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EUROPEAN RUGBY  
CHALLENGE  
— CUP —

# FINAL LONDON 2015

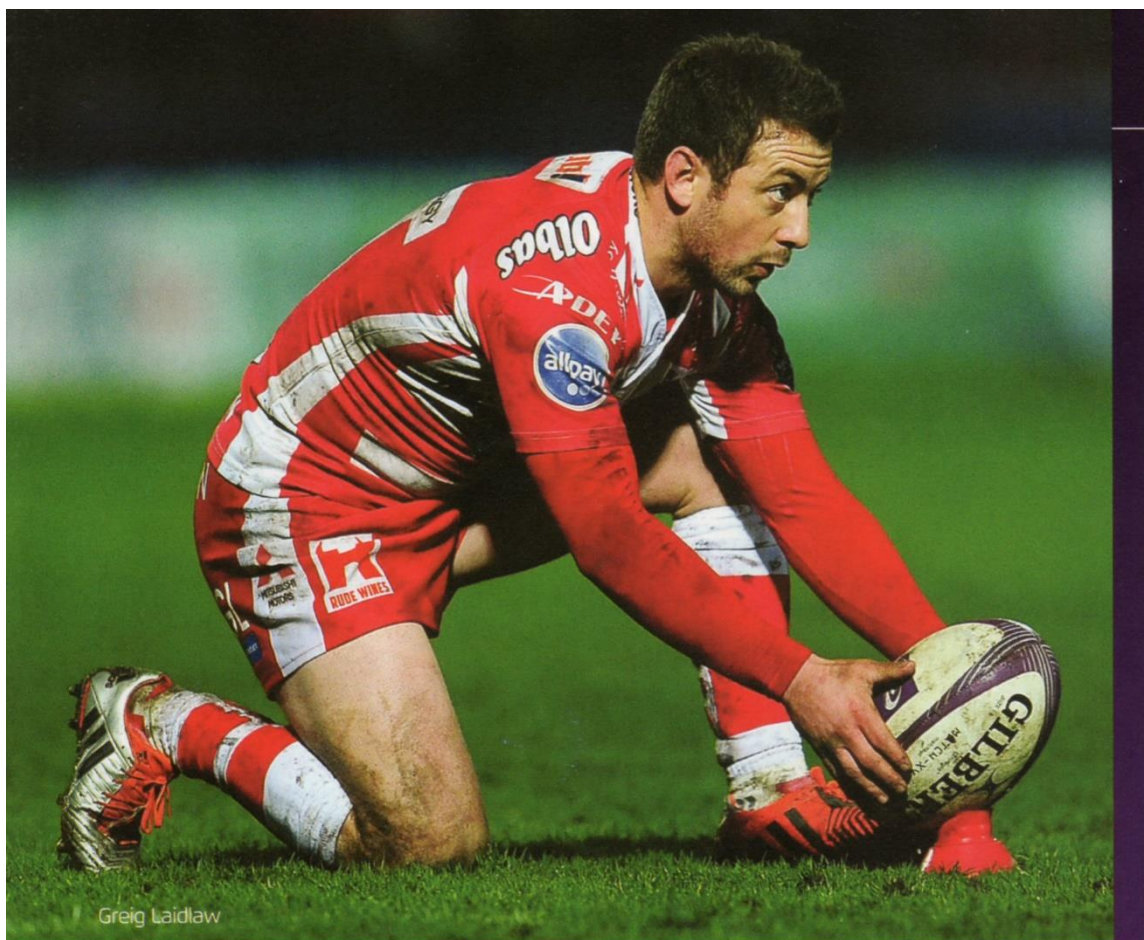


Twickenham Stoop  
Friday 1st May K.O. 19:45



Edinburgh Rugby V Gloucester Rugby





Greig Laidlaw

# Scrum halves battling for club and country

By Alasdair Reid

No two rugby fans will ever agree on the names of the players who should be chosen for a World XV side, but they might just reach consensus on where the planet earth selectors should go looking for their team.

Up front, you'd expect the search for a couple of props to begin – and probably end – in South Africa. France would provide one of those Devil's Island escape committee hookers they churn out in such numbers, while

England would be the source of a pair of boilerhouse bruisers for the second row. New Zealand, of course, is where the loose forwards would come from.

France would probably give you your back three as well,

although Argentina has also turned out some pretty tasty wingers in recent times. The midfield is trickier, but Ireland, New Zealand and Australia have been pretty strong in that area just lately. And you can't really go

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Sam Hidalgo-Clyne

**Scotland is still scrum-half central, a veritable Nirvana of nines.**

wrong with a fly-half from Wales (although a startling number of Welsh coaches have tried their damndest to do so).

Which brings us to the scrum-half, where the globe-scouring exercise can only end in Scotland. The country may have toiled on other fronts, battling to compete against the big beasts of world rugby from such a narrow playing base, but Scotland is still scrum-half central, a veritable Nirvana of nines.

We should probably resist the temptation to set off on a speculative excursion on the question of why Scotland has such a rich tradition of excellence in a position well suited to little guys with big chips on their shoulders. Instead, let's just savour the great timeline of the past 40 years that brought forth the likes of Dougie Morgan, Roy Laidlaw, Gary Armstrong, Bryan Redpath, Mike Blair and Chris Cusiter.

And, of course, the present incumbent. Greig Laidlaw is not just the current Scotland scrum-half; he is the current Scotland captain as well. The 29-year-old moved from Edinburgh to Gloucester last year, and he reckoned the change of scenery added gas to his game. Nobody who has ever encountered him could possibly doubt his desire to reward the Kingsholm club's faith with silverware in his first season.

