



# GLOUCESTER RUGBY


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**vs Saracens**

**Aviva Premiership Rugby Round 13: 09.01.2015**

Inside tonight's matchday programme we have an exclusive interview with our barnstorming number 8 Ben Morgan. Aled Thomas provides us with his A to Z plus 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 FIRST TIME IN 2015 TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS AND CLUB PARTNERS HERE TONIGHT.



**I**'D also like to welcome everyone from Saracens, for what we hope will be another great game between the two sides.

To get 2015 off to a winning start is something few may have expected from us outside of our camp, and to get the four points against a top team meant it was a very happy bus ride home.

Laurie spoke afterwards of

the character we had to show after conceding a pair of tries to mistakes, and to regain the lead after that body blow was a key aspect of the win and testament to the belief we are growing within our squad.

Further to that, we were going into the game off the back of a pair of defeats, so to bounce back and close out a victory was a great feeling, and has given us a massive boost in the lead up to

facing Saracens today.

Over the past few seasons, Mark McCall has assembled a talented and tight-knit squad, and they are on a strong run of form so we know the size of the task in hand.

Packed with international experience and a team that has been together for many seasons, it is going to be yet another tough opponent at Kingsholm, which highlights the quality that exists in the Aviva Premiership.

There will be fascinating match ups all across the park. However, under the lights, one thing that can't be matched is the Kingsholm support and that has been one constant over the Christmas period.

As a squad, we spoke at length at the support we received from two full houses over Christmas and this doubled the disappointment at the two results. Tonight we have a chance to rectify that and give every one in Cherry and White plenty to shout about.

So thank you for the support you have all shown us during the last few weeks, and, as we enter the second half of the season, we are hugely excited to have your backing as we run out each and every week.

Enjoy the game.



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Billy

DIR. OF  
RUGBY

DAVID  
HUMPHREYS



DAVID  
HUMPHREYS

8



GOOD EVENING AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE AS WE WELCOME SARACENS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS TO KINGSHOLM FOR THE FIRST GAME OF 2015.

**H**AVING just passed the halfway point of the 2014/15 season, it seems like a good time to reflect a little on the events of the last few months.

The well documented changes to both the management team and playing squad meant that we entered the new season underprepared from a rugby perspective but excited and optimistic about the challenge that lay ahead.

Any doubts about the scale of that challenge were removed after the result in the first game against Northampton but at least we got a clear view of what was required to become a top team in the Aviva Premiership!

Despite that setback, I thought we improved most aspects of our game week by week and finished the first phase of the season with a great win away in France against Oyonnax.

Set piece, goal kicking and defence, all areas

The November International series arrived at the wrong time for us. Just as we were gaining some confidence and momentum, we lost a number of players to injury and International commitments, and suffered disappointing defeats in the Premiership that we have struggled to bounce back from.

In Europe, we again played well but feel we let everyone down with our performances at home over Christmas against Bath and Wasps.

Kingsholm is a wonderful place to play rugby and all of us who are new to the Club have been overwhelmed by the support shown to the team. Even though we haven't always delivered the results everyone wants, the support home and away has been phenomenal and I have no doubt that Kingsholm will again become an intimidating and difficult venue for teams to play at!

That starts tonight with a massive game against Saracens. Over the last few seasons,



for us. After tonight, we return to European action and are very much hoping to build on the work we've put in so far. Finishing top

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WINNING AT SANDY PARK AGAINST EXETER WAS A GREAT START TO 2015 AND I WAS DELIGHTED FOR ALL PLAYERS AND COACHES THAT WE GOT THE WIN - EVERYONE HAS BEEN WORKING VERY HARD OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS, WITHOUT MUCH REWARD, AND WE DESERVED THAT WIN. THE CHALLENGE NOW IS TO BACK THAT UP WITH A BIG PERFORMANCE THIS EVENING.

identified as needing improved from last season, were much better and, despite narrow losses to Exeter and Saracens, we were very competitive and picked up losing bonus points.

Saracens have become one of Europe's top teams and it will take a huge step up in performance from last week for us to beat them.

Winning at Sandy Park against Exeter was a great start to 2015 and I was delighted for all players and coaches that we got the win - everyone has been working very hard over the last few weeks, without much reward, and we deserved that win. The challenge now is to back that up with a big performance this evening.

It's an important few weeks

of the pool and securing a home quarter-final is the goal.

