



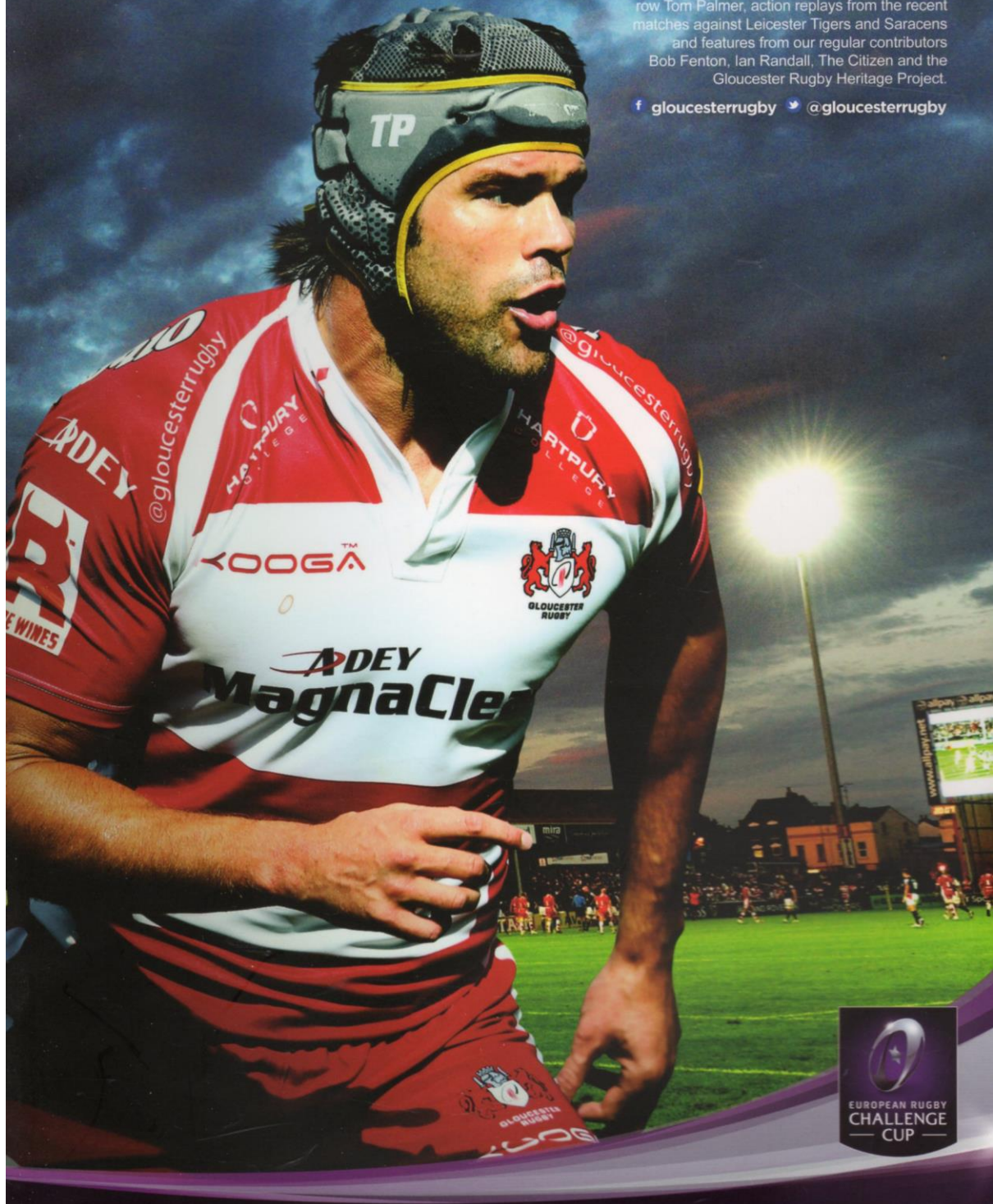
# GLOUCESTER RUGBY

vs CA Brive

European Rugby Challenge Cup Round 01: 16.10.2014

Inside today's matchday programme we have an exclusive interview with our talismanic second row Tom Palmer, action replays from the recent matches against Leicester Tigers and Saracens and features from our regular contributors Bob Fenton, Ian Randall, The Citizen and the Gloucester Rugby Heritage Project.

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# CAPTAIN'S CORNER BILLY TWELVETREES

GOOD EVENING AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM FOR THE OPENING GAME IN THE EUROPEAN RUGBY CHALLENGE CUP.



**W**e face a real challenge tonight, and it's a challenge that the whole squad is relishing. It's Kingsholm under the lights, with a strong French side in town and we cannot wait.

If I'm honest, it's been an ideal quick turnaround from Saturday's game at Saracens, as we felt we left something

out there, and tonight gives us an instant chance to put things right and in front of our own support.

Saturday's game was a really tough one as it brought to an end the first section of the Aviva Premiership games, and there were a lot of good things to take from our performance against one of the strongest sides in Europe.

Games are turned on small margins at this level now, and we can't dwell on our small mistakes and we now have to put huge focus on what we can do this evening and away in Oyonnax next week.

It's an honour to be kicking off the new era of European Rugby this evening, the first game of the competition. All eyes will be on Kingsholm and it's important that we rise to this challenge against a Brive side full of talent.

As a squad, we are fully focused on the next four weeks and the individual challenges posed by all four of our opponents. The form we can build up going forward will stand us in good stead when we return to Premiership duty against Harlequins next month.

As skipper, I have hugely enjoyed the opening six games. There have been highs and lows already, but the progress shown by the squad has been pleasing to see against some strong opposition.

But that is only the start of the hard work, we all have plenty to work on and strive to constantly improve, and that continues this evening.

