announcements as soon as we have confirmation.

Once the concerts were done and dusted, it was then over to Dave Balmer and his crew to begin their work on the pitch. It never ceases to amaze me, and I've seen it happen a few times now, how quickly the playing surface is transformed from looking like the surface of the moon to having a healthy covering of grass within the space of a couple of weeks. With the World cup games and Sevens tournament before the season got underway, the pitch took a bit of a hammering last

"IT NEVER CEASES TO AMAZE ME HOW QUICKLY THE PLAYING SURFACE IS TRANSFORMED FROM LOOKING LIKE THE SURFACE OF THE MOON TO HAVING A HEALTHY COVERING OF GRASS WITHIN THE SPACE OF A COUPLE OF WEEKS."



season but we are confident that the surface should be in a better place this season.

We've also been continuing to look at ways at improving the supporter experience here at Kingsholm.

We purchased the former Cooper Cowan site on Kingsholm Road last year when we realised it was available, as space is at a premium around Kingsholm. In that area we are currently constructing a dedicated Fan Zone, complete with Community zone where fans can get involved in the activities we have planned, such as kicking and passing games and also meet the first team squad for photos and autographs as usual.

We will also take the opportunity to add some new and different food options and a new real ale offering. We are also going to have our very own 'Pub on Wheels' in the fan zone too, which will prove to be a hit I'm sure, and we will be asking our fans to help us choose a name for the pub, so keep an eye on our Social media in the next few weeks.

We are also hoping to get a screen up so other sporting action can be watched whilst in the zone, complete with some seating and tables for those wishing to take the weight off their feet. Weather permitting, we may even put some live music on after the games so people can kick back and enjoy some food or drink in a fun environment.

The work won't be completed when you visit this evening, but it won't be too far away.

In terms of playing matters, we have continued to invest in the playing department as we strive to build upon the solid work that David Humphreys and Laurie Fisher have put in over the past two years.

We're also continuing to place a high priority on the work of our Academy, and Neil McCarthy and

**"THERE'S A LOT OF STABILITY IN THE COACHING AREA AND SQUAD, WE'RE BRINGING IN SOME REAL QUALITY AND HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGH."**

his staff are doing a great job in terms of identifying and developing local talent and we feel the future is in safe hands. Hartpury College is obviously key to our success and they have their own exciting season to look forward to, and their first team were close to a Championship place at one stage last season so we wish them the very best for the upcoming campaign.

None of us will deny that missing out on the Challenge Cup this season is a blow, but it's a long-term project here and we're confident that we're moving in the right direction. There's a lot of stability in the coaching area and squad, we're bringing in some real quality and hopes and expectations are high.



It just remains for me to thank you all for your ongoing support which I feel, biased as I am, is the best in the Premiership. It's never taken for granted and I'm hoping we all have lots to shout about this season!

It's the start of a busy period, we hope to see lots of you down at the Beach Weekender over the Bank Holiday in Gloucester Quays and then back here for the big kick off against Leicester next Friday night.

Cheers

*Steve*

STEVE VAUGHAN || CEO





# ACADEMY UPDATE

**T**he Gloucester Rugby Academy continues to be a productive breeding ground for the future stars en route to a Cherry and White shirt, and after a number of changes during the summer, the production line shows no sign of slowing down.

Now embarking on his second season in the role, Head of Academy Neil McCarthy has made a few small changes to his coaching team going forward, all with the intention of building on the good work that has been put in so far.

Richard Whiffin and Robin Eager have joined the staff this summer in the Academy department, and McCarthy is delighted to have brought the experienced coaching duo to the team.

"From the club's perspective, we're trying to invest in the structures and processes around the Academy, so we needed some additional athletic development support to

help Kev Mannion, given the growth in the programme which is why we decided to bring Robin Eager in.

"With Tim (Taylor) moving up to the first team, we needed to ensure we kept the quality in terms of our coaching as well. We're very fortunate that Richard Whiffin was available after what happened with London Irish, so overall it is a good thing.

"I'm actually really pleased that we've got a really good team together.

"Robin spent the whole of Rugby World Cup 2015 with England, doing strength and conditioning and sports science support, and was involved in the Six Nations when they won the Grand Slam under Eddie Jones.

"Recently he was with the England U20s at the World Rugby U20s Championships for the last two years, so the depth of experience that Robin has got around young

players and performance in general, is massively beneficial to us."