At this point, I am happy to offer myself as living proof that it is actually possible to spend your childhood in Jedburgh and not end up as a Test scrum-half. I mention this as the little Borders town (population 4,000 and just a bit) gave the world two Laidlaws – Greig is Roy's nephew – and one



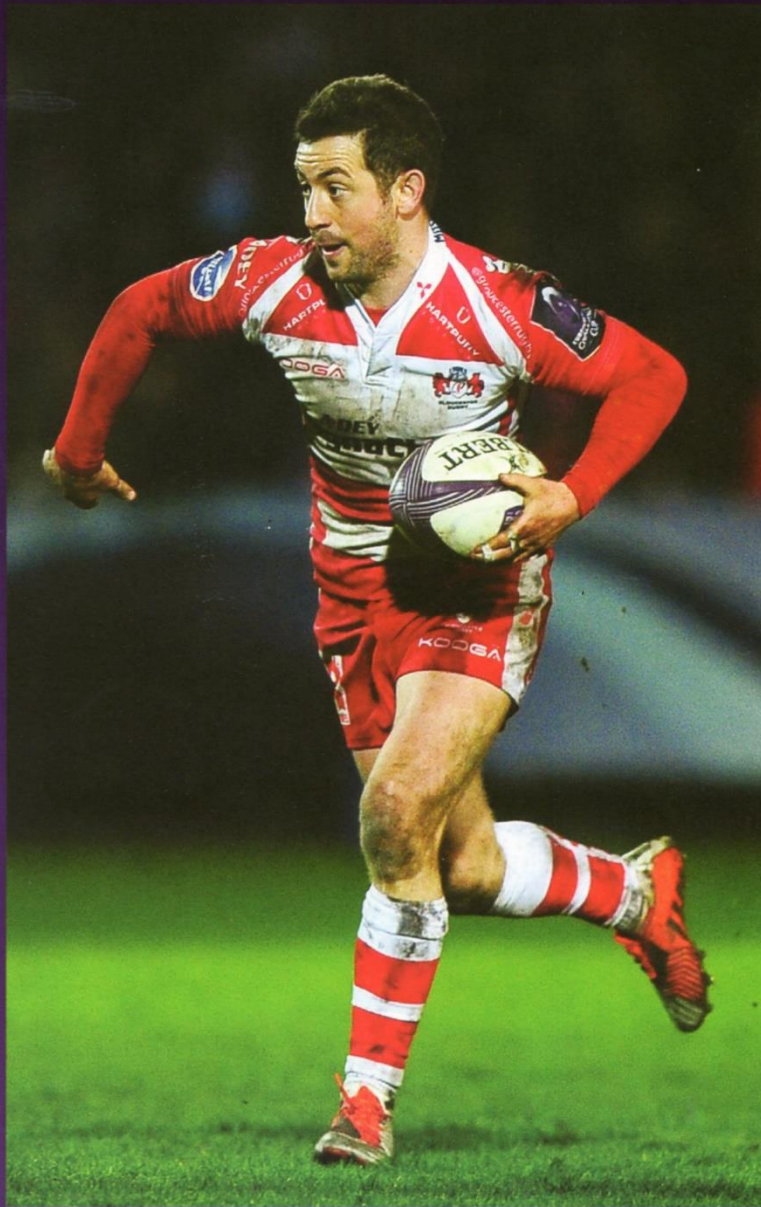


Armstrong, and such astonishing productivity might lead you to suspect that there is something in the water that turns young players into world-class half-back talents. If there is, I was clearly drinking from a different well.

However, if anyone thinks that the younger Laidlaw had an easy passage to the top on account of his family background, they do a disservice to his fierce determination. Greig represented Scotland at age-grade levels, but was widely regarded as being too small to make it to the top of the senior game. A latecomer to professional rugby – he completed his apprenticeship as a joiner before signing for Edinburgh in 2006 – he arrived on a scene in which his path to the full Scotland side was blocked by Blair, Cusiter and Rory Lawson. It was a tribute to his dedication, his self-belief and his refusal to give up on his dreams when he made his international debut against New Zealand in 2010.

But then, maybe that's how it should be. It is almost certainly no coincidence that all the great Scottish scrum-halves have had to fight for their places against some pretty talented players. Morgan had Alan Lawson breathing down his neck. Roy Laidlaw had Gordon Hunter and Greig Oliver to deal with. Even Armstrong, to many the greatest there has ever been, had serious rivals in the shape of Redpath and Andy Nicol.

And now Greig Laidlaw has one too. For the past three seasons, Laidlaw's position as first-choice scrum-half has been reinforced by his status as first-choice goal-kicker as well, but the emergence of Sam Hidalgo-Clyne at Edinburgh over the past six months means that the Scottish coaches have a fully-formed, like-for-like alternative. And as Hidalgo-Clyne put in a series of impressive performances