We hope you enjoy tonight's game,

*Billy*

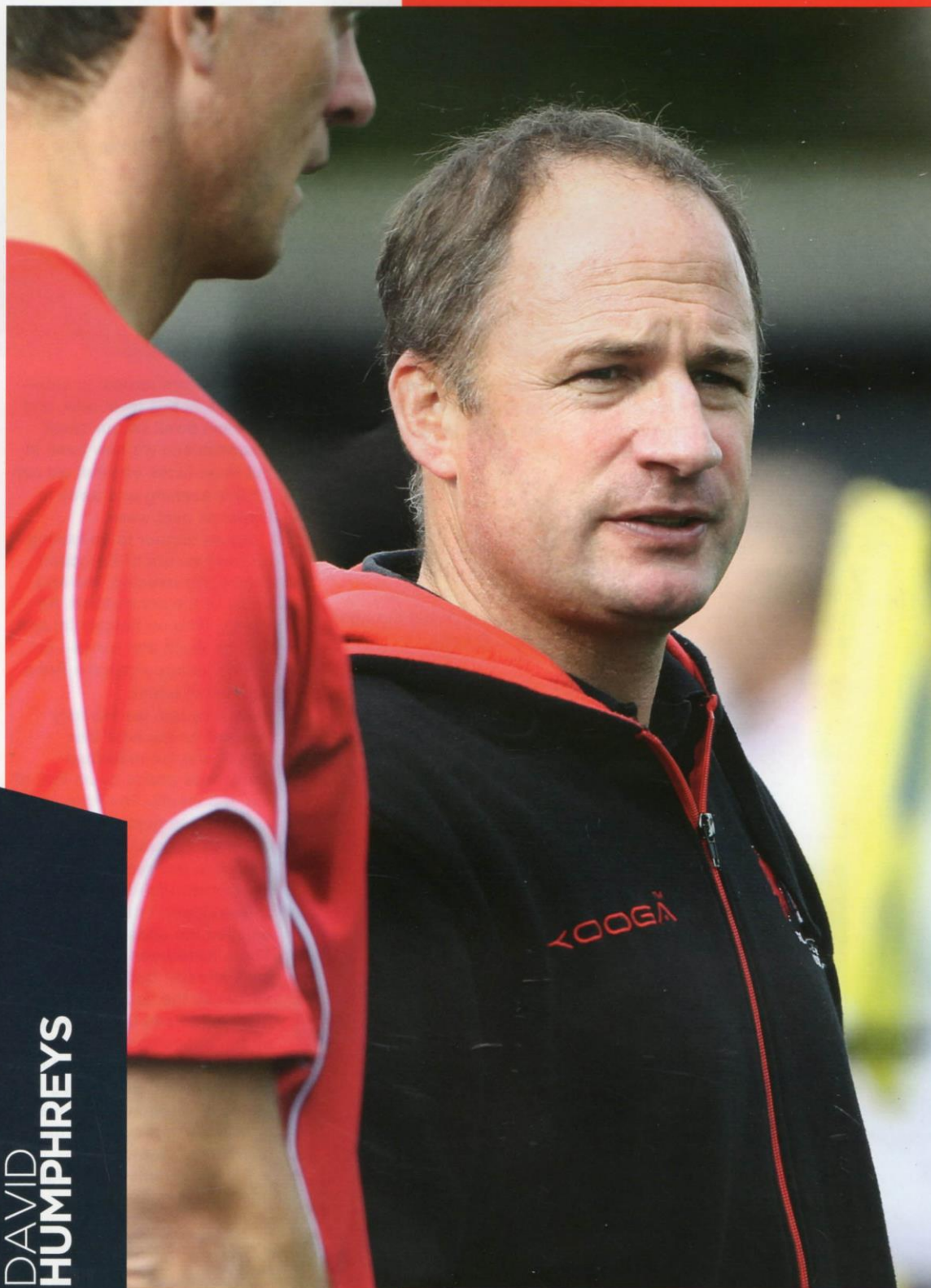
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IF I'M HONEST, IT'S BEEN AN IDEAL QUICK TURNAROUND FROM SATURDAY'S GAME AT SARACENS, AS WE FELT WE LEFT SOMETHING OUT THERE, AND TONIGHT GIVES US AN INSTANT CHANCE TO PUT THINGS RIGHT AND IN FRONT OF OUR OWN SUPPORT.



DIR. OF  
RUGBY

DAVID  
HUMPHREYS



DAVID  
HUMPHREYS

5



GOOD EVENING AND WELCOME TO KINGS HOLM FOR OUR OPENING EUROPEAN RUGBY CHALLENGE FIXTURE. AND, OF COURSE, A WARM WELCOME TO EVERYONE WHO HAS MADE THE TRIP OVER FROM BRIVE.

**T**o be talking about the first European game makes me realise just how quickly the first phase of the season has flown by. The games have come thick and fast – preseason and the Sevens tournaments seem like yesterday!

On the other hand, we've covered a lot of ground in the first weeks of the Aviva Premiership season. Before we went to Northampton, I asked people to judge us after six weeks as we were all aware that it would take time for this group to come together both on and off the pitch.

And, hopefully, after last Saturday's game at Saracens, everyone will be able to see that we are making progress and heading in the right direction even if we're far from being the finished article.

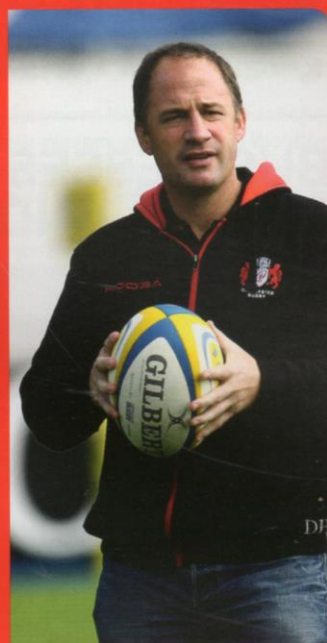
Indeed, for us to be talking about being slightly disappointed having only taken a losing

bonus point away from Saracens shows how far we've come in a relatively short space of time. We made a very positive start to the game and got ourselves in a very good position in that first quarter by getting points every time we got into the Saracens half.

However, to beat the top teams in the Premiership we can't make the mistakes or concede the number of turnovers that then happened. We have placed a huge emphasis on our discipline this season but on Saturday, our penalty count was too high and allowed Saracens to control field position.

For all that, I thought last weekend was an outstanding defensive performance and we showed huge commitment to prevent Saracens scoring a bonus point try in the last few minutes. We were all delighted that we kept going though, and to get a losing bonus point right at the death was the least we deserved I thought.

” I THOUGHT LAST WEEKEND WAS AN OUTSTANDING DEFENSIVE PERFORMANCE AND WE SHOWED HUGE COMMITMENT TO PREVENT SARACENS SCORING A BONUS POINT TRY IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES.



The crucial thing for us now is to carry on working hard and to continue improving. This evening's game may be a different competition but our goals remain the same – to deliver as complete a performance as possible and win the game.

It will certainly be a different sort of test for our players. There is always a slight element of the unknown when taking on the French sides in the early stages of the competition.

Brive have had a mixed start to their Top 14 campaign, but I watched their game against Grenoble on Friday evening and they played some very good rugby in almost turning around what looked to be a very grim situation at half time.

That shows what they're capable of. However, as much as we respect them, we've been focusing mainly on ourselves in our build up and hopefully we can put in a solid 80 minute performance under the lights at Kingsholm this evening.





# THE VIEW FROM The Citizen



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CODE FOR  
MORE NEWS  
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**PUPILS'  
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suspected  
illegal immigrant  
dashes from their  
coach

**JAMES  
NORWOOD  
SEALS WIN**  
for Forest Green

**REVEALED:**  
The 50 Greatest  
Employers in  
Gloucestershire

**POLICE  
SEEKING**  
missing  
Elizabeth  
Hayward

## PRE-SEASON PREDICTION RIGHT ON THE MONEY

From day one at Kingsholm, David Humphreys has remained consistent in his message.

"Judge us after the first block of Premiership matches. After the first six matches we will have a much clearer picture of where we are."

We are now at that point and there is plenty of cause for optimism.

Following six Premiership matches, Gloucester enter this period of cup competition, sitting sixth in the league having won three and lost three.

What a contrasting position the Cherry and Whites are now, six weeks on from an embarrassing 53-6 defeat to reigning champions Northampton Saints on the opening day of the season.

They could not have been more ruthlessly exposed on that bleak Friday night at Franklin's Gardens.

We saw a rudderless side blown away by a well-oiled machine. Gloucester stood up well for 20 or so minutes but when the pressure came on they imploded.

Northampton knew exactly what they were doing, what each player would do and everything they touched came off. Gloucester were the opposite.

Humphreys admitted on Saturday that the defeat served as a wake-up call for the entire



The opening night defeat at Northampton seems a long time ago

set-up. Indeed they had work to do and a lot of it.

But gradually, week on week we have seen a steady improvement. It has not always been enough to triumph and the performances have not entirely been consistent.

But each week there have been added elements, a tightening of defence, a sharpening of attack and a growing familiarity among the glut of new players.

Facing Saracens at Allianz Park is undeniably just as big a

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“THAT IS HARD, DIRECT RUGBY WITH NO THRILLS. A BIG DRIVING MAUL, SCRUM AND LINEOUT. THEY HAVE A COUPLE OF FIJIANs AND A TONGAN IN MIDFIELD AND THEY WILL RELY ON THEM FOR FLAIR.

Terry Fanolua



challenge as the Saints on their home patch and Gloucester's six weeks on were worlds apart.

They were tenacious, hard-working, committed and clear in their goal. Yes, too many mistakes were made and Saracens' power eventually told but for large periods Gloucester matched a true heavyweight of European rugby.

They could and probably should have won.

So now as a new era of European rugby dawns with this Challenge Cup tie, Gloucester's shoots of recovery are clear to see.