Finally, we are delighted that so many players have committed their playing futures to Gloucester over the past couple of months. It is critical to retain our key players so that we can then recruit top quality international players to further strengthen our squad as we try to compete with the top teams in the Aviva Premiership.

David





# THE VIEW FROM The Citizen



**SCAN THE  
CODE FOR  
MORE NEWS  
AND STORIES  
FROM OUR  
WEBSITE**

**A DISUSED  
BUILDING** near  
Gloucester Quays  
has gone up in  
flames

**FOREST  
GREEN** can  
revive my best  
days

**GYM CENTRE  
GYMNASTICS**  
Club enjoy  
success at West  
Country League  
finals

**MAN JAILED**  
after Cinderford  
pub and park  
attacks with  
realistic-looking

## REAPING THE REWARDS

**ANDY HAZELL** established himself as a Gloucester legend during 17 seasons of putting his body on the line in Cherry and White.

He was a fearless flanker that typified everything about this club and that Gloucester dog. He is better placed than any to cast an eye over those who pull on his coveted number seven jersey and believes Matt Kvesic is reaping the rewards from the new regime at Kingsholm.

The 22-year-old flanker struggled to hit full straps last season and was dropped from England's elite player squad (EPS) ahead of the autumn, but he has responded in perfect fashion.

Kvesic has been in imperious form for the Cherry and Whites and has grown in prominence throughout the season.

He has twice been named Man-of-the-Match in recent weeks, following the victories over London Irish and Exeter Chiefs.

During the 26-25 victory at Sandy Park, the German-born ace made 19 tackles, carried the ball 40 metres and claimed three clean turnovers while also forcing several penalties at the breakdown.

And his predecessor Hazell, who made 266 appearances for the club before retiring due



**In Form** Kvesic will be looking to push Chris Robshaw out of the England No.7 shirt for the 6 Nations

to a string of concussions, has been impressed with Kvesic's performances.

Hazell, 36, said, "Over the last month Kev's form has really picked up. He has some real confidence and now the challenge is to keep that going.

"I've obviously watched him from when he first came and I still can't believe he's only 22 years old. But Laurie Fisher, and whoever else is working with him, is obviously having a very positive impact and he is growing in confidence each week.

"There's a different environment, different training methods, a slightly different group and it all

” HE ALSO NEEDS TO PERFORM WELL AGAINST OTHER PEOPLE VYING FOR THAT POSITION BECAUSE COACHES STILL LOOK AT THAT. THOSE ONE ON ONE MATCH-UPS ARE STILL IMPORTANT AND THIS WEEK AGAINST SARACENS WILL BE MASSIVE, HE COULD BE UP AGAINST BURGER WHO IS VERY ABRASIVE.. **Andy Hazell**



seems to be benefitting Kev.

“Previously he would sometimes go in for the tackle and then look to finish it, drag the person to the floor and get over the ball but now he is dominating the tackle. He seems to pick and choose when to attack the breakdown a lot better now and is very effective there.

“The balance seems to be coming in the back-row and with the second rows. You look at the likes of Tom Savage and Tom Palmer and they hit a lot of rucks and do the stuff people don't see which allows Matt to do his job.

“In the last couple of weeks we've also defended the driving maul a lot better and that means he doesn't get dragged in and can stay a bit wider.

“Individually he also increasingly seems to be in the right place at the right time and is getting his hands on the ball more.

“He just has to keep working on his strengths and weaknesses and build on these performances consistently.”

International honours often eluded Hazell, who has seven England caps to his name, despite his legendary status at Kingsholm.

But those disappointments only served to increase the former Old Richian's heart and desire to perform for his beloved Cherry and Whites.

And he is well aware that time is firmly on Kvesic's side and reckons his status as an out and out openside flanker offers something different to the current Red Rose candidates.

He said, “Being left out isn't always a bad thing and can fuel the fire. He is still a young lad and has time on his side but disappointments like that make you dig in that little bit harder.

“He also needs to perform well against other people vying for that position because coaches still look at that. Those one on one match-ups are still important and this week against Saracens will be massive, he could be up against

Burger who is very abrasive.

“Matt is a genuine, 100 per cent openside and that can help him but it all depends on what Stuart Lancaster wants.

“The difficult thing about being a seven is every coach wants something different and it's all about the balance of the back-row.