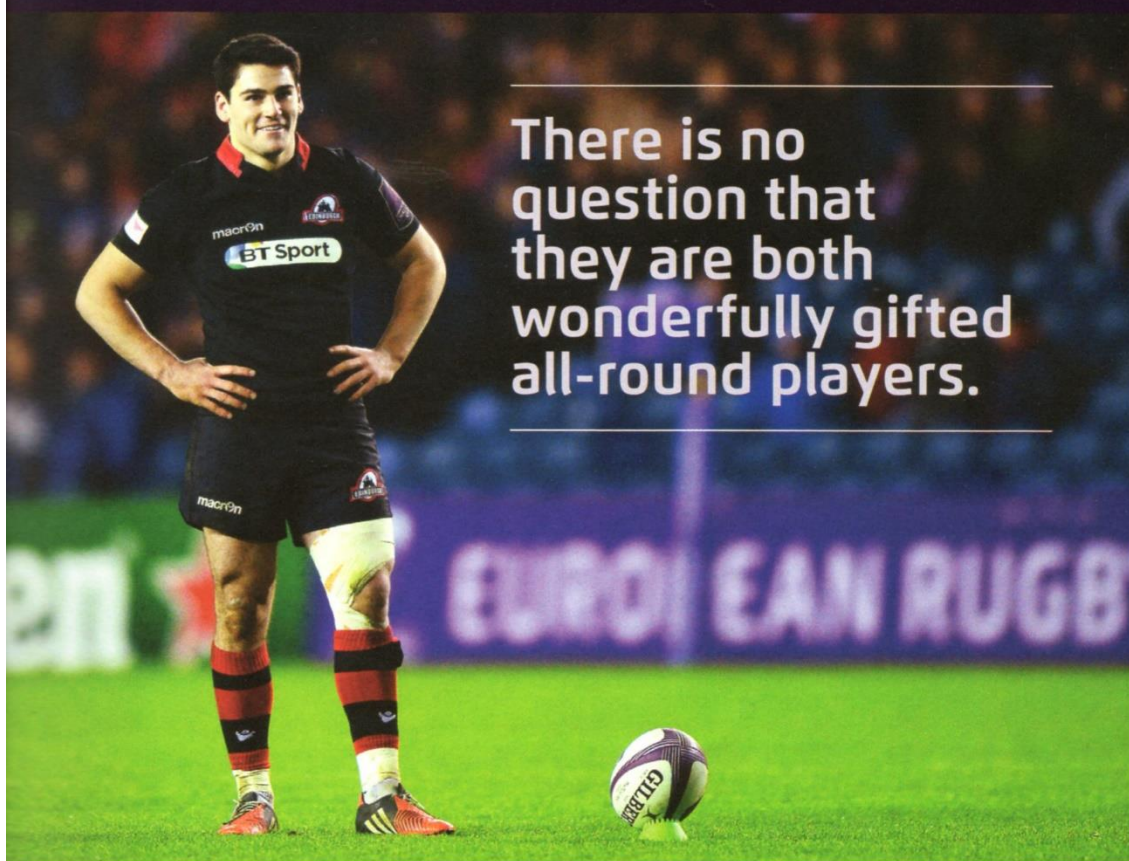


for Scotland when he replaced Laidlaw in every match of this year's Six Nations, there is a growing feeling that he could force his way through to grab the starting place for the World Cup later this year.

If anything, the 21-year-old Hidalgo-Clyne's displays for







There is no question that they are both wonderfully gifted all-round players.

Edinburgh have been even more startling. When he was named Heineken Man of the Match at the end of the capital side's 23-18 Challenge Cup quarter-final victory over London Irish at the Madejski Stadium – his third award on the trot. His run ended at the semi-final stage, when lock Ben Toolis was considered the outstanding figure in Edinburgh's 45-16 Murrayfield win against Newport Gwent Dragons – but the 25 points he scored in that match set a new individual European record for the club.

That record had previously been held by Laidlaw. The symbolism could hardly be more obvious.

Nor could their backgrounds be any more different. While Laidlaw grew up in the Borders, Hidalgo-Clyne spent his earliest years in Granada, in southern

Spain. His distinctive surname comes from having a Spanish father and a Scottish mother. At the age of three, he moved back to Scotland, took up rugby at the Forrester club in Edinburgh and was subsequently awarded a scholarship at Merchiston School, one of the great nurseries of the game.

Intriguingly, Hidalgo-Clyne played most of his schools rugby at fly-half, while Laidlaw spent a couple of seasons in that position for Edinburgh and Scotland. Hidalgo-Clyne has also played at a high level at full-back and wing. This evening's contest between the two will focus on what they do as scrum-halves and goal-kickers, but there is no question that they are both wonderfully gifted all-round players.

So who will come out on top?

On recent evidence, Hidalgo-Clyne appears to have the edge in raw pace over the ground and in the swiftness of his service, but there have been signs of rawness, too, when he sometimes takes on a little too much. Laidlaw is likely to press his case more subtly, with the craft, guile and rugby nous he has acquired over almost a decade at the top.

The Challenge Cup is the first prize. Then comes the Scotland jersey. Tomorrow the world, you might say.

*Alasdair Reid writes for The Herald*





# Humph: The leader who delivers

By Brendan Fanning

In the 1980s and early '90s the interprovincial scene in Ireland was owned by Ulster. Coached by the late Jimmy Davidson – a slightly mad but visionary coach whose personal time machine took him well ahead of everyone else – they created the Club Ulster philosophy long before the idea of a province being your club actually took off.

Lots of the stuff that we would hear in later years when the game went professional, Ulster were doing off their own bat during this period of dominance. At their peak – from 1984-92 – they beat Leinster nine times straight.

David Humphreys was lucky to get in on the tail end of this. We first saw him – a skinny 11 stone-something kid – coming off the bench on his debut, to rescue Ulster from certain defeat in Thomond Park in 1992. In those days, fly-halves actually looked like fly-halves. They were rarely 'built', and rated passing, kicking and making clean breaks well ahead of defending.

Humphreys fitted the mould. The confidence with which he nailed the winning drop goal that day marked him out as special.

You wonder now how much of an influence it was on him, being exposed so early to a group that had so many leaders, and who had been so well coached

and cajoled initially by Davidson. David McMaster was at the helm when Humphreys made his debut, but it was Davidson's template for success. And it taught the young number 10 a bit about taking responsibility when it mattered most.

Naturally enough Humphreys, the captain, was at the heart of Ulster's European Cup triumph in 1999. Simon Mason may have been the metronomic points gatherer from full back, but Humphreys was the undisputed leader. He led the way in the final, against Colomiers – it was the first window on how good rugby could be in Ireland – but it was the semi-final where he really earned his corn. Ravenhill had to be extended temporarily to a 20,000 capacity for the visit of Stade Francais, the glamour team at the time.

He scored a breakaway try down the stand-side that lit up the crowd and put huge pressure

on the French, and added a drop goal to keep the home fires burning. There were just five points in it at the end. The final – where he dropped another goal – was a stroll by comparison.

By then Humphreys was in his third season as a Test player where he was vying with Eric Elwood for the number 10 shirt. Despite Ronan O'Gara arriving a year later, the Ulster star would go on to win 72 caps in a 10-year career that saw him score 560 points.

He carried on with Ulster for another two seasons after packing it in with Ireland, finishing with 162 provincial appearances. When the time came to stop playing altogether many presumed he would put on a suit and tie and dust down his law degree, for when he was on the long wind down as a professional player he had kept his hand in with a firm of solicitors in Belfast.

Instead – thankfully – he

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stayed in Ravenhill, moving smoothly from the pitch upstairs to the newly created post of Director of Operations. At the time, Ulster had just completed their ninth straight season of failing to get out of their pool in the Heineken Cup. Given that they had been champions the last time they had made it to the knockout stage, this was an increasing source of frustration to the Ravenhill faithful.