With the likes of Ollie Thorley, Elliott Creed and Lloyd Evans all showing up well for the first team at the tail end of the last campaign, McCarthy is pleased with the progress of the Academy players, but knows that they have to work hard to achieve the goals they set out.

"There is no doubt about it, most Academy players will get their opportunity by default, so whether that is injury or in an Anglo-Welsh Cup game, it is very rarely by design.

"We have been fortunate in recent years that we've had some good players come through the system, and go into the first team and perform well.

"The key is to sustain it, and we want to create a pipeline of talent and we want to ensure that the first team is suitably stocked all of the time.



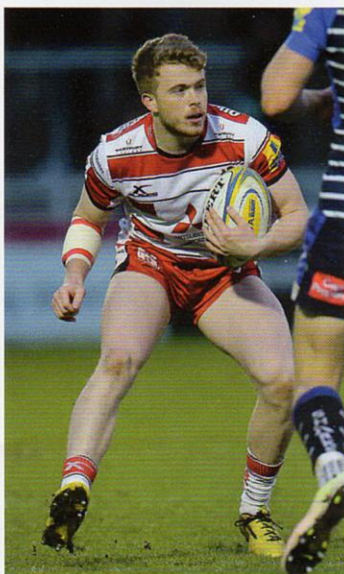
"We don't want to be bit-part or have purple patches, there needs to be a constant flow of players into the first team squad."

And rather than pull up the drawbridge between the two squads, McCarthy highlights the challenges the players face to ensure they are best placed for senior rugby.

"The biggest challenge is transitioning players from Academy systems into Senior systems and adapting quickly and efficiently to express their ability ultimately.

"It is a massive challenge, in all sports, and at some point it is a sink or swim situation. We can prepare players as much we like, but they've got to go in and they have got

**"THE KEY IS TO SUSTAIN IT, AND WE WANT TO CREATE A PIPELINE OF TALENT AND WE WANT TO ENSURE THAT THE FIRST TEAM IS SUITABLY STOCKED ALL OF THE TIME."**



to be able to take in and retain information, and then execute under pressure."

The Gloucester Rugby Under 18s had a standout campaign in 2015/16, going through the Aviva Under 18 League unbeaten before coming unstuck in the final against London Irish, but rather than dwell on the disappointment, McCarthy was almost immediately highlighting areas for improvement and speaks of his pride in the performance of the young charges.

"To be honest, it surprised us all where we were able to take that group of players, because when we first said that we were going to prioritise that group, we weren't sure what we were dealing with.

"Obviously a lot of the staff were new, and so it was remarkable how that team reacted and adapted to take on the challenge of the Under 18 league, and do incredibly well in some tough games.

"I think the final probably was an indicator of where we are as a programme in terms of that we're not quite ruthless enough or despise losing enough to allow that to happen to us as an Academy and a club.

"We need to be able to get to finals and appreciate it's not just about getting there, it's about making sure we come away with some bacon, in my view!

"That's the next challenge for us, making sure these boys are mentally prepared when the pressure is on. We're going to win and lose games, but we felt with that group of players at that time, it was enough just getting to the final.

"We don't focus on the outcome, if we go well in the Academy League and win it, that is neither here nor there, what we want to do is create players that have relentless expectations of themselves.

"If we concentrate on that, and focus on the process of our players are like that, then everything else with take care of itself."



**NEIL  
McCARTHY**



**RICHARD  
WHIFFIN**



**ROBIN  
EAGER**



# Gloucester's young prospects bow out of Sevens at the pool stages

**T**he Singha Premiership Rugby Sevens is a tournament that has been a happy hunting ground for the Cherry and Whites in recent years, with the team having lifted the title in 2013 and 2014 as well as making the final in 2012 and semi-final in 2015.

However, the 2016 tournament saw a young Gloucester side fall at the first hurdle as they finished with one victory from three matches from the pool stages held at Franklin's Gardens in Northampton.

Although the final outcome was disappointing, the three performances were genuinely competitive. A win over Saracens was thoroughly deserved, the narrow defeat to Northampton could have gone either way and the fixture against Harlequins was always going to be tough with the London side having brought in a number of 'guests' from the England 7s set up.

## GAME ONE

### GLOUCESTER RUGBY 26 SARACENS 19

Mat Protheroe was the hero for Olly Morgan's men in Game One, with the Cherry and Whites coming from behind to collect a bonus point victory over Saracens.

The flying youngster was ideally placed to collect a perfect pass from Tom Hudson and sprint away for the winning try, and with it, clinch a perfect start to the evening.