The same, to an extent, can be said of today's opponents Brive, who in 1997 were crowned Heineken Cup champions but soon tumbled into Pro D2.

They secured a return to the Top 14 last season and made a good fist of it, finishing a

respectable ninth, but are just one place off the bottom – next week's opponents Oyonnax hold that honour.

Terry Fanolua knows all about both clubs having left Gloucester for the former heavyweights in 2006.

A lot of things have changed since he left Stade Amedee-Domenech and he believes the appointment of two of their 1997 heroes Didier Casadei and Philippe Carbonneau, under head coach Nicolas Godignon, will be instrumental.

But make no mistake. This is a game Gloucester must win and with a bonus-point to boot.

“The coaches from that Heineken Cup winning team are trying to instill that culture and attitude to the current squad.

“That is hard, direct rugby with no thrills. A big driving maul,

scrum and lineout. They have a couple of Fijians and a Tongan in midfield and they will rely on them for flair.

“But when I was there they prided themselves on that big set-piece. But with French teams, and ones in their position, the Top 14 is their priority.

“Unfortunately we are not in the top tier of Europe so they will probably not send their best team.

“It should definitely be a bonus-point win. With the quality of player Gloucester have, they should comfortably win.

“My only concern is the weather we have had this week, which will make things difficult for Gloucester, especially with Brive having that strong forward unit.

“Whichever pack can get the upper hand and dominate will win.”

Citizen AVAILABLE DAILY



GLOUCESTER RUGBY  
HERITAGE

www.gloucester rugby heritage.org.uk

# FROM BLOOD AND GOLDS TO RORKE'S DRIFT

GLOUCESTER AND THE PROFESSIONAL GAME 100 YEARS AGO

## BILLY HALL AND THE BLOOD AND GOLDS

On Christmas Day 1913 a match took place between a Gloucester XV captained by William "Billy" Hall, one of the seven Hall brothers who played for Gloucester, and A S Perpignan the "Blood and Golds" at the Stade de la Route de Thuir.

The match, which was attended by the mayor and local dignitaries, attracted a crowd of 3,000 – a huge gate for a rugby match in France at the time. A second match was played on the following Sunday, December 29.

The Perpignan player-coach and captain was Rowland

for France later that season and Fernand Buscail of SCUF, the French Championship runners-up. They were said to be instrumental in bringing the Gloucester side to Perpignan. The matches were promoted by the Perpignan vice president Jean Laffon.

Local press coverage was lavish and implied that the tour was an official tour backed by the Gloucester club.

However, all was not as it seemed. The three Gloucester players named in the French press – half back and captain Billy Hall, back row forward George Griffiths and three-quarter James Hamblin – had all played their last game for Gloucester, although still in their twenties, and Billy Hall himself was on his way to a distinguished Rugby League career with Oldham.

Frequent references to the sacrifices made by the Perpignan club in order to obtain the services of the Gloucester XV suggest that the team were well rewarded. No mention of either match has been discovered in the Gloucester club records or the Gloucester press.

Gloucester, or "The Blues" as they were described in the Perpignan local paper, won much praise for their entertaining and attacking rugby. Billy Hall himself was the subject of adulation and responded in an interview by making many generous comments about the local players and the hospitality he had received.

For the record the Gloucester

XV won both games – the Christmas Day game by 10 points to 6 and the Sunday game by 16 points to 0.

A S Perpignan went on to win the 1913-14 French Championship, beating Tarbes in the final in May. Renamed USA Perpignan later that year, they were in Gloucester's Heineken Cup group last season and still wear the "blood and gold" colours.

The match promoter Jean Laffon fought and died in the 1914-18 war and the Stade de la Route de Thuir, where the matches were played, was



Billy Hall

"Digger" Griffiths, an ex-Newport player and British Lion, who had played for Racing Club de France in the 1912 French Championship Final. Guesting for Perpignan were Raphael Lavaud of Carcassonne who played twice



renamed the Stade Jean Laffon in his honour. The stadium has been a Rugby League venue since 1940 and hosted a tie in the 2000 Rugby League World Cup. It is also the home of Perpignan Association Football Club.

## THE BATTLE OF RORKE'S DRIFT

Six months after the match

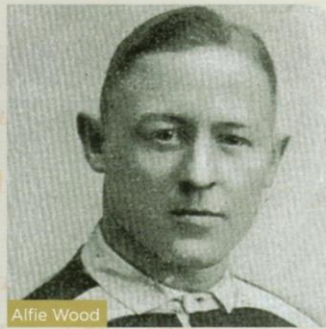




in Perpignan, Billy Hall found himself playing in one of the greatest Test Matches in the history of Rugby League.

In June and July 1914, on the eve of the 1914-18 war, a Great Britain Rugby League side (touring as the Northern Union) played a three match Test Series against Australia. With the series drawn at one test apiece, the third and deciding Test was played on July 4 at Sydney Cricket Ground.

The Test Match featured three former Gloucester players - outside half Billy Hall, (139 games 1908-13), described by the French



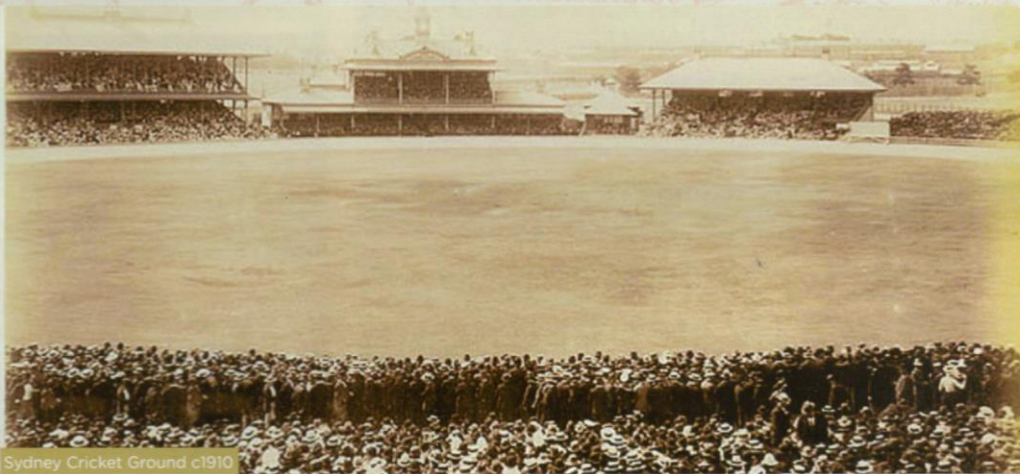
Alfie Wood

an established figure in Rugby League for five years.

England Rugby Union international forward Dave Holland had left Gloucester at the end of

been scheduled for August in Melbourne, to be played after the New Zealand leg of the tour, but the New South Wales Rugby Football League unilaterally rescheduled the match for Sydney on July 4 to maximise their profits. The British team protested that it would be their third match in seven days and that several of their players were injured but the tourists were instructed by the Northern Union to play the match.

Great Britain were a man down through injury from the first



Sydney Cricket Ground c1910

press as a "bewildering acrobat", full back Alfie Wood (48 games 1905-08) described by Bill Bailey of the Citizen as "one of the greatest full backs of all time" and front row forward Dave Holland (97 games 1906-10), described by Bill Bailey again as "one of the greatest attacking forwards of his time" - all now playing in the cherry and white colours of Oldham RLFC.

England Rugby Union international full back Alfie Wood had been capped three times by England in 1907-08. He had left Gloucester during that season and played briefly for Cheltenham. He was originally approached by Oldham while watching the historic Rugby League international between England and New Zealand at Cheltenham in February 1908, and had been

the 1909-10 season and, while working in Devonport dockyards, had played for Devonport Albion. He was capped three times by England as a Devonport player in 1911-12. Holland was, like Billy Hall, a newcomer to the Northern game having joined Oldham with Hall in 1913.