For his first year on the new job Humphreys busied himself getting to know every bit of the operation from top to bottom. Then he got stuck in closer to the playing side of the operation. And after two years of that, Ulster finally cleared that first hurdle of qualification. For the next four seasons they would take their place at the business end of a competition that had come to be dominated by Irish sides.

The closest Humphreys' Ulster had come to closing the European deal had been in 2012, when they got to the final only to be emptied by a Leinster team at their peak who were winning the trophy for the third time in four seasons. So until that milestone had been achieved no one was expecting Humphreys to jump ship.


The reaction in Ulster to that move to Gloucester last summer could be measured on the Richter scale. If you took a step back from it, however, it wasn't quite seismic stuff. When Humphreys quit playing he had chosen the path of professional rugby over the law, which was a tacit statement to the effect that he understood the rules of the pro game.

There would be twists and turns in the road, and there was a good chance that at some point he would opt to explore one of those paths rather than staying at

home. Not many in Belfast though saw it that way.

They had just completed a naming rights deal for Ravenhill, and the wedge coming from Kingspan would surely help them realise their dream of European glory. An interestingly worded statement at the time from Chief Executive Shane Logan said: "We are disappointed with the decision but respect David's decision to leave Ulster. We know we already have the structures in place to ensure we have success in the long term. Ulster Rugby will now begin the process of recruiting a new Director of Rugby and we look forward to building on the progress that the province has made in recent years."

In truth they were in a tailspin, and only in the last month have they started looking like they are back on track.

But what about Gloucester, 



The prospect of some European silverware is especially welcome.







Humphreys' new home? For a one-team town with a passion for the game the Cherry and Whites have a history of falling short of the target. Then the cheque book came out big time this season. The deal to secure their new Director of Rugby was one an informed source said "he couldn't refuse".

They shelled out as well for front rowers John Afoa and Richard Hibbard, and further strengthened that area with another three signings after Christmas.

The addition of Greig Laidlaw, James Hook and Tom Palmer

were seen at the time as good buys, but while the run to this evening's Challenge Cup final has been impressive, their Aviva Premiership form has left something to be desired.

So the prospect of some European silverware is especially welcome, not least the door it would open to the play-offs for the Champions Cup next season. If all that came to pass then it would make life easier for a man who is desperate for success, and usually pretty clear about how he wants to get it.

If pedigree counts for anything then Gloucester will get what they're looking for from David Humphreys.

*Brendan Fanning is Rugby Correspondent of the Irish Sunday Independent*





# Multi-cultural Matt making things happen

By Rob Wildman

It is fitting that a player who has German, Polish and Croatian links is a central figure in this evening's European final here at the Stoop.

However, Matt Kvesic is also a true Gloucester boy. His rugby education brought him regularly to Kingsholm where he stood in The Shed, the club's famous terrace, alongside his father, Mark.

Kvesic, who was born in Germany (he was christened Matthew Boris) while his father was serving in the Army, has become one of the most watched players in the Aviva Premiership over the past two seasons.

The name of the 23-year-old, whose father is of Croatian descent while his mum has Polish relatives, is brought up whenever English supporters talk about the crucial openside position and whether Chris Robshaw or Steffon Armitage, the RC Toulon exile, should be wearing the No 7 jersey.

To give this fierce Anglo-French debate a further domestic dimension, he is usually thrown in as a good alternative to Robshaw or Armitage.

Thus Kvesic needs this Challenge Cup decider to remind the England coaching team that

he is finishing the season in the form which first brought him international recognition, two years ago, on the tour of Argentina.

Gloucester's impressive push for the final (featuring an unbeaten run in the pool stage) has come at the right time not only for Kvesic but for other members of the club's England contingent – captain Billy Twelvetrees, Jonny May and Charlie Sharples.

They all need success against Edinburgh to press for inclusion in the World Cup training squad due to be named later this month.

Kvesic's own England hopes have certainly been hindered by Gloucester's disappointing form over the past two seasons in the Premiership. Everything looked promising when he joined from Worcester in the summer of 2013. Though he had gone to Worcester as an academy player, Gloucester had always been the club he wanted to play for and he eagerly took up the offer to move to Kingsholm.

Gloucester were regrouping, under the management of Nigel Davies, and he looked assured of adding quickly to the two caps he had gained on England's tour of Argentina that summer.

His first cap came in Salta, the Argentinian city in the foothills of the Andes, and his performance earned him immediate respect for a high tackle count of 29.

Kvesic came home after those two victories – the second came in Buenos Aires – and looked to have firmly established himself as a credible alternative to Robshaw, the England captain, who had been given the summer off after missing out on Lions selection.

However, a delayed start to his first season at Gloucester due to an ankle injury and a run of disappointing results meant Kvesic was something of a forgotten name by the time England came to play the autumn series in 2013.

Robshaw, refreshed by his summer break, was back in harness and his ultra-consistent form has made him an immovable

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object ever since, despite all those calls for Armitage to be recalled from France. It is only in the last two or three months that he has once again pushed himself to the forefront of those conversations. He helped England Saxons to an 18-9 win over the Irish Wolfhounds, including Sean O'Brien, at the end of January in Cork.

Since then he has become a key forward as Gloucester finished unbeaten in the pool stage (six wins out of six) followed by wins over Connacht Rugby and Exeter Chiefs in the knockout stage.

This Challenge Cup run has been uplifting for all at Kingsholm. Kvesic acknowledges that the 2013/14 campaign had been a big disappointment.

A season of hope turned into one in which he tried too hard to succeed and became very frustrated.

Gloucester finished ninth in the Premiership and the lack of success brought about the departure of Davies as Director of Rugby.

A new coaching regime was quickly put together and it has taken time for the work of David Humphreys, the replacement for Davies, and Head Coach Laurie Fisher to take effect.

