**today’s visitors**

**gloucester**

Today’s Loftus Road match up gives the Cherry & Whites a first opportunity to overcome one of their biggest psychological hurdles.

Despite an enviable record at home where the highly partisan and enthusiastic home following almost give them a 10 point start, Gloucester have yet to find the magic formula to repeat such successes away from home. Season 1998/99 was no exception with Newcastle, Saracens and Northampton all summarily dismissed by a combined points total of 122 at Kingsholm. Yet following a highly promising defeat of Richmond at the Madjeski Stadium, Gloucester proceeded to lose their remaining 12 road games, consigning them to lower mid-table despite a respectable campaign in front of their own fans.

Nevertheless a feeling of optimism pervades the club with new coach Philippe Saint-Andre seen as the perfect figure to inject some travelling heart. They may also have lost Mark Mapleton to Saracens, yet Simon Mannix has proved himself a fly half of equal measure. The arrival of Junior Paramore from Bedford completes a formidable looking back row and with devoted owner Tom Walkinshaw talking up a proposed increase in Kingsholm’s capacity to 20,000, there is every reason for the Gloucester faithful to look favourably on their club’s prospects. An opening day defeat of former champions Newcastle at Kingsholm has got them off to the perfect start although no-one will be taking anything for granted until the league’s most notoriously travel-sick side start stealing the points from unsuspecting hosts. That test starts today.

**head to head**

**london wasps vs gloucester**

Their last 10 league meetings

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<th>Venue</th>
<th>London Wasps</th>
<th>Gloucester</th>
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<td>Loftus Road</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/10/98</td>
<td>Kingsholm</td>
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<td>11/3/97</td>
<td>Kingsholm</td>
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<td>11/1/97</td>
<td>Loftus Road</td>
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<td>7/1/95</td>
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<td>10/9/94</td>
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two players to watch

Simon Mannix

When Simon Mannix broke the club record for most points in a match, during the thrilling 43-31 defeat of league runners-up Northampton, his value to Gloucester became abundantly clear to anyone who wasn’t already aware.

Philippe Saint-Andre regards this man as his number one fly half and it is difficult to find an argument against him.

After a difficult spell with Sale, Mannix scored 98 points in his first season at Kingsholm — including the record breaking 28 in one go — and having completed a three year residency in this country, this New Zealand born half back has his eyes on an England spot.

An outstanding playmaker for Gloucester and if he can continue the bullish form of last season, his wish could soon be fulfilled.

Steve Ojomoh

This is Steve Ojomoh’s second coming and after a superb two seasons at Kingsholm he must have been almighty close to persuading Clive Woodward of his restored powers. A former schoolboy decathlete, he spent seven rampaging years with Bath and won many plaudits for his England displays including a sparkling tour of South Africa in 1994.

Having fallen away somewhat, his career was rejuvenated with the short move to Gloucester where he proved his continued worth courtesy of two highly impressive seasons.

Five more tries and continued defensive excellence have returned Steve Ojomoh to the forefront of Premiership rugby and he will be a player to keep an eye on this afternoon.
An exciting counter attacking full back with eight England 'A' caps to his name. After six appearances for Exeter he joined Gloucester in 1996 and has since scored 12 tries. He previously toured Australia with the 1997 England Under 21 side.

A Bristol born centre with a full range of England international appearances at Under 18's, Under 21's and 'A' levels. He began his top flight career with Bath before a spell with Bedford and finally joined Gloucester this year. He made his debut against Newcastle as a right back.

Battling with Ian Sanders for the regular gig at scrum half, Moncrieff made his first appearance for the Cherry & Whites as a right back, starting against the Newcastle Falcons. He has previous experience with New South Wales and Wellington Crusaders.

Pacey army captain with four England 'A' and one Barbarians appearance to his name. Having previously played his rugby with Newbury, he moved to the south west and Kingsholm in 1997 after three seasons in Berkshire.

Rather than playing for Otautau, this powerful Anglo-Kiwi was actually born there before beginning his rugby career in England with Old Aldwinians. He represented England in the 1995 Hong Kong Sevens, whilst enjoying a five year spell with Sale from whom he joined Gloucester.

A former Australia centre whose ability contributed much to Gloucester's best recent performances. A member of the Aussie World Cup winning squad of 1991, he joined Gloucester in 1997 having previously played for New South Wales.

A vastly experienced prop now entering his ninth season at Gloucester, with 95 league appearances and five tries to his name. Formerly with Longlevens, he is a powerful and perhaps underrated part of the Gloucester front row armoury.
Highly promising front row man with a number of England A caps to his name. Also picked for the short full international tour of Australia and despite not playing is tipped as a future international. Now in his fourth season with Gloucester.

Gloucester born number two row in his fourth season at Kingsholm. Has admirably filled the boots of Phil Greening and established himself in the Cherry & Whites first team. Formerly with Gordon League before joining Gloucester in 1996.

Also comfortable in the second row, this promising young utility back emerged strongly towards the end of last season making five appearances and scoring one try. He is actually Gloucester born and was previously with Coney Hill.

Another former Longlevens player who came to prominence playing for the South West in the 1995 CIS Divisional Championships. A former club captain now in his eight season with Gloucester. Has made over 70 appearances for the Kingsholm club.

Now in his second season with Gloucester, this former Ebbw Vale flanker has returned from an achilles injury which reduced him to only three appearances last season and is back to full fitness. Now has 10 full Wales caps to his name.
**Today's Teams**

**London Wasps** vs **Gloucester**

**London Wasps**
- 15 Jonny Uttson (Full Back)
- 14 Paul Sampson (Wing)
- 13 Fraser Waters (Centre)
- 12 Rob Henderson (Centre)
- 11 Shane Roiser (Wing)
- 10 Josh Lewsey (Fly Half)
- 9 Alex King (Scrum Half)
- 1 Martyn Wood (Prop)
- 2 Andy Le Chevalier (Hooker)
- 3 Dugald Macer (Prop)
- 4 Will Green (Lock)
- 5 Mark Weedon (C) (Lock)
- 6 Eben Rollitt (Flanker)
- 7 Paul Volley (Flanker)
- 8 Peter Scriver (No. 8)

**Gloucester**
- 15 Richard Tombs (Full Back)
- 14 Brian Johnson (Wing)
- 13 Joe Ewens (Centre)
- 12 Chris Yates (Centre)
- 11 Tom Beirn (Wing)
- 10 Simon Mannix (Fly Half)
- 9 Elton Moncrieff (Scrum Half)
- 1 Trevor Woodman (Prop)
- 2 Chris Fortey (Hooker)
- 3 Andy Deacon (Prop)
- 4 Rob Fidler (Lock)
- 5 Richard Ward (Lock)
- 6 Adam Eustace (Flanker)
- 7 Kingsley Jones (Flanker)
- 8 Steve Ojomoh (No. 8)

**Replacements**
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced
- To be announced

**Referee:** Chris Rees

**Touch Judges:**
- Steve Savage
- John Burtenshaw

**London Wasps Official Kit Suppliers:**
- Canterbury of New Zealand