The third Test had originally



Dave Holland

minutes of the game, and what followed was one of the most remarkable and heroic rearguard actions in the history of either code.

The match became known as the Battle of Rorke's Drift, named after the famous action in the Zulu Wars. Alfie Wood was one of the Great Britain heroes, kicking four goals in a 14-6 victory. Billy Hall was one of the casualties as the visitors were reduced to ten men, just ten minutes into the second half.

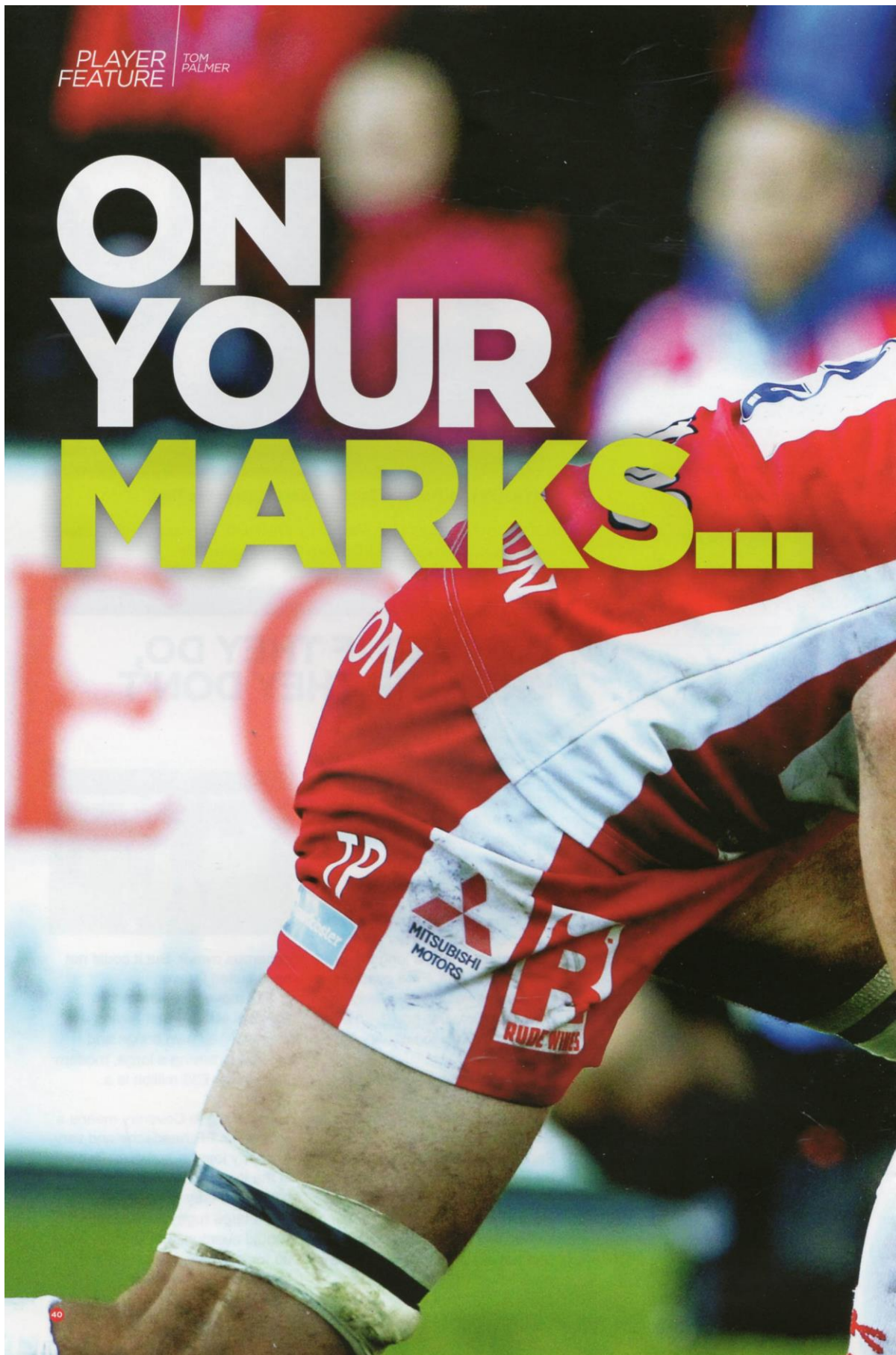
The Great Britain XIII went on to narrowly defeat New Zealand 16-13 in Auckland on August 1 and the team returned home to a nation at war.



PLAYER  
FEATURE

TOM  
PALMER

# ON YOUR MARKS...





DID YOU KNOW? PALMER HAS PLAYED FOR THE FOLLOWING PROFESSIONAL CLUBS: YORKSHIRE CARNEGIE, STADE FRANÇAIS & WASPS

GET  
SET...

GO



IN HIS SEVENTEENTH SEASON AS A PROFESSIONAL RUGBY PLAYER, FEW HAVE AS DETAILED A RUGBY STORY TO TELL AS TOM PALMER. HAVING PLAYED FOR FOUR CLUBS IN HIS CAREER TO DATE, THE 35-YEAR-OLD HAS FOUND A NEW LEASE OF LIFE IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

**“**FEEL like I've settled in really well, I've been here quite a while now, obviously since the start of June so a good few months now.

“I'm really enjoying living in Gloucestershire, playing for Gloucester Rugby and running out at Kingsholm every week, it really has been fantastic.

“It's been great to discover the Cheltenham Literature Festival over the last few days, a short walk from where I live, and it's something I've really enjoyed.”

On the pitch, the second row is also pleased with the development of his new team.

“I think you've seen that each week we've got better, and I think in each round we have shown improvement and I am hoping that this will continue and carry on.”

Many times an opponent at Kingsholm, Palmer is definitely pleased to have the home crowd on his side!



“It's very nice having the Shed on my side, but I wouldn't say I feared it when I was a member of the opposition.

“I remember a time quite fondly when I was preparing to come and play Gloucester for Leeds, a long time ago, and Phil Davies was the coach at the time.

“He got a recording of The Shed going 'Gloucester, Gloucester' and played it on loud speakers while we were training so that we got used to the noise.

“That's shows clearly the amount of respect opponents have for a noisy, vocal Shed and the crowd can definitely have

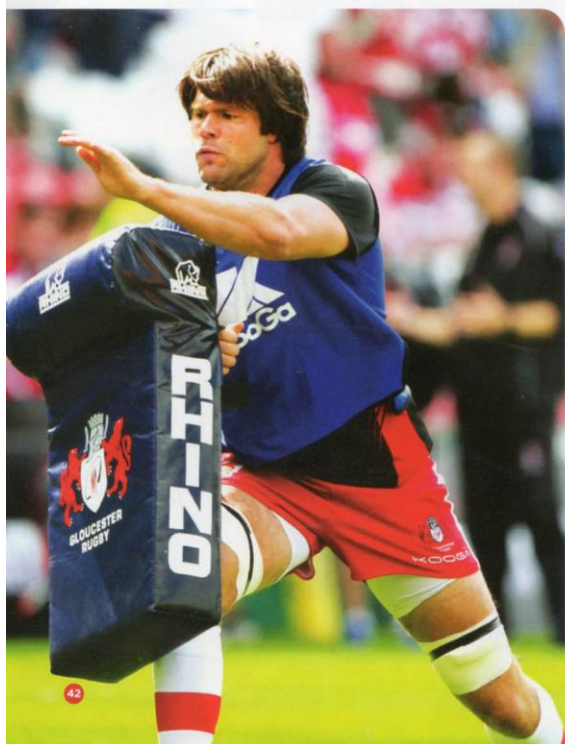
a big effect on key things on the game.”