“Chris Robshaw is there at the moment but it depends what England want. You could even look at someone like James Haskell, a big carrier and someone that slows the ball down.”

Back on the domestic front, Hazell has been bitterly disappointed with Gloucester's general form and current predicament.

He insists the home record at crumbling Castle Grim, where they have lost four of their six Premiership matches to date is unacceptable.

But he remains hopeful that the nerve jangling 26-25 victory over Exeter Chiefs at Sandy Park on Saturday can prove a turning point of the season and it all starts against Saracens tonight.

He added, “It's a very tough second half of the season and there's some difficult fixtures coming up but the win over Exeter can give them a lot of confidence. Sometimes all you need is that win.

“Now they need to concentrate on their home form and the coaches and players know it's not good enough. Every game at Kingsholm should be like a cup final.

“Saracens is a massive game tonight and they certainly have their work cut out but sometimes that's the kind of game you need and if they can get the win it would be a huge boost.”

Citizen AVAILABLE DAILY



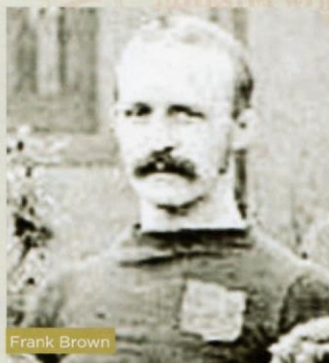
GLOUCESTER RUGBY  
HERITAGE

www.goucester rugby heritage.org.uk

FLY  
HALVES  
– PART ONE**FRANK BROWN**

In the very early days of rugby there was very little definition of position. There were forwards, half backs, three quarter backs and a back. Sometimes a team would play as many as three half backs, and a fly half (as we would call him) was unknown.

In those far off times the nearest thing to a fly half in the Gloucester team was Frank Brown. He played for the club from 1875 to 1885, and was captain from 1876 to 1883. Under his leadership Gloucester developed what was called a "short passing game". This was quite innovative and proved very successful.



Frank Brown

The team was unbeaten through 1882-83 and they were called "the invincibles". Under Frank's leadership Gloucester emerged as a major force in the land.

**TOMMY BAGWELL**

The early Gloucester players were mostly middle class professionals, and the first working class player to break



Tommy Bagwell

into the team was George Coates.

He persuaded his friend Tommy Bagwell to try his luck at the club. Tommy had previously been playing for a local club called St. Luke's Red Cross, and made his first appearance for Gloucester against Cardiff in 1883.

In only his fourth game on Boxing Day he scored two outstanding tries against a London Team, which contained A.E. Stoddart who was to play for England. At this time Tommy was playing in the centre, but soon switched to fly half, as the position was now being called.

He was an early advocate of player fitness through thorough training. He captained the club in 1890-91 when Gloucester achieved the double over Cardiff, and again in 1891-92. Tommy made 239 appearances and scored 62 tries. He also played 22 times for the County.

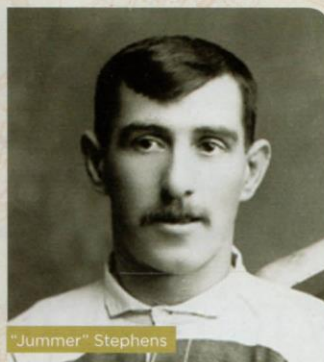
On his retirement Tommy became the club's trainer and continued in that role until the late twenties, and even after that was

baggage and kit man for several years. He died aged 83 in 1943.

**"JUMMER" STEPHENS**

Jim, nicknamed "Jummer", first played for the local teams Tredworth Stars and Gordon Wanderers as a centre. He made his debut for Gloucester in March 1895 but only played four times in his first two seasons. Then he disappeared from the team only to return in 1899-1900 when he quickly established himself in the first fifteen.

It was not until the 1903-04 season that he moved to fly half. In 1904-05 he built up a special partnership at half back with another iconic Gloucester player, Dai Gent.