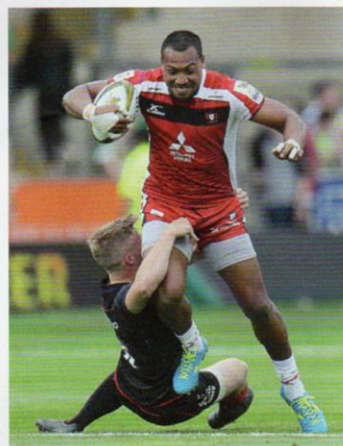
Added to the influence of replacement Harry Randall who scored one and created another, Gloucester would have been buoyed by the energy and commitment in a physical opener.

After a late schedule change, the Cherry and Whites found themselves opening up the evening against Premiership and European Champions Saracens.

And with first use of the pristine surface in the East Midlands, the Cherry and Whites were flying into attack, David Halaifonua getting on the scoreboard with a classic Pacific Island step and hand off to go over.

But, Saracens earned the possession back, allowing Alistair Crossdale to slide over in the corner, for a score that was excellently converted by captain Whiteley.

Gloucester were back in possession as they kept the ball moving against the physical Saracens' defence, and



Dan Thomas' quick thinking was rewarded as he swooped on an unguarded ruck to collect and race away for the Cherry and Whites' second score.

Saracens had the chance to level up proceedings, but Lloyd Evans was solid in defence to deny Dom Morris who was penalised before crossing, and the Cherry and Whites held the half time lead.

Shortly after the resumption, Ben Earl crossed for the Londoners despite the best efforts of Callum Braley to level up the scores.

The restart possession is key in Sevens as Morris got his score for Saracens who seized the lead for the first time after a double-strike.

With two minutes to play, Harry Randall entered the fray and scored with his first touch after supporting a break from Halaifonua as the Cherry and Whites reached even Stevens on the scoreboard.



And there was just enough time in the final stages as Mat Protheroe backed his pace down the left wing to race away for the winning try as the Cherry and Whites picked up a maximum point win to kick off the evening.

*Tries - Halaifonua (1), Thomas (6), Randall (11), Protheroe (14)*  
*Conversions - Evans (1, 6, 14)*

## GAME TWO

### GLOUCESTER RUGBY 10 HARLEQUINS 31

Game three arrived, and the Cherry and Whites took on Harlequins, who had looked impressive against Northampton Saints in their opener.

The men from The Stoop looked imperious in victory, starving the Cherry and Whites of possession, and displaying a clinical edge in attack to romp to an impressive victory.

With Sevens guru Howard Graham at the helm, the Harlequins did to the Cherry and Whites, what they had been dishing out themselves in recent seasons of the Singha Premiership Rugby Sevens.

In truth, when Gloucester did have possession but it was few and far between and Harlequins were an impressive outfit, with Cameron Cowell to the fore.

There was no sign of fatigue however, with Jonas Mikalcius benefitting from a Cam Cowell break in the opening seconds to open the scoring for Howard Graham's men.

Without touching the ball, the Cherry and Whites found themselves with a mountain to climb. Cowell, who had spent the last season with the England Sevens on the HSBC Series, showed his class to scoot over for Quins' second.

With a tricky assignment now on the table, the Cherry and Whites recovered but Harlequins were

relentless, Cowell wriggling free from a tackle and over the line for a seven pointer on the half time whistle.

After bossing the first seven minutes, Quins were again on the charge, and tries from James Lang and a second for Mikalcius followed.

Mat Protheroe finished off a sweeping move for the Cherry and Whites as they got on the score board minutes later, but this period of the game was damage limitation against the dominant Quins.

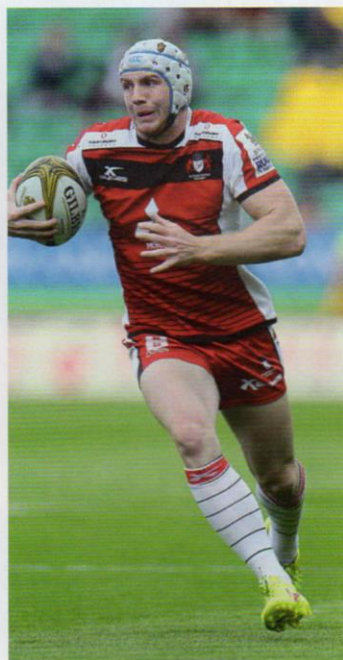
Trialist Tom Hudson was then rewarded with a try after good support to Mason Tonks as the Cherry and Whites added a second consolation score.