A new addition has recently arrived to add to the plethora of second rows in the Cherry and Whites' armory, in the form of Mariano Galarza, adding to Elliott Stooke, James Hudson and Tom Hicks, and Palmer is thrilled with the competition in that area.

“It is really good strength in depth, and there are a lot of options for the coaches to turn to, and that is something that I'm sure they are very happy with. The ability to have a good amount of quality options to turn to makes a big difference to the coaches and the team.

“Going forward, the team will be able to rotate more, and it'll be good for the players that need to rest to be able to do so and you have a fully able replacement ready and waiting.”

With Gloucester kicking off a new era of European Rugby with the very first clash of the new weekend, a man with 31 appearances for Stade Francais, is a perfect person to talk of the challenge posed by our opponents







from over the English Channel, CA Brive.

"Certainly when you go away to France, they will be two hugely difficult tests and, with the home games, sometimes you have to be on your guard as they could be well up for the game and be fired up to take your scalp.

"With Brive, they will have a hugely physical pack and be really solid in the scrum and set piece. They will be dangerous counter-attackers and for us, we will have to be focused and restrict our mistakes.

"If the game becomes loose, and we restrict what we can do, that will suit them."

**”** I FEEL LIKE I'VE SETTLED IN REALLY WELL, I'VE BEEN HERE QUITE A WHILE NOW, OBVIOUSLY SINCE THE START OF JUNE SO A GOOD FEW MONTHS NOW. I'M REALLY ENJOYING LIVING IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE, PLAYING FOR GLOUCESTER RUGBY AND RUNNING OUT AT KINGSHOLM EVERY WEEK, IT REALLY HAS BEEN FANTASTIC. **”**



GLOUCESTER RUGBY AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION





# BOB FENTON'S

## KINGSHOLM NEWS

TONIGHT... IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN WHEN OUR LEAGUE FIXTURES GET FORGOTTEN FOR A WHILE AND WE CONCENTRATE ON ALL THINGS EUROPE FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS BEFORE DIVING INTO THE CONFUSION THAT IS THE POOL STAGES OF THE LV= CUP.

**A** week or so ago I had the pleasure of watching a quartet from Gloucester Rugby appear at the Cheltenham Literary Festival to chat about all things rugby. I'm not sure what the exact purpose of the evening was, given that most of the events were inevitably linked to a nice and expensive book that you could purchase in the tent outside.

Nothing to flog here though, just an interesting evening of conversation hosted by the peerless Stephen Jones. There was a decent sized audience who got to hear from Messrs Twelvetees, Afoa and Laidlaw

on international rugby, life in Gloucester and the impending World Cup.

They were all entertaining and informative – Greig's views on Scotland and the number of overseas players getting into their side was eye-wateringly honest. Jones the journalist did well to keep his pencil in his pocket as Greig's comments would make uncomfortable reading for some of the Scottish selectors.

Stephen Vaughan – Gloucester Rugby's CEO – was also on the panel and outlined some of the changes that will take place at Kingsholm in the run up to RWC15. We've already seen some of them - nice new

(hopefully big ball proof) posts and some changes behind the in-goal areas. But that's seemingly just the start. Stephen talked about new seating to bring up the capacity to the required numbers and some off field changes such as coaches 'boxes' of the kind you see on TV in addition to new floodlights.

He said we're not going to make heaps of money out of the event but not all these changes are temporary and will stay beyond the World Cup, further improving our stadium. And the reputation of Gloucester, as one of only two rugby grounds capable of staging World Cup games, will rocket.

Exciting times – I know it's





COMING  
UP... | OUR NEW CENTRE MARK ATKINSON PROVIDES  
THE ANSWERS TO OUR PLAYER A-Z



about a year away yet, but news like this, the banner advertising in the City and all the anticipation over tickets (I am going to be so skint if I get all the ones I asked for) are really bringing it all to life. Can't wait!

But tonight... it's that time of year again when our league fixtures get forgotten for a while and we concentrate on all things Europe for a couple of weeks before diving into the confusion that is the pool stages of the LV= Cup. Once again our friends in the telly business determine kick off times and days, so it's a Thursday evening and we're all here, slightly sweaty having rushed from work, but here we are.

I know that the TV revenue is important, but from this fan's point of view it results in some mightily inconvenient match times. Of course they love coming down to Kingsholm as they know that they are assured of a good crowd and a bit of atmosphere even if they were to make us play at midnight on a Tuesday. Compare that to the vast range of empty seats that you would find at the Madejski or AJ Bell stadiums on a Thursday night and you can see why they want to come here.

So enough grumbling already, let's enjoy it. It's European Cup (Lower Division) rugby, so what's not to like? What's more the new

trophy is a bit of a beast so we might as well make a bit of history and be the first people to win the thing.

Like always in these fixtures, you never know quite what to expect from our French opponents. Unlike their wine some of the French teams do not seem to travel so well and can sometime be here in spirit only. Given that they are currently second from bottom in the Top 14 back home in France, they may have other things on their minds. Conversely they may just feel that this is a chance to cut loose and try to get some momentum into their season.

Looking at their results so far I think one objective for Brive will be to keep fifteen players on the pitch at any one time. They seem to be falling foul of referees and seeing more than a few yellow cards, and a red last weekend against Toulon. It's actually quite interesting if you look at the Brive information page on the Sky Sports website, it shows that both Terry Fanolua and Shaun Perry are still playing for them!

I don't know about the little fat bloke from Bristol, but, given the fact that Terry will be sat over in our Community Department's office while you are reading this, we'd best hope he's brought his boots with him!

Talking of Terry, I was at the Exeter game with a couple of people from work who, having spotted him, asked if I would take pictures of them with him. Terry obliged and chatted for a bit before wandering off.

After he left one guy – and I promise you this is true – said "I really liked him as a player, Lesley Vainikolo was always one of my favourites." I know Terry has put on a pound or two since he was here as a player (yeah, yeah... pot, kettle) but haven't had the heart to break the news to him yet, though if he is reading this – he just found out!





# IAN RANDALL'S RUGBY TALK

WE'LL NO DOUBT SEE SOME ELEMENT OF ROTATION IN THE SQUAD TONIGHT, BUT CREDIT TO THE PLAYERS FOR PARITY OVER THE FIRST BLOCK OF MATCHES IN THE PREMIERSHIP.

**T**he players would have enjoyed the good training conditions for the bulk of the time since they reported back, but having been drowned (sic) by a deluge during last Thursday's session, James Hook got soaked again on route to our chat about European matters, but he was still generous with his time.

Hook's move to Kingsholm came after three years at Perpignan which ended with relegation, something no player wants on his CV.

"My worst time in the team was the last three to four months when we were struggling at the bottom of the league and had a

Oyonnax (ironically, the other French team in the pool) at the end because they would send us down on the head to head record. But that wasn't the only reason we went down. There were a lot of elements to it."

I sensed until this spring Hook had fully embraced the French experience. With only a few English speakers at Perpignan he'd had to master the language as well as the tactics, although the importance placed on European matches when it came to selection was very different to what he'd been used to.

"Boys like Luke Charteris and myself who had played in Wales were used to taking the Heineken

the Top 14 so I'm sure how Brive and Oyonnax will approach this competition.

I didn't win at Brive in any of my three seasons at Perpignan, and the support there is fantastic. Oyonnax had a lot of older players last season and because they didn't have a big squad they tended to rest players for away games. They took some big scalps at home, and I didn't win there either."

**"**"BOYS LIKE LUKE CHARTERIS AND MYSELF WHO HAD PLAYED IN WALES WERE USED TO TAKING THE HEINEKEN CUP SERIOUSLY, SO IT WAS ODD TO US WHEN WE MET GLOUCESTER LAST SEASON THAT PLAYERS WERE BEING RESTED"**"** James Hook

lot of injuries," Hook told me.