"Jummer" Stephens

In October 1905 Gloucester played against the touring All Blacks, and decided to play three half backs, Dai Gent at scrum half and two fly halves, Jummer, and Alfie Wood (who became an outstanding full back). The ploy was not successful as





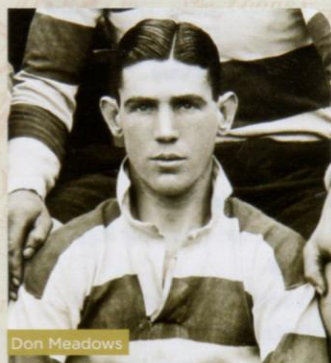
the game was lost 0-44. The pair also played together for Gloucestershire and faced the South Africans in November 1906, but that also ended in defeat 0-23.

Jummer played no fewer than 322 games for Gloucester. He also played 32 times for the county and was a member of the team (again partnering Dai Gent) which beat Yorkshire 27-0 at Kingsholm in April 1910 to win the County Championship.

Jummer came very close to an England cap as a trialist and a reserve but was never selected for the ultimate honour.

### DON MEADOWS

**Don was a jinking fly half and solid kicker, who between 1927 and 1939 made 305 appearances for the club. He played for England as a schoolboy and had two full England trials, but was never awarded a cap.**



Don Meadows

He was a vital member of the very successful Gloucester fifteens of the thirties which produced some memorable wins against Welsh opposition. In the 1932-33 he was in the team which won the first double over Newport for 50 years.

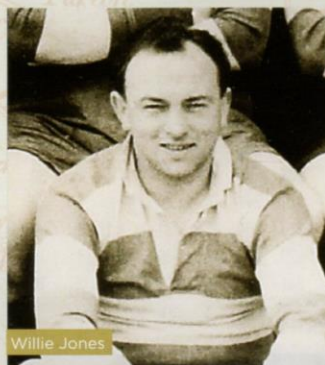
In November 1933 he was present when Gloucester won for the first time ever at Swansea. Not content with that, he was there later in the season when Gloucester completed their first ever double over the Welsh club. In March 1936 he was in the team which won at Llanelly for the first time in 38 years. This was truly a

golden era for Gloucester.

Don was awarded the captaincy in season 1936-37. He also played 16 times for Gloucestershire and was in the team which lost in the final against East Midlands in 1934.

### WILLIE JONES

**Willie was a diminutive (5'5") but busy fly half who played for Gloucester from 1945 to 1949. He first played for Neath from 1937 to 1940 and appeared in two Welsh trials in the 1938-39 season. He was a war-time Welsh international.**



Willie Jones

In his 76 appearances for Gloucester, he kicked no less than 38 drop goals, which at that time counted as four points. It is said that he was instrumental in having the value of the drop goal being reduced to three points in 1948.

His kicking ability did not end with dropping goals; he was an accomplished place kicker. In the 1947-48 season he scored 212 points in 30 games, including 42 conversions, 18 penalties and 17 drop goals.

Willie also had success playing for Gloucestershire. In the semi-final against Middlesex in 1947 he kicked 18 points in the 24-17 victory, and two drop goals in the drawn (8-8) final against Lancashire. Although acknowledged to be a great kicker he was sometimes criticised for lack of ability to see an opening, or pursue constructive play.

He was a very accomplished cricketer and played for

Glamorgan from 1937 to 1958 scoring 12,285 runs. He had a big role in Glamorgan's championship winning team of 1948, topping the batting with 1,425 runs at an average of 41.91.

### ALAN HOLDER

**Alan was a neat, reliable utility back who played in every position behind the scrum apart from scrum half. A product of the Crypt Grammar School, he played in 31 games in his first season, 1955-56.**

In 1956-57 he moved from centre to fly half. In December 1957 Gloucester took on Cardiff at Kingsholm, having lost eight of their ten previous games. Cardiff, however, had lost only one game all season. Gloucester won 3-0 due to a penalty Holder "kicked from a few yards short of half-way"



Alan Holder

as The Times correspondent put it.

In 1959 partnered by Mickey Booth, Alan played in the championship losing county final against Warwickshire. With the arrival of Terry Hopson, he moved to full back for the rest of his career. He captained the club in 1963-64. Alan made 338 appearances between 1955 and 1966, scoring 42 tries, 46 conversions and 34 penalties.