*Tries - Protheroe (12), Hudson (13)*

## GAME THREE

### GLOUCESTER RUGBY 17 NORTHAMPTON SAINTS 27

The final game of the night came down to a straight shootout between hosts Saints, and the Cherry and Whites, with the hosts taking the spoils.



The winners would go to Coventry alongside Harlequins, and the loser's Singha Premiership Rugby Sevens involvement would be over.

In a harem-scarem start, Gloucester had the early chances, and after a pair of spurned chances, Elliott Creed raced over.

It then got better for the Cherry and Whites, Ludlow claimed the restart and set away Protheroe who shook off a pair of tackles before setting Harry Randall free for a second try in as many minutes.

The hosts, with the home crowd roaring them on, hit back through wing Howard Packman as possession continued to change hands.

With the final play of the half, the Saints levelled up proceedings. Sam Olver spotting the space and kicking for Packman to race onto and level up.

The second half got off to a dreadful start for Gloucester. A knock on at the restart was missed, and Saints capitalised. Packman swooping to dot down for his hat trick score, and the 12-0 lead Gloucester had built up was gone.

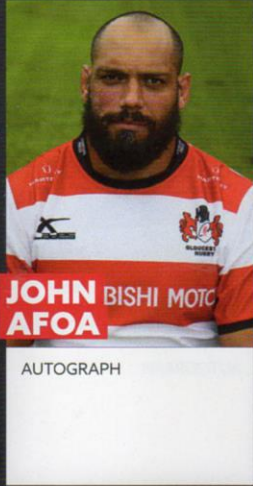
But the Cherry and White spirit was evident, Elliott Creed stepping through the defence and racing home from halfway to level up the scores again.

The stakes were high and the two teams were tiring but refusing to give an inch, Creed was then shown a soft yellow by referee Richard Haughton, and Packman then added his fourth try of the game to wrestle the game back for Saints.

There was still time for the hosts to add a fifth and see the Cherry and Whites' involvement in the Sevens come to an end.

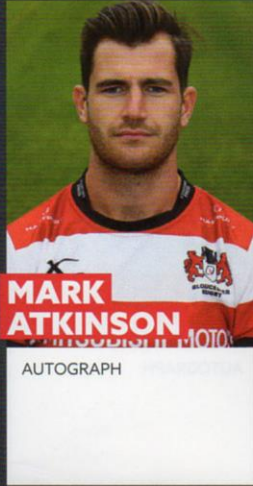
*Tries - Creed (4, 11), Randall (5)*  
*Conversions - Braley (4)*  
*Yellow Cards - Creed (12)*