"We couldn't buy a win and then being relegated at the end was a real kick in the teeth. We knew we had to be above

Cup seriously, so it was odd to us when we met Gloucester last season that players were being rested," he said.

"Everything in France is about



Hook is 29 now, and admits the chance to play regularly and to look after his family's future were driving factors in his move back across the channel. He had





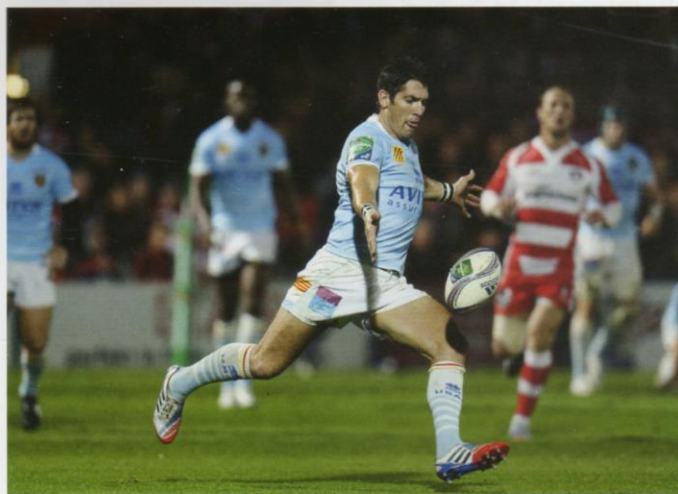
known Richard Hibbard since school days, and could see the potential in the squad Gloucester had assembled, potential which ought to be more than good enough to reach the knockout stages.

In 50 previous Challenge Cup matches, Gloucester's record is 37 wins, 12 defeats and one draw, with only La Rochelle and Biarritz winning here since the inaugural season. I think the target ought to be 24 points with hopefully bonuses to add, and Hook doesn't disagree.

"History says if you get at least two away wins you ought to be in good shape. We don't know what sort of teams the others will put out but we have to play what's in front of us."

We'll no doubt see some element of rotation in the squad tonight, but credit to the players for parity over the first block of matches in the Premiership.

To get through a sequence that included both Northampton and Saracens away in the top half of the table and with a positive points difference is no mean feat



considering that happened at Franklins Gardens. Greig Laidlaw has been a key element in that with his goal kicking, something James Hook is happy for him to do.

"It doesn't bother me because Greig is really accurate at the moment. I practice like I always do because there could be an injury and you have to be ready to step up. That is what our training is all about - improving as

individuals and as a team."

Brive's solitary visit here was at the quarter final stage of this competition in 2006, when nearly 7,000 supporters saw Gloucester win 46-13. It was a season that finished with the extra time drama in the final against London Irish, and James Forrester's decisive try.

An omen perhaps, for what's ahead...



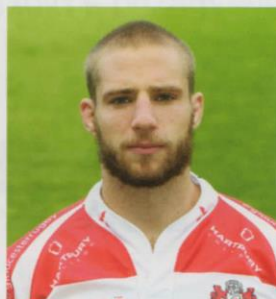


## PLAYER A to Z MARK ATKINSON



... is for  
**atmosphere**  
— the best  
atmosphere played  
in?

**MA** Vs Leicester  
Tigers this season



... is for **BEST  
MATE** — best mate  
in rugby?

**MA** The other half  
of team north,  
Jacob Rowan

... is for  
**CAREER** — job  
if not a rugby  
player?

**MA** Front man for  
a boy band



... is for  
**EMBARRASSED**

— most  
embarrassing  
moment on the  
field?

**MA** Most times  
I've kicked at goal

... is for **DRIVE**  
— what car are you  
driving?

**MA** BMW

A

B

C

D

E

M

... is for **MATCH**  
— best match ever?

**MA** Under 18  
Cheshire Cup final  
for school

N

... is for  
**NICKNAME** —  
what's yours?

**MA** Aki - @  
sausagelegs10

O

... is for  
**OPPONENT** —  
best player you  
have ever faced?

**MA** Not faced,  
but played with  
Juan Fernandez  
Lobbe — he could  
do everything

P

... is for **PRIDE**  
— proudest  
achievement?

**MA** Passing first  
year Uni, just  
about!

Q

... is for  
**QUICKEST** —  
fastest played you  
have shared a pitch  
with?

**MA** Jonny May or  
Charlie Sharples

R

... is for **RUN  
out music** —  
what's your tune to  
run out to?

**MA** The Riff Off  
from Pitch Perfect

S

... is for  
**SUPPORT** — team  
followed as a  
youngster?

**MA** Liverpool







... is for  
**FASHION** – worst  
dress sense at the  
club?  
**MA** Woody – goes  
for the rich Dad  
look

... is for  
**GLOUCESTER  
RUGBY** – best  
thing about  
Gloucester Rugby?  
**MA** Has to be The  
Shed



... is for **HARD  
MAN** – toughest  
player you have  
come across?  
**MA** Paul Tupai,  
still playing at 40.



... is for **IDOL** –  
player you looked  
up to growing up?  
**MA** Michael  
Owen/Jonny  
Wilkinson



... is for **JOKER**  
– funniest player  
you have shared  
a dressing room  
with?  
**MA** Greig Laidlaw  
and all his rants

... is for  
**KINGSHOLM**  
– describe  
Kingsholm in three  
words?  
**MA** Very, Noisy,  
Shed

... is for **LIFE**  
after rugby –  
what do you hope  
to be doing?  
**MA** Earning

**F**

**G**

**H**

**I**

**J**

**K**

**L**

**T**

**U**

**V**

**W**

**X**

**Y**

**Z**

... is for **TRY**  
– best one ever  
scored?  
**MA** Very rare but  
London Welsh  
away

... is for  
**UNBELIEVABLE**  
– tell us something  
surprising about  
you?  
**MA** Got picked  
out the crowd at  
Seaworld to ride a  
dolphin

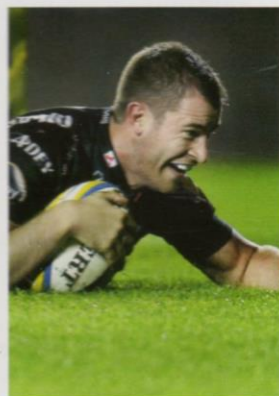
... is for  
**VISITOR** –  
favourite ground to  
play at?  
**MA** Welford Road

... is for **WORST**  
– worst thing  
about being a  
rugby player?  
**MA** The gym

... is for **X RAY**  
– worst injury you  
have suffered?  
**MA** Snapped  
elbow ligaments

... is for  
**YOUNGSTERS**  
– what advice  
would you give to  
aspiring players?  
**MA** Speak when  
spoken to

... is for **ZZZZ** –  
teammate with the  
worst banter?  
**MA** Hands down  
Shane Monahan.