## PLAYER FEATURE

BEN  
MORGAN

”

I'M REALLY PLEASED  
TO CONTINUE MY  
INVOLVEMENT HERE FOR  
THE NEXT FEW YEARS. I  
HAVE REALLY ENJOYED  
MY RUGBY HERE AND I'M  
REALLY EXCITED ABOUT  
THE FUTURE





DID YOU KNOW? | BEN ATTENDED KINGSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND KATHARINE LADY BERKELEY'S SECONDARY SCHOOL

# FROM KINGSWOOD TO KINGSHOLM

LAST WEEK, THE CLUB WERE THRILLED TO REVEAL THAT ENGLAND INTERNATIONAL NUMBER EIGHT BEN MORGAN HAD PENNED A NEW DEAL AT KINGSHOLM AND, FOR THE 25-YEAR OLD BACK ROWER, THIS WAS A PERFECT WAY TO START 2015, AFTER A STRONG FINISH TO THE LAST CALENDAR YEAR.

**N**OW back to fitness and back in a Cherry and White jersey, the ex-Dursley RFC man is chomping at the bit to get the ball rolling in the new year, and start the Cherry and Whites' improvement.

"I'm really pleased to continue my involvement here for the next few years, I have really enjoyed my rugby here and I'm really excited about the future. The new coaches coming in have really made a difference, and I am really enjoying the way that we want to play – when we get it right.

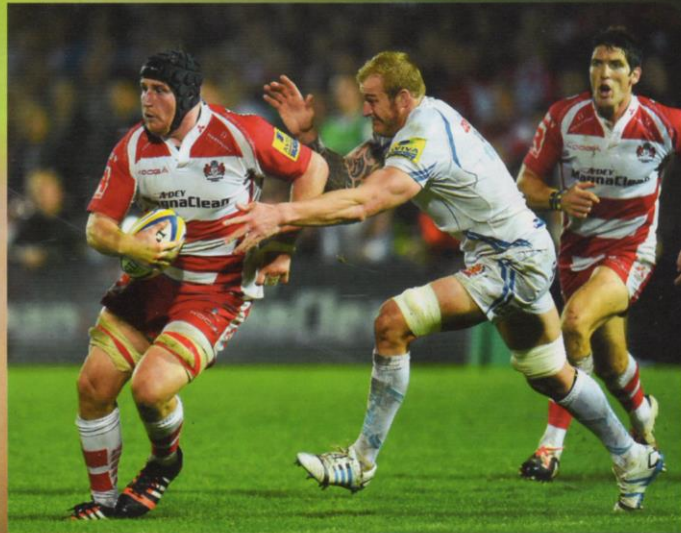
"I think the direction the club is heading is good, with myself signing behind Matt and Jonny, two England internationals as well, it shows the class of player that we have here. It shows that people want to be here and want to be involved in this squad, and represent this club."

Named as QBE Man of the Series off the back of some superb performances in an England shirt in the Autumn Internationals, the new deal has topped off a great few weeks for Ben.

"I've had worse months! Everything came together nicely. I had been speaking with Gloucester for a few weeks anyway, and it's really



DID YOU KNOW? | BEN HAS SCORED 5 TRIES IN HIS 20 APPEARANCES FOR ENGLAND



Instead a hamstring injury left him sidelined, something that was hugely frustrating.

"It was an absolute nightmare. I'm not a good watcher so I have been pretty frustrated over the Christmas period watching the boys. They have been trying really hard but unfortunately not getting the results.

"But I'm buzzing to be back

fit and back in contention and getting on with it"

With it being the first home fixture of 2015, a big year for Morgan, Gloucester and Kingsholm with Six Nations and Rugby World Cup on the horizon, any resolutions?

"I've not made any yet, my main aim probably is to finish my house!"

”

I THINK THE DIRECTION THE CLUB IS HEADING IS GOOD, WITH MYSELF SIGNING BEHIND MATT AND JONNY, TWO ENGLAND INTERNATIONALS AS WELL. IT SHOWS THE CLASS OF PLAYER THAT WE HAVE HERE. IT SHOWS THAT PEOPLE WANT TO BE HERE AND WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS SQUAD, AND REPRESENT THIS CLUB.

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# BOB FENTON'S

## KINGSHOLM NEWS

“ONE THING THAT I HAVE NEVER REALLY UNDERSTOOD THOUGH, IS THE WAY THEIR FANS DRESS UP - I GET THE FEZ BIT, THAT'S OBVIOUS. BUT THE BLOKES IN THOSE 'CHAIN MAIL' TABARDS???

**W**ELCOME back everyone, I hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year break. We go into the year full of optimism and hope, thinking this could be our year. To be fair I've lost count of the times that I have woken up and had that very thought, I've also lost count of the number of times that it has failed to materialise.