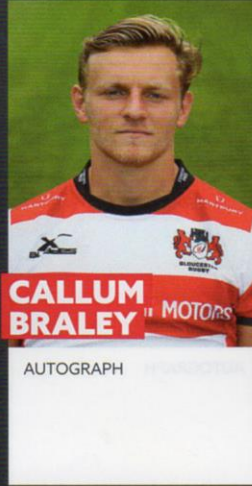
**JOHN BISHI AFOA**

AUTOGRAPH



**MARK ATKINSON**

AUTOGRAPH



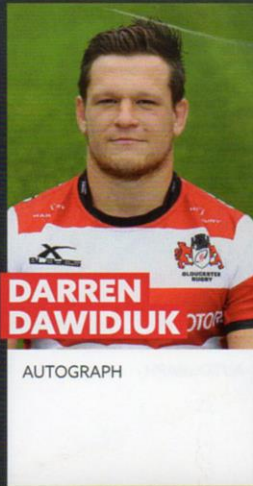
**CALLUM BRALEY**

AUTOGRAPH



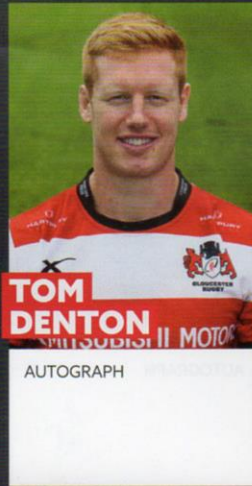
**BILLY BURNS**

AUTOGRAPH



**DARREN DAWIDIUK**

AUTOGRAPH



**TOM DENTON**

AUTOGRAPH



**PAUL DORAN-JONES**

AUTOGRAPH



**GARETH EVANS**

AUTOGRAPH



**MARIANO GALARZA**

AUTOGRAPH

# 2016/17 SQUAD





**DAVID HALAIFONU**

AUTOGRAPH



**WILLI HEINZ**

AUTOGRAPH



**RICHARD HIBBARD**

AUTOGRAPH



**JAMES HOOK**

AUTOGRAPH



**SIONE KALAMAFONI**

AUTOGRAPH



**MATT KVESIC**

AUTOGRAPH



**GREIG LAIDLAW**

AUTOGRAPH



**JOE LATTA**

AUTOGRAPH



**TOM LINDSAY**

AUTOGRAPH



**LEWIS LUDLOW**

AUTOGRAPH



**TOM MARSHALL**

AUTOGRAPH



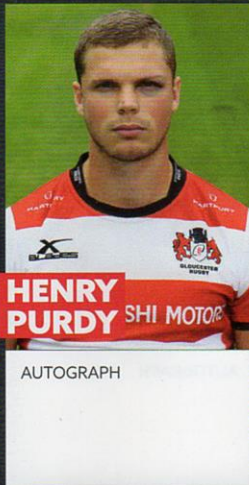
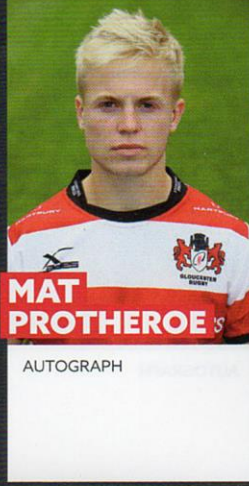
**MOTU MATU'U**

AUTOGRAPH





**GLOUCESTER RUGBY**



# 2016/17 SQUAD





**MATT SCOTT** "SHI MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



**CHARLIE SHARPLES** "MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



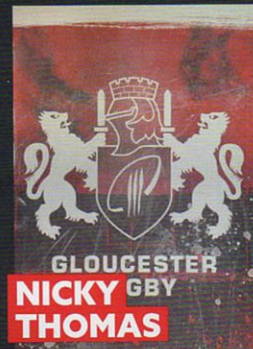
**ANDY SYMONS** "MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



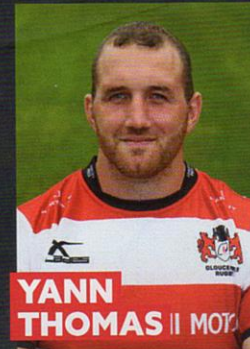
**DAN THOMAS** "MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



**NICKY GBY THOMAS**

AUTOGRAPH



**YANN THOMAS II** "MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



**OLLIE THORLEY** "MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



**JEREMY THRUSH** "MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



**HENRY TRINDER** "MOTORS"

AUTOGRAPH



**BILLY TWELVETREES**

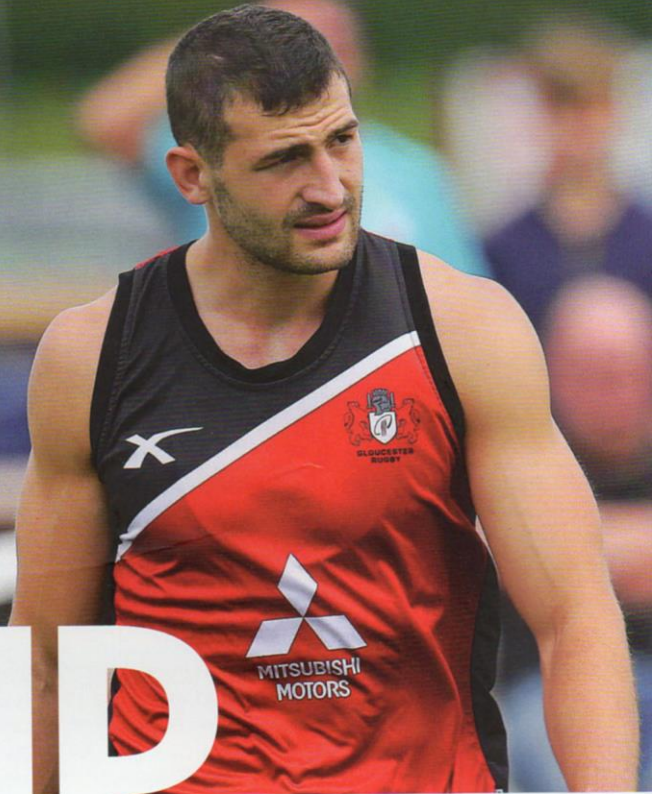
AUTOGRAPH

Can you collect all of the player autographs?