The first big improvement came in those European games where Kvesic has excelled, winning three Heineken Man of the Match awards and amassing statistics almost comparable to Armitage whose Toulon side

are going for a hat-trick of titles in tomorrow's Champions Cup showpiece. According to the stats Kvesic has earned 15 turnovers in his eight European games as against 19 by Armitage.

While the Gloucester player maybe shaded by his rival No 7 at the breakdown, his total of 97 tackles in Europe puts him ahead of any other player in either competition.

The turnover has become the key measuring stick of openside: and Kvesic is clearly benefiting from the influence of Fisher, the Australian who has helped perfect the breakdown work of David Pocock and Michael Hooper.

Fisher has been very public in his advice to Kvesic, telling him to become harder to shift when the

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flanker is locked over the ball at the breakdown.

"Look at Pocock, once he gets there he is hard to shift," Fisher has said in talking about how a flanker should build strength in the hips to ride the hits from opponents.

"There are plenty of guys prepared to put their head over the ball and compete, but they can't be in there to be bashed off by the opposition," Fisher has explained.

Kvesic believes he is developing better balance at the breakdown. "But I wouldn't say my decision-making has been bad, my technique has probably been better this year and I have more balance on my feet."

He hopes to become as good as Richie McCaw for his all-round play at openside. "Players like him have been doing it for years and years. It's a bit like chess he is thinking three, four or five phases ahead. I'm enjoying this season a lot more with the new regime coming in and almost a new squad, everything has changed."

However, if McCaw is Kvesic's modern-day hero there is no doubting that his maternal grandfather, Henry Kaczmarek, has also played a part in shaping the young man.

The story of how he arrived in Britain, following the horrors of the Second World War, is far more riveting than anything professional rugby can serve up.

Kaczmarek, whose journey to Britain took in a Siberian labour camp, ended up in Redruth where he became a miner and brought up a family of four children, including Julie, Kvesic's mother.

His tales have left a big impression on Kvesic who is very conscious that professional rugby is a "pretty good" career in comparison. That career could take another major step in the right direction later this evening.

**"I'm enjoying this season a lot more with the new regime coming in and almost a new squad, everything has changed."**







## EDINBURGH RUGBY

Probable Team

- 15 Greig Tonks / Full back
- 14 Dougie Fife / Wing
- 13 Sam Beard / Centre
- 12 Andries Strauss / Centre
- 11 Tim Visser / Wing
- 10 Phil Burleigh / Outside half
- 9 Sam Hidalgo-Clyne / Scrum half
- 1 Alasdair Dickinson / Prop
- 2 Ross Ford / Hooker
- 3 WP Nel / Prop
- 4 Anton Bresler / Second row
- 5 Ben Toolis / Second row
- 6 Mike Coman (c) / Flanker
- 7 Roddy Grant / Flanker
- 8 Cornell Du Preez / No. 8

- 16 Stuart McNally / Replacement
- 17 Rory Sutherland / Replacement
- 18 John Andress / Replacement
- 19 Fraser McKenzie / Replacement
- 20 Hamish Watson / Replacement
- 21 Nathan Fowles / Replacement
- 22 Tom Heathcote / Replacement
- 23 Tom Brown / Replacement

Friday 1st May 2015  
 Referee: Jerome Garcès (FRA)  
 Assistant Referee: Pascal Gauzere (FRA)  
 Touchline: Mathieu Raynal (FRA)

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## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Probable Team



- Full back / Charlie Sharples 15
- Wing / Jonny May 14
- Centre / Bill Meakes 13
- Centre / Billy Twelvetrees (c) 12
- Wing / Henry Purdy 11
- Outside half / James Hook 10
- Scrum half / Greig Laidlaw 9
- Prop / Nick Wood 1
- Hooker / Richard Hibbard 2
- Prop / John Afoa 3
- Second row / Tom Savage 4
- Second row / Tom Palmer 5
- Flanker / Ross Moriarty 6
- Flanker / Matt Kvesic 7
- No. 8 / Gareth Evans 8

- Replacement / Darren Dawidluk 16
- Replacement / Yann Thomas 17
- Replacement / Sila Puafisi 18
- Replacement / Mariano Galarza 19
- Replacement / Jacob Rowan 20
- Replacement / Dan Robson 21
- Replacement / Billy Burns 22
- Replacement / Steve McColl 23

For confirmation of today's teams and replacements,  
 visit [eporugby.com](http://eporugby.com) on your mobile.







## Gloucester Rugby

### Squad Biographies 2014 / 2015



**John  
Afoa**

Position: Tight Head Prop  
DOB: 16/10/83  
Height: 1.83m  
Weight: 126kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 7 Pts: 0



**Mark  
Atkinson**

Position: Centre  
DOB: 08/03/90  
Height: 1.95m  
Weight: 106kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 5 Pts: 10



**Billy  
Burns**

Position: Outside half  
DOB: 13/06/94  
Height: 1.80m  
Weight: 80kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 6 Pts: 12



**Rob  
Cook**

Position: Full back  
DOB: 07/07/84  
Height: 1.82m  
Weight: 88kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 2 Pts: 6



**Darren  
Dawidiuk**

Position: Hooker  
DOB: 21/09/87  
Height: 1.80m  
Weight: 106kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 5 Pts: 5



**Gareth  
Evans**

Position: Back row  
DOB: 19/09/91  
Height: 1.90m  
Weight: 110kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 5 Pts: 0



**Mariano  
Galarza**

Position: Lock  
DOB: 12/11/86  
Height: 2.02m  
Weight: 112kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 1 Pts: 0



**David  
Halaifonua**

Position: Wing  
DOB: 05/07/87  
Height: 1.88m  
Weight: 85kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 2 Pts: 0

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**Richard  
Hibbard**

**Position:** Hooker  
**DOB:** 13/12/83  
**Height:** 1.83m  
**Weight:** 111kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 6 **Pts:** 0



**James  
Hook**

**Position:** Outside half  
**DOB:** 27/06/85  
**Height:** 1.85m  
**Weight:** 97kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 8 **Pts:** 35



**James  
Hudson**

**Position:** Lock  
**DOB:** 28/10/81  
**Height:** 2.01m  
**Weight:** 113kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 5 **Pts:** 0