A few weeks ago I wrote that the fixtures that we had lined up over the Christmas and New Year period were going to be a test and would, by the time we went into the next round of European and LV= games, give a good indication of how we have progressed so far this season.

Going into the last installment of the fearsome fixture foursome, with Bath, Wasps, Exeter all done

and dusted, and just Saracens to go, what have we learned? In a nutshell for me, we have under-lined the fact that we have become more resilient as a side - the late score against Bath when before we would have crumbled to dust.

So far the two home games haven't been the best. Against Bath I thought we did quite well to come second, such was their dominance.

Against Wasps it was a much closer run thing. It was one of those games when it could have gone either way. We got out of the traps at a fantastic pace, scoring after just a few seconds, unfortunately little errors and some poor decisions cost us dear.

Then last weekend Exeter were expected to steam roller us into submission, again we tried to help them on their way by gifting a couple of really soft tries. But we showed some real tenacity to hang in there and - by the width of a coat of paint on a post - came away with a great win.

At half time I don't think anyone could really work out how we were in front, Greig's penalties had put us there, but Exeter had all the play and had butchered a series of opportunities. The Chiefs were not impressed, as I said at the time, they are not Apache on us...







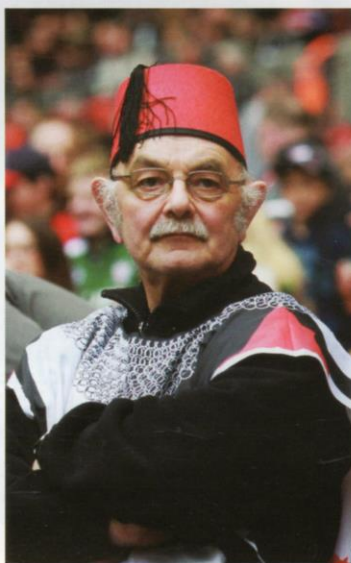
(note clever Native American pun thing going on there... yeah, I know if you have to explain them, don't bother). So who cares how we got over the line? The record shows a win for us, and that's good enough for me.

Having faced a team from a part of a country with some tenuous link with the Wild West (maybe their directors had a penchant for John Wayne films?), this week we host a team with links to the far Orient. To be fair Barnet is in North East London, so maybe that's it? One thing that I have never really understood though, is the way their fans dress up - I get the Fez bit, that's obvious. But the blokes in those 'chain mail' tabards???

Actually if you look at the club's history you'll find that Saracens merged with another local club called 'Crusaders' a couple of years after their formation, so perhaps those tabards have been in store since then? Still, as long as they are having a bit of fun that's all that really matters.

Last weekend Saracens

showed the latest trick in their armoury - re-programming all their players with little computer chips inserted behind their ears. Obviously being Saracens there was some-thing deeply underhand going on, something like what went on in that film - The Manchurian Candidate.



In that film the main man was brainwashed into becoming an assassin for the communist party. I can only assume that these chips brainwashed all the players into believing that there was something special happening at Saracens! That and making them realise that Barnet was similar in every way to Monaco, and playing for fifty quid a week and some free woodwork or hairdressing lessons at the local job centre was a great and fair return for their services.

Not only that I am reliably informed that the chips also served as a remote control device so that the coaches could manoeuvre the players into the correct position on the park and to feed them information about the opposition tactics etc. That's what all the blokes with laptops are doing up in the stands. While our blokes are looking at films of kittens on YouTube or checking bargains on eBay, the evil geniuses from Saracens are sending instructions direct to their players brains!

Ah, okay, I've overdone the conspiracy theories for one week. These chips were, apparently, a way of recording impacts the players were receiving and was a way of monitoring the effects they had. In which case they have to be a great idea - anything that makes things safer for the guys on the pitch has to be a good thing, and fair play to Saracens for trialing it.

No doubt by the time this programme appears the expert pundits will have written us off, and suggested that there is little point in us turning up at all. But I've said it before, cold, damp evenings; floodlights on and a full and noisy Kingsholm is no place for the faint-hearted.

Many bigger, and supposedly better, sides have come to town on evenings like this and left with their tails between their legs. Why not tonight?

Have faith.