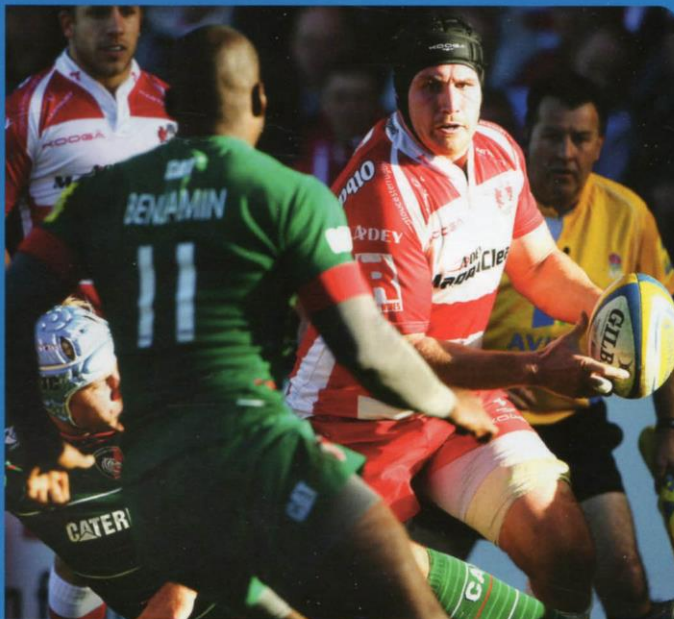
## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

### LINE-UP

15	FB	ROB COOK
14	W	CHARLIE SHARPLES
13	C	HENRY PURDY
12	C	BILLY TWELVETREES (C)
11	W	JONNY MAY
10	FH	JAMES HOOK
9	SH	GREIG LAIDLAW
1	P	NICK WOOD
2	H	RICHARD HIBBARD
3	P	JOHN AFOA
4	L	TOM SAVAGE
5	L	TOM PALMER
6	F	SIONE KALAMAFONI
7	F	MATT KVESIC
8	N8	BEN MORGAN

### REPLACEMENTS

16	H	ALEKI LUTUI
17	P	YANN THOMAS
18	P	SILA PUAFISI
19	L	ELLIOTT STOOKE
20	F	ROSS MORIARTY
21	SH	DAN ROBSON
22	C	MARK ATKINSON
23	W	TOM ISAACS



# GLOUCESTER RUGBY

**33**

**TRIES:** Wood (19), Sharples (26), May (35) **PENS:** Laidlaw (4, 8, 12, 57) **CONS:** Laidlaw (19, 27, 36)



# LEICESTER TIGERS

**16**

**TRY:** Mele (79) **PENS:** Williams (2, 15, 32) **CON:** Williams (80)



## LEICESTER TIGERS

### LINE-UP

15	FB	MATHEW TAIT
14	W	BLAINE SCULLY
13	C	VERENIKI GONEVA
12	C	OWEN WILLIAMS
11	W	MILES BENJAMIN
10	FH	FREDDIE BURNS
9	SH	BEN YOUNGS (C)
1	P	MICHELE RIZZO
2	H	LEONARDO GHIRALDINI
3	P	FRASER BALMAIN
4	L	BRAD THORN
5	L	GRAHAM KITCHENER
6	F	JAMIE GIBSON
7	F	JULIAN SALVI
8	N8	ROBERT BARBIERI

### REPLACEMENTS

16	H	NEIL BRIGGS
17	P	TOM BRISTOW
18	P	TIZIANO PASQUALI
19	L	SEBASTIAN DE CHAVES
20	N8	JORDAN CRANE
21	SH	DAVID MELE
22	R	SAM HARRISON
23	FB	MATT SMITH



# STRIPEES EARNED AGAINST OFF COLOUR TIGERS

THE CHERRY AND WHITES PICKED UP THEIR THIRD WIN OF THE AVIVA PREMIERSHIP SEASON ON AN EXCITING AFTERNOON AT KINGSHOLM, WITH A 33-16 VICTORY OVER LEICESTER TIGERS.

**I**T was a hugely enjoyable afternoon, the sun was shining and a great win born off the back of an impressive first half performance, sent the Cherry and Whites' supporters home happy – but also with a sense of frustration at the failure to secure a bonus point.

The hosts played with tempo, vigour and passion against the Tigers, who despite a lengthy injury list, still boasted 10 full

to barge over under the posts.

The Cherry and Whites have been striving to give proof they are developing into a cohesive unit, and they were doing just that. Quick ball, smart lines of running and patience were creating gaps, and the second try was in the bag as Charlie Sharples accelerated through a midfield gap to dive over untouched.

That was good, but it got better. Savage straightened the line and quick ball saw Laidlaw and James

**”** FOR THE FIRST 40 MINUTES TODAY WE WERE DELIGHTED WITH THE WAY WE PLAYED, AND WE ARE DELIGHTED TO COME AWAY WITH A 33-16 WIN AGAINST A TEAM THAT HAS BEEN AT THE TOP OF THE PREMIERSHIP SINCE ITS INCEPTION. **David Humphreys**

internationals and one Freddie Burns who was a late inclusion to start at fly half.

Tigers were first on the scoreboard, Owen Williams' judging his penalty to perfection to just clear the crossbar, before the Cherry and Whites very own metronome Greig Laidlaw was handed a trio of early chances to add three points, all of which he gratefully accepted.

Then the hosts turned up the pressure on the Tigers, a side that so often has enjoyed the upper hand over the Cherry and Whites, and put the game to bed in a blistering spell.

Firstly, almost as if it were scripted, the returning Burns failed to spot Tom Savage's presence and the second row charged down his kick before feeding Nick Wood

Hook combine with Rob Cook to give Jonny May a simple finish in the corner.

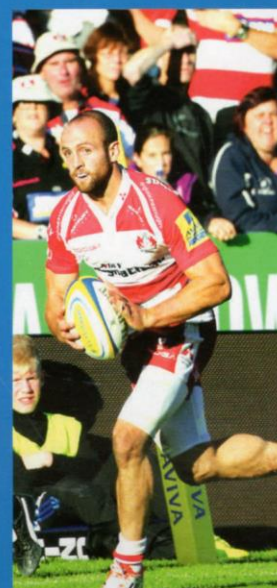
A blistering spell of top class rugby from the hosts, with Tigers' only answering back through a Williams penalty, trailing 30-9 at the break.

With three tries in the bag, and the hosts looking sharp in attack, the words on many lips at Kingsholm were 'bonus point'. But, up against a wounded Tigers side, the hosts had to retain control of the game and they did just that.

Gloucester survived an attempted Leicester fightback, but the third quarter was mainly stop-start, with a Laidlaw penalty the only score.

The Cherry and Whites did carve out several try scoring chances and, with Niki Goneva

## CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



Charlie Sharples try won the Sinbad Moment from the game, and the winger more than deserved the quality finish that relied much to the tempo of Gloucester's game, and the winger's brilliantly disguised drift and change of direction whilst at full tilt.

sinbinned for his second no-arm tackle of the afternoon, they sensed a chance.

It so nearly came, Rob Cook was making metres for fun and his half break found James Hook via a stupendous offload from Mark Atkinson. However, as the Welshman tried to find the scoring pass, the ball found the ground rather than the hands of onrushing Sharples and Dan Robson.

A collective groan was probably heard across the Cotswolds as such a stunning build-up was lost, but the cheers at full time marked the appreciation of a memorable performance, despite a last play score for Tigers' replacement David Mele.



# ACTION REPLAY

VS  
SARACENS

## SARACENS

### LINE-UP

15	FB	BEN RANSOM
14	W	CHRIS ASHTON
13	C	CHIRS WYLES
12	C	BRAD BARRITT
11	W	DAVID STRETTLE
10	FH	CHARLIE HODGSON
9	SH	RICHARD WIGGLESWORTH
1	P	RICHARD BARRINGTON
2	H	SCHALK BRITS
3	P	KIERAN LONGBOTTOM
4	L	JIM HAMILTON
5	L	ALASTAIR HARGREAVES (C)
6	F	ERNST JOUBERT
7	F	KELLY BROWN
8	N8	BILLY VUNIPOLA

### REPLACEMENTS

16	H	JAMIE GEORGE
17	P	RHYS GILL
18	P	JAMES JOHNSTON
19	L	GEORGE KRUIS
20	F	WILL FRASER
21	SH	NEIL DE KOCK
22	FB	ALEX GOODE
23	C	MARCELLO BOSCH