**Sione  
Kalamafoni**

**Position:** Back row  
**DOB:** 18/05/88  
**Height:** 1.96m  
**Weight:** 112kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 7 **Pts:** 0



**Shaun  
Knight**

**Position:** Tight Head Prop  
**DOB:** 19/02/90  
**Height:** 1.82m  
**Weight:** 112kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 3 **Pts:** 0



**Matt  
Kvesic**

**Position:** Back row  
**DOB:** 14/04/92  
**Height:** 1.91m  
**Weight:** 104kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 8 **Pts:** 20



**Greig  
Laidlaw**

**Position:** Scrum half  
**DOB:** 12/10/85  
**Height:** 1.74m  
**Weight:** 78kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 6 **Pts:** 67



**Brendan  
Macken**

**Position:** Centre  
**DOB:** 19/05/91  
**Height:** 1.87m  
**Weight:** 92kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 2 **Pts:** 0







## Gloucester Rugby

### Squad Biographies 2014 / 2015



**Jonny May**

Position: Centre/Wing  
DOB: 01/04/90  
Height: 1.82m  
Weight: 92kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 6 Pts: 10



**Stevie McColl**

Position: Full back  
DOB: 16/08/88  
Height: 1.85m  
Weight: 98kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 4 Pts: 10



**Bill Meakes**

Position: Centre  
DOB: 23/02/91  
Height: 1.87m  
Weight: 100kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 6 Pts: 10



**Ben Morgan**

Position: No 8  
DOB: 18/02/89  
Height: 1.93m  
Weight: 117kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 3 Pts: 5



**Ross Moriarty**

Position: Flanker  
DOB: 18/04/94  
Height: 1.88m  
Weight: 103kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 8 Pts: 0



**Dan Murphy**

Position: Loose Head Prop  
DOB: 27/10/85  
Height: 1.90m  
Weight: 115kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 4 Pts: 0



**Tom Palmer**

Position: Lock  
DOB: 27/03/79  
Height: 1.99m  
Weight: 113kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 3 Pts: 0



**Sila Puafisi**

Position: Tight Head Prop  
DOB: 15/04/88  
Height: 1.85m  
Weight: 122kg

ERCC Record 2014-15  
Played: 4 Pts: 0

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**Henry  
Purdy**

**Position:** Centre/Wing  
**DOB:** 21/05/94  
**Height:** 1.85m  
**Weight:** 93kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 5 **Pts:** 5



**Dan  
Robson**

**Position:** Scrum half  
**DOB:** 14/03/92  
**Height:** 1.71m  
**Weight:** 77kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 4 **Pts:** 15



**Tom  
Savage**

**Position:** Lock  
**DOB:** 18/04/89  
**Height:** 1.95m  
**Weight:** 115kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 8 **Pts:** 5



**Charlie  
Sharples**

**Position:** Wing  
**DOB:** 17/08/89  
**Height:** 1.83m  
**Weight:** 93kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 6 **Pts:** 25



**Elliot  
Stooke**

**Position:** Lock  
**DOB:** 10/09/93  
**Height:** 1.99m  
**Weight:** 114kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 7 **Pts:** 0



**Yann  
Thomas**

**Position:** Tight Head Prop  
**DOB:** 16/04/90  
**Height:** 1.91m  
**Weight:** 120kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 5 **Pts:** 0



**Billy  
Twelvetrees**

**Position:** Centre  
**DOB:** 15/11/88  
**Height:** 1.90m  
**Weight:** 100kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 8 **Pts:** 0



**Nick  
Wood**

**Position:** Loose Head Prop  
**DOB:** 09/01/83  
**Height:** 1.86m  
**Weight:** 109kg

*ERCC Record 2014-15*  
**Played:** 5 **Pts:** 0





# Gloucester Rugby Path to the Final



## Pool 5 Round 1

16/10/2014  
Kingsholm  
9,793

Referee  
Ian Davies (Wales)

## Gloucester Rugby 55 (10)

T: C Sharples 3, J Hook, D Dawiduiik,  
D: Robson, Pen Try  
C: G Laidlaw 3, R Cook 3, J Hook  
P: G Laidlaw 2

## Brive 0 (0)



**Gloucester Rugby:** R Cook; C Sharples, B Meakes, B Twelvetrees (cap, M Atkinson 53), J May; J Hook (B Burns 62), G Laidlaw (D Robson 50); Y Thomas, R Hibbard (D Dawiduiik 53), J Afoa (S Puafisi 53), T Savage (E Stooke 59), J Hudson, S Kalafamoni (R Moriarty 66), M Kvesic, B Morgan (N Wood 52-62)  
YC: Y Thomas 52

**Brive:** A Mafi (H Veyssiere 62); M Bakaniceva (A Neisen 66), B Delage, T Sanchou, G Namy; R Swanepoel (D Neveu 47), N Bezy; K Asieshvili (D Lavergne 46), L Acosta (T Acquier 69), D Jourdain (Y Tuncer 62), P Marais, R Boukerou (V Lebas 46), H Briatte, P Luafutu (cap, Y Tuncer 52-62), K Murphy (F Sanconnie 50)  
YC: D Jourdain 52

### Match Points

Gloucester Rugby 5, Brive 0  
Heineken Man of the Match  
Charlie Sharples (Gloucester Rugby)

## Round 2

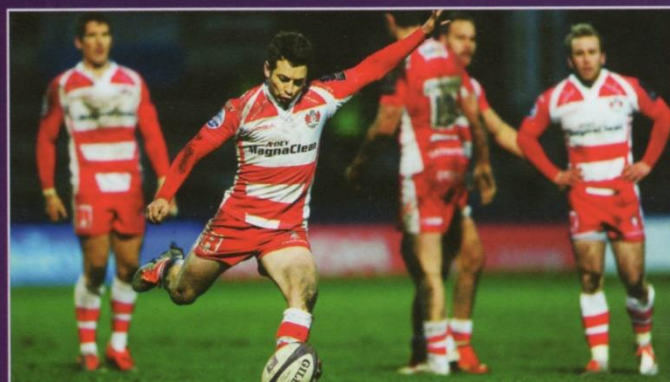
25/10/2014  
Stade Charles  
Mathon, 6,500  
Referee  
Giuseppe Vivarini  
(Italy)