# IAN RANDALL'S RUGBY TALK

WHEN MARCO BORTOLAMI CAME BACK HERE WITH ZEBRE LAST MONTH, HE GOT A TREMENDOUS OVATION FROM YOU, THE SUPPORTERS.

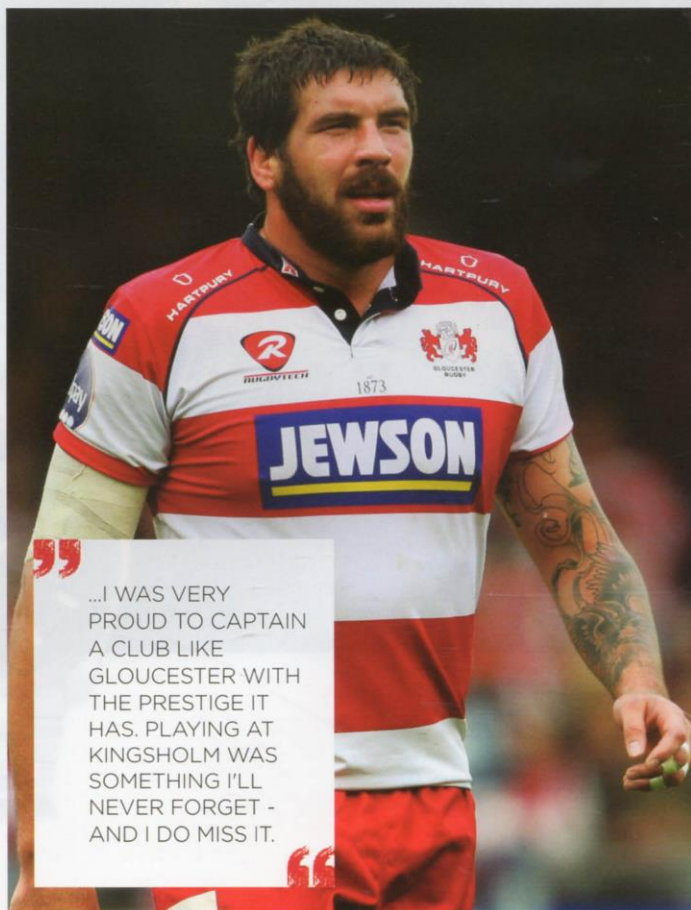
**T**ODAY another former captain returns to Kingsholm and - by his own admission - he isn't sure what kind of reception he'll get. Tongue in cheek, Jim Hamilton might expect it to be mixed.

The giant Scotland second row spent three seasons at Kingsholm, two under the man who signed him (Bryan Redpath) and one under Nigel Davies. He comes here tonight with Saracens after a year in France with Montpellier. It was a year that was a real eye opener.

"There had been a lot of speculation about me leaving Gloucester, and we'd always said as a family that if the chance came to go to the south of France, by the beach, and with an amazing contract that would set us up for life, that's what we'd do," Jim told me.

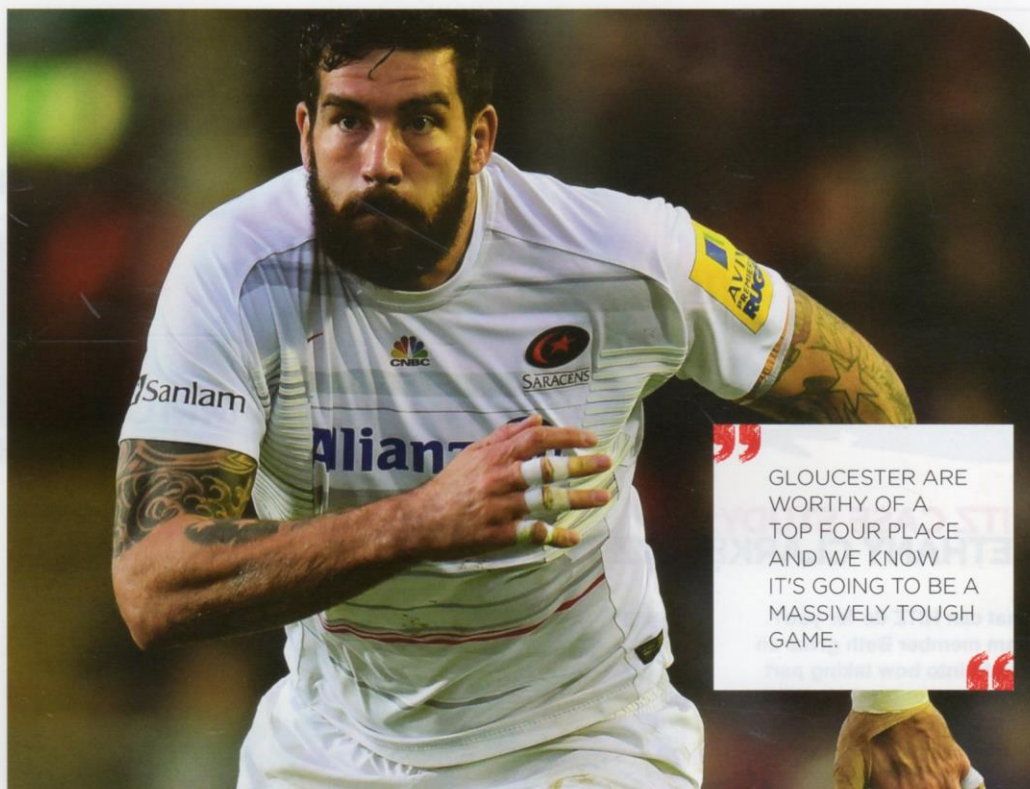
"We took an optimistic view about my career, but what I found hard was to detach myself from Gloucester.