"RECOVERY IS GOING REALLY WELL" SAYS MAY AFTER MONTHS OF GRUELLING REHAB

# ON THE MEND



**A**fter suffering a serious leg injury at the turn of the year, Jonny May is targeting a return to a Cherry and White shirt, as he finally sees the light at the end of the recovery tunnel.

The England winger's season was cut short after a serious knee injury sustained in the December draw with Harlequins at Twickenham, and after a committed and determined programme of rehab, is beginning to return to his normal self.

May is part of the Gloucester squad that travelled to Tenerife this week, and the jet-heeled speedster has recently spent time in Houston, Texas at the Michael Johnson Academy as he aims to return faster and fitter than ever.

Without putting any date on his return, May is full of positivity about a potential return in

the coming months, revealing the painstaking rehab and commitment put in to his everyday life since the injury struck.

"It's been a pretty tough time. I think it was seven months since my operation this month, and it's been a long road. I've honestly worked so hard, and it is coming along the way I would've hoped and I did some running in the last week and I was around 90% of my top speed, which is not bad considering where I'm at.

"I was thinking that if I could add a percent a week then I'll be in a good place pretty soon."

Mentally, it is somehow difficult to see the scars that a serious injury leaves behind, but May has been admirable in his character and positivity after so long on the sidelines.

"I couldn't really imagine it being



much tougher to be honest, and it has been hell at times. Somehow I've just managed to keep working hard every day and grinding through every day. Even if it has taken me a bit longer to get through every session, before I finish them.

"Every day I have been waking up determined to give it everything I've got.

"I guess it has helped to have familiar faces with me in rehab. Normally you would not wish at all for anyone to get injured, but the facts are that there are usually 20% of a squad injured at one time.

"I've been the longest member of the injury club, boys have come in and gone and I've remained injured. But whenever boys have been injured we're all there for each other."

May received a call-up into the England EPS squad at the start of August, and this came as a welcome boost, especially with Eddie Jones keeping tabs on the progress of one of English rugby's finest talents.

"That was really nice, to be fair, Eddie has been in contact with me from the start. We've had letters from him around Christmas, then I got injured and he was texting me throughout the surgery and wanting updates as I was beginning my rehab.

"It's good to know that he likes me as a player and that he is keen to get me back in to the squad. I saw Eddie last weekend and he encouraged me to get fit as quick as I could. And I'm doing just that.

"It's reassuring to know that after all of this time, that I'm still in his thoughts and that he rates me as a player."

Since his last action in December, the work hasn't stopped for May, and an intensive programme behind the scenes with the club's medical staff has seen him become almost a full-time resident at Hartpury.

"I've been in pre-season for almost nine months, I haven't stopped training and done my work everyday. I've not had a single day without my rehab. Even when I've been away, I've taken my rehab equipment with me to do my balance and taken my glute band.

"I think ultimately, all the things I have needed to do to get my knee right would be all the things I would be doing to get quicker, knowing what I need to do to get back. I need to be safe, and need to be patient.

"I'm 26 and I've got to think about the long term and I'd like to think I've got my best form ahead of me and I have to put that first."

A unique part of May's summer programme saw him head to the United States for some state of the art training, with some of sport's finest experts, as he explains.

"When I knew I was going to be out for so long, the likes of Henry Trinder and Olly Morgan have always gone over to the US to see specialists.

"I trawled the internet looking for stuff to do, and I met Michael Johnson in the Autumn internationals when he popped

"Luckily, it's a Nike centre, so they paid for my assessment and I headed over!"

"It's as much mental to get away from being here on my own to being over there, and you know how enthusiastic Americans are! It was an awesome facility and it was nice to pick up a few little tweaks and tips in a different environment. It was well worth it."

As for Michael Johnson, the former 400m record holder may have had a special influence on one of May's finest moments on the pitch.

"I met Michael the week that he came in during the week that I scored the try against New Zealand, and the media made a big thing of it. They showed the try in front of him in a meeting and he gave me some running tips, mainly around relaxing my face!"

"THEY SHOWED THE TRY IN FRONT OF MICHAEL [JOHNSON] IN A MEETING AND HE GAVE ME SOME RUNNING TIPS, MAINLY, AROUND RELAXING MY FACE!"

into camp, and I remember him saying he had a training centre.

"So I googled it and thought it looked really cool, so loads of NFL players train there ready for the Combine in the off season. So I thought that why don't I plan to go over there for a few weeks when I was back running.