## Oyonnax 15 (9)

P: R Lespinas, A Smit 4

## Gloucester Rugby 25 (9)

T: M Kvesic  
C: G Laidlaw  
P: G Laidlaw 6



**Oyonnax:** A Smit; S Tian, P Aguilhon, R Hansell Pune (cap, H Paea 67), A Luatua; R Lespinas (D Codjo 50), F Cibray (Y Domenech 74); S Tonga'uiha (A Tichit 53), J Jenneker (C Jullien 74), M Clerc (A Guillamon 53), M Nemecek (L Power 61), V Ursache, G Bernad (P Sobela 67), C Andre (S Tonga'uiha 79), P Wannenbourg  
YC: A Tichit 70

**Gloucester Rugby:** R Cook (B Burns 50-57, 74); C Sharples, H Purdy (B Meakes 59), B Twelvetrees (cap), J May; J Hook, G Laidlaw; N Wood, R Hibbard (D Dawiduiik 59), J Afoa, T Savage, J Hudson (E Stooke 59), S Kalafamoni, M Kvesic, B Morgan (R Moriarty 69)

### Match Points

Oyonnax 0, Gloucester Rugby 4  
Heineken Man of the Match  
Matt Kvesic (Gloucester Rugby)

FINAL LONDON 2015



**Round 3**

17/10/2014

Kingsholm

10,005

Referee

Neil Hennessy

(Wales)

**Gloucester Rugby 35 (21)**

T: J Hook, M Kvesic, M Atkinson, S McColl

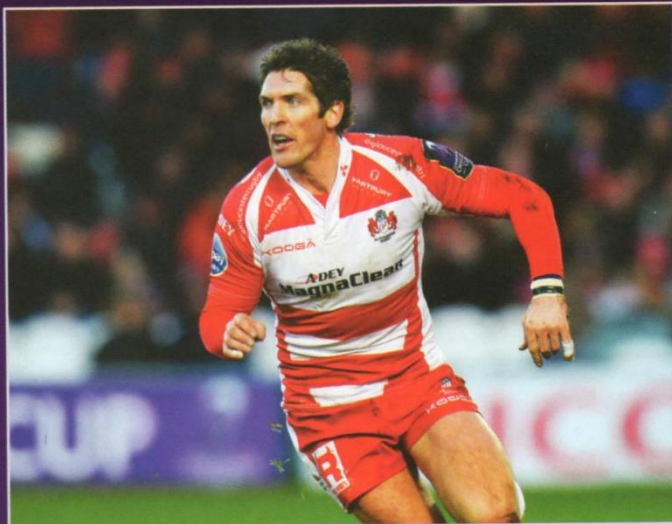
C: B Burns 2, G Laidlaw

P: G Laidlaw 3

**Zebre 10 (5)**

T: H Daniller, M Visentin

**Gloucester Rugby:** S McColl; C Sharples, H Purdy, B Twelvetrees, S Monahan (M Atkinson 59); J Hook (B Burns 65), G Laidlaw (cap, C Braley 47); Y Thomas, A Lutui (D Dawiduk 52), J Afoa (S Puafisi 41), T Savage (E Stooke 62), T Palmer, S Kalafamoni (R Moriarty 47), M Kvesic, G Evans



**Zebre:** H Daniller; G Venditti (D Odiete 53), M Bergamasco, M Praticetti, M Visentin; L Orquera (K Haimona 65), G Palazzani (B Leonard 65); A Lovotti (A de Marchi 57), A Manici (O Fabiani 56), D Chistolini (L Romano 56), G Biagi, M Bortolami (cap, V Bernabo 57), J Sarto (S Vunisa 52), F Cristiano, D van Schalkwyk

## Match Points

Gloucester Rugby 5, Zebre 0

Heineken Man of the Match

Matt Kvesic (Gloucester Rugby)

**Round 4**

13/12/2014

Stade XXV Aprile

3,050

Referee

Neil Paterson

(Scotland)

**Zebre 16 (6)**

T: D van Schalkwyk, G Venditti

P: L Orquera 2

**Gloucester Rugby 32 (10)**

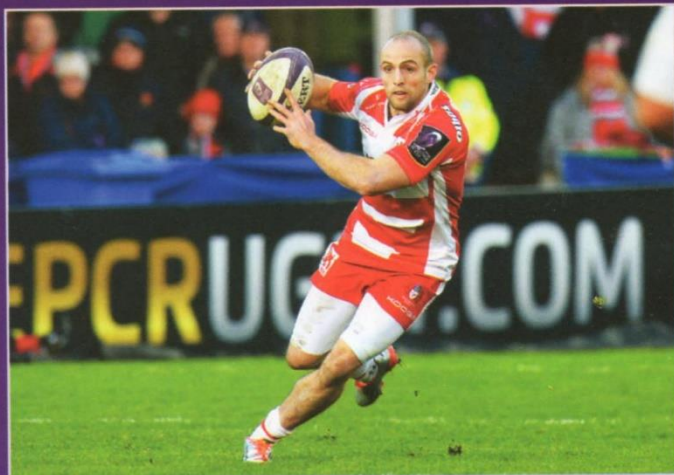
T: C Sharples, B Morgan, S McColl, H Purdy

C: J Hook 3

P: J Hook, B Burns

**Zebre:** H Daniller; G Venditti, M Bergamasco, M Praticetti, M Visentin (D Odiete 36); L Orquera (K Haimona 51), G Palazzani (B Leonard 49); A Lovotti (A de Marchi 68), A Manici (O Fabiani 65), D Chistolini (L Leibson 65), G Biagi, M Bortolami (cap, Q Geldenhuys 13-20, 49), V Bernabo (J Sarto 47), F Cristiano, D van Schalkwyk  
RC: D Odiete 39