# SARACENS

# 28

**TRY:** Wyles (20), Hargreaves (24), Ashton (60) **PEN:** Hodgson (13, 47, 67) **CON:** Hodgson (21, 51)



# GLOUCESTER RUGBY

# 21

**TRIES:** Cook (18), Savage (80) **PENS:** Laidlaw (2, 5, 50)  
**CONS:** Laidlaw (19)



## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

### LINE-UP

15	FB	ROB COOK
14	W	CHARLIE SHARPLES
13	C	HENRY PURDY
12	C	BILLY TWELVETREES (C)
11	W	JONNY MAY
10	FH	JAMES HOOK
9	SH	GREIG LAIDLAW
1	P	NICK WOOD
2	H	RICHARD HIBBARD
3	P	JOHN AFOA
4	L	TOM SAVAGE
5	L	TOM PALMER
6	F	SIONE KALAMAFONI
7	F	MATT KVESIC
8	N8	BEN MORGAN

### REPLACEMENTS

16	H	DARREN DAWIDIUK
17	P	YANN THOMAS
18	P	SILA PUAFISI
19	L	ELLIOTT STOOKE
20	F	ROSS MORIARTY
21	SH	DAN ROBSON
22	C	MARK ATKINSON
23		BILL MEAKES



# DOGGED GLOUCESTER COME SO CLOSE TO SUCCESS

JUDGE US AFTER SIX WEEKS HAS BEEN THE MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF RUGBY DAVID HUMPHREYS, AFTER THE SHORTENED PRESEASON LEFT THE GLOUCESTER SIDE MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME AS THE SEASON KICKED OFF.

**A**nd last Saturday's performance at Allianz Park against Saracens certainly showed how much progress the team has made in those six rounds of Aviva Premiership action.

Just over a month after the Cherry and Whites got their season off to a stuttering start at Northampton, Gloucester gave

However, in the blink of an eye, Saracens were back in the game. Billy Twelvetrees had provided a superb pass for Cook's try, but it was his kick that was charged down by Chris Wyles on 20 minutes to get the home side off and running.

It was a stroke of luck for the Men in Black and, suddenly, Mark McCall's side had their tails up.

”

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY IN SIX WEEKS. NOW WE'VE SHOWN THAT WE CAN COMPETE WITH THE TOP TEAMS. NOW IT'S ABOUT ESTABLISHING SOME BELIEF WITHIN OUR SQUAD THAT WE CAN GO OUT AND PERFORM AT A LEVEL WHICH ALLOWS US TO PUT A TEAM LIKE SARACENS UNDER PRESSURE.”

David Humphreys

Saracens an almighty scare on their own turf, earning a losing bonus point but it could have been ever more.

Greig Laidlaw's unerring accuracy off the kicking tee opened up an early 6-0 lead for Gloucester, although the equally deadly Charlie Hodgson quickly responded with a penalty of his own.

But Gloucester really stamped their authority on the game through a peach of a try from Rob Cook, opening up a 13-3 advantage. They were good value for it and the home PA had had precious few opportunities to blast out their 'much loved' tunes.

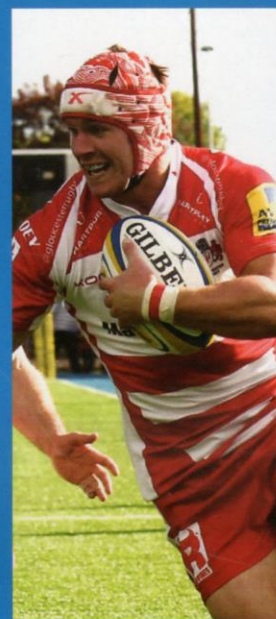
When Alistair Hargreaves dived over in the corner for the second just four minutes later, it looked like it could be a long afternoon for Gloucester.

However, the Cherry and Whites dug in and made it to half time without any further mishaps. They also refused to throw in the towel as the home team threw the kitchen sink at them before making a host of replacements.

Hodgson and Laidlaw exchanged penalties, but the task became that little bit harder when Nick Wood was yellow carded for pulling back Alex Goode off the ball.

Saracens wasted no time in

## CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



Gloucester's first half try saw forwards and backs combine superbly. Richard Hibbard and Sione Kalamafoni trucked the ball up, before Greig Laidlaw released Billy Twelvetrees. The skipper's cut out pass took several Saracens out of the equation and Rob Cook finished in style.

striking. Hargreaves broke a tackle before offloading to Chris Ashton and the winger was under the posts in the blink of an eye.

Hodgson added another penalty to extend the lead to 28-16 and it looked as though all Gloucester's efforts would count for nothing.

However, the defence manned up to prevent Saracens getting a bonus point and killing the game, before Gloucester secured a last gasp losing bonus point.

Sila Puafisi crashed into the 22, before Dan Robson and James Hook linked up to send Tom Savage rampaging through a gap, stepping Neil de Kock and withstanding Hodgson's tap tackle to score.





# TODAY'S TEAMS

## GLOUCESTER RUGBY vs CABRIVE

REFEREE: Ian Davies ASSISTANTS: Roger Baileff and Gwyn Morris

TEAMS CORRECT AT TIME OF PRINT

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ROB **COOK**  
FULL-BACK  
CHARLIE **SHARPLES**  
RIGHT WING  
BILLY **MEAKES**  
OUTSIDE CENTRE  
BILLY **TWELVETREES (C)**  
INSIDE CENTRE  
JONNY **MAY**  
LEFT WING  
JAMES **HOOK**  
FLY-HALF  
GREIG **LAIDLAW**  
SCRUM-HALF  
YANN **THOMAS**  
LOOSEHEAD PROP  
RICHARD **HIBBARD**  
HOOKER  
JOHN **AFOA**  
TIGHTHEAD PROP  
TOM **SAVAGE**  
LOCK  
JAMES **HUDSON**  
LOCK  
SIONE **KALAMAFONI**  
BLINDSIDE FLANKER  
MATT **KVESIC**  
OPENSIDE FLANKER  
BEN **MORGAN**  
NUMBER EIGHT

DARREN **DAWIDIUK**  
REPLACEMENT 1  
NICK **WOOD**  
REPLACEMENT 2  
SILA **PUAFISI**  
REPLACEMENT 3  
ELLIOTT **STOOKE**  
REPLACEMENT 4  
ROSS **MORIARTY**  
REPLACEMENT 5  
DAN **ROBSON**  
REPLACEMENT 6  
BILLY **BURNS**  
REPLACEMENT 7  
MARK **ATKINSON**  
REPLACEMENT 8

15

14

13

12

11

10

9

1

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22

23

GAETAN **GERMAIN**  
FULL-BACK  
BENITO **MASILEVU**  
RIGHT WING  
ARNAUD **MIGNARDI**  
OUTSIDE CENTRE  
THOMAS **SANCHOU**  
INSIDE CENTRE  
ALFI **MAFI**  
LEFT WING  
RIAAN **SWANEPOEL**  
FLY-HALF  
DAMIEN **NEVEU**  
SCRUM-HALF  
GODERDZI **SHVELIDZE**  
LOOSEHEAD PROP  
THOMAS **ACQUIER**  
HOOKER  
PAT **BARNARD**  
TIGHTHEAD PROP  
DOMINIKO **WAGANIBUROTU**  
LOCK  
ARNAUD **MELA**  
LOCK  
PETRUS **HAUMAN**  
BLINDSIDE FLANKER  
SAID **HIRECHE**  
OPENSIDE FLANKER  
SISA **KOYAMAIBOLE**  
NUMBER EIGHT

LOUIS **ACOSTA**  
REPLACEMENT 1  
KARLEN **ASIESHVILI**  
REPLACEMENT 2  
RUSSLAN **BOUKEROU**  
REPLACEMENT 3  
KIERAN **MURPHY**  
REPLACEMENT 4  
JEAN BAPTISTE **PEJOINE**  
REPLACEMENT 5  
ANDREW **MAILEI**  
REPLACEMENT 6  
ELIA **RADIKEDIKE**  
REPLACEMENT 7  
KEVIN **BUYS**  
REPLACEMENT 8

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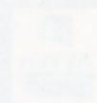
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Gloucester Rugby