**Gloucester Rugby:** S McColl (M Atkinson 73); C Sharples, H Purdy, B Twelvetrees (cap), J May; J Hook (B Burns 59), C Braley (D Robson 49); Y Thomas (N Wood 65), R Hibbard (A Lutui 59), S Puafisi (S Knight 67), T Savage (E Stooke 59), J Hudson, G Evans (S Knight 42-47, R Moriarty 64), M Kvesic, B Morgan (R Hibbard 67-76)  
YC: S Puafisi 37, A Lutui 66



## Match Points

Zebre 0, Gloucester Rugby 5

Heineken Man of the Match

James Hook (Gloucester Rugby)





# Gloucester Rugby Path to the Final



## Round 5

17/01/2015

Kingsholm

9,381

Referee

Andrew McMenemy  
(Scotland)

## Gloucester Rugby 33 (26)

T: J May, D Robson, B Burns, M Atkinson, Pen Try  
C: G Laidlaw 4

## Oyonnax 3 (3)

P: R Lospinas

**Gloucester Rugby:** J Hook; D Halaifonua  
(R Moriarty 71), M Atkinson, B Twelvetrees  
(cap, B Meakes 51), J May (S McColl 41);  
B Burns, G Laidlaw; Y Thomas (D Murphy  
59), R Hibbard, J Afoa (S Knight 59),  
T Savage, J Hudson, S Kalafamoni (E Stooke  
62), M Kvesic, G Evans (R Moriarty 24-27)



**Oyonnax:** A Smit (F Denos 59); D Codjo,  
G Bousses, H Paea (R Hansell Pune 59),  
J Coux; R Lospinas, F Cibray (cap, G Fabbri  
69); L Rapant (A Tichit 51), P Ngauamo  
(C Jullien 51), A Guillamon (M Clerc 51),  
T Lassale, D Lagrange (Y Domenech 69),  
G Bernad (M Clerc 43-51, P Sobela 60),  
V Ursache, P Wannenburg  
YC: A Guillamon 39

### Match Points

Gloucester Rugby 5, Oyonnax 0

Heineken Man of the Match

Billy Burns (Gloucester Rugby)

## Round 6

22/01/2015

Stade Amedee-

Domenech, 1,900

Referee

Dudley Phillips  
(Ireland)

## Brive 20 (6)

T: T Acquier, Pen Try  
C: N Bezy, R Swanepoel  
P: R Swanepoel 2

## Gloucester Rugby 31 (17)

T: M Kvesic 2, D Robson, Pen Try  
C: J Hook 4  
P: J Hook

**Brive:** R Sola; V Voretamaya, S Galala,  
R Swanepoel (A Mailei 74), G Namy  
(B Delage 65); N Bezy, D Neveu  
(H Veyssiere 63); J Coetzee (K Asieshvili 40),  
L Acosta (T Acquier 63), P Barnard  
(A Peikrishvili 47), V Lebas (J Coetzee 78),  
R Boukerou (S Pinet 41), T Uanivi  
(F Sanconnie 41), S Hireche (cap, J Coetzee  
45-54), F Laurent (A Peikrishvili 37-47)  
YC: P Barnard 37, K Asieshvili 44



**Gloucester Rugby:** J Hook; D Halaifonua  
(S Monahan 51, C Braley 63), M Atkinson,  
B Twelvetrees (cap, B Meakes 56), H Purdy;  
B Burns, D Robson; Y Thomas (D Murphy  
54), D Dawiduk (A Lutui 63), J Afoa  
(S Knight 41), E Stooke, T Palmer (J Hudson  
52), T Savage, M Kvesic, S Kalafamoni  
(R Moriarty 63)  
YC: D Halaifonua 41, J Hook 57

### Match Points

Brive 0, Gloucester Rugby 4

Heineken Man of the Match

Tom Savage (Gloucester Rugby)

# FINAL LONDON 2015



**Quarter Final Gloucester Rugby 14 (14)**

03/04/2015

Kingsholm

13,236

Referee

Mathieu Raynal

(France)

T: C Sharples, B Meakes

C: G Laidlaw 2

**Connacht Rugby 7 (0)**

T: Pen Try

C: J Carty

**Gloucester Rugby:** S McColli; C Sharples, B Meakes, B Twelvetrees (cap), J May; J Hook, G Laidlaw; D Murphy (N Wood 48), R Hibbard, J Afoa (S Puafisi 41-48), T Savage, T Palmer, S Kalafamoni, M Kvesic, G Evans (R Moriarty 73)



**Connacht Rugby:** M Muliaina (D Leader 34); T O'Halloran, D Poolman (C Ronaldson 52), R Henshaw, M Healy (I Porter 63); J Carty, K Marmion; D Buckley, T McCartney, R Ah You, Q Roux, A Muldowney (G Naoupu 3-12), A Browne (G Naoupu 43), E Masterson (J Connolly 73), J Muldoon (cap)

Heineken Man of the Match  
Matt Kvesic (Gloucester Rugby)

**Semi Final Gloucester Rugby 30 (13)**

18/04/2015

Kingsholm

11,907

Referee

John Lacey (Ireland)

T: B Meakes, T Savage, J May

C: G Laidlaw 3

P: G Laidlaw 2, J Hook

**Exeter Chiefs 19 (6)**

T: E Tajone

C: G Steenson

P: H Slade 4

**Gloucester Rugby:** C Sharples; J May, B Meakes, B Twelvetrees (caain), H Purdy; J Hook, G Laidlaw; N Wood (D Murphy 60), R Hibbard (D Dawiduk 76), J Afoa, T Savage, M Galarza (E Stooke 78), S Kalafamoni, M Kvesic, G Evans (R Moriarty 9)



**Exeter Chiefs:** P Dollman (T James 39); I Whitten, J Nowell (T James 36-38), S Hill, M Jess; H Slade, W Chudley; B Moon (C Rimmer 66), J Yeandle (E Tajone 71), T Francis (A Brown 60), D Mumm (caain), M Lees, D Ewers, K Horstmann (T Johnson 71), T Waldrom (S Skinner 78)

Heineken Man of the Match  
Tom Savage (Gloucester Rugby)