"I was captain in the season when it was announced I was leaving. I couldn't have given any more but fans want loyalty and



...I WAS VERY PROUD TO CAPTAIN A CLUB LIKE GLOUCESTER WITH THE PRESTIGE IT HAS. PLAYING AT KINGSHOLM WAS SOMETHING I'LL NEVER FORGET - AND I DO MISS IT.





GLOUCESTER ARE WORTHY OF A TOP FOUR PLACE AND WE KNOW IT'S GOING TO BE A MASSIVELY TOUGH GAME.

the circumstances in which I left may have annoyed a few people, and those people will be calling for penalties against me tonight!

"I still say though that I was very proud to captain a club like Gloucester with the prestige it has. Playing at Kingsholm was something I'll never forget - and I do miss it."

Tonight, for one night only - and having been rested from Saracens' win over London Irish last weekend - Hamilton hopes to get that chance again. He's settled in well at Allianz Park, and "Big Jim" sites the stability of the club on and off the field as a major reason why Saracens regularly challenge for honours.

"The foundations are rock solid," said Hamilton with a certainty you wouldn't argue with.

"At Gloucester there has been a fairly high turnover of players in the last four years and three different Directors of Rugby. It made the club unbalanced.

"Are Saracens stronger

mentally? I'd say it's more about the consistency that comes from a strong base. We're not at our very best at the moment but we are winning, and that comes from trust in each other and the systems we have."

At this stage, however, Saracens cannot match the sharpness of Northampton and Bath. Hamilton isn't surprised by Saints leading the table - in his opinion, another stable club who promote from within and recruit carefully externally. You certainly couldn't say they empty the apple cart every summer for a swathe of new signings.

When asked about Bath, even though they lost at Leicester last Sunday, Jim merely said "dangerous." The other leading clubs will no doubt feel the same.

Hamilton is keen to play tonight. He says he's recaptured his love of rugby after his season at Montpellier, which - in his own words - proved that money isn't everything.

He struggled with the culture at the French club, but still believes it was the right decision to try playing there because it took away the "what if" element that would have been nagging away at him if he'd turned the chance down.

What Hamilton IS certain about is how he regards Gloucester.

"It's a sleeping giant - what it needs is a settled squad and a good coaching set up," Hamilton said, "My first year was great because of the people that were in the squad. The second year was difficult towards the end when Brush (Bryan Redpath) left and then John Brain sadly passed away."

"If you look now they've recruited Hibbard and Afoa up front - where they struggled last season - and those guys are two of the top 10 front rowers in the world. It's also great to see Tom Savage back playing so well.

"Gloucester are worthy of a top four place and we know it's going to be a massively tough game."





## PLAYER A to Z ALED THOMAS

### ...is for **ATMOSPHERE...**

What is the best atmosphere you have experienced? Westpac Stadium in Wellington during the IRB 7s; 40,000 drunk fans, all dressed up and making as much noise as possible for 2 days – awesome!



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

Wayne Evans; ex-Newport Gwent Dragons, been best mates since we were 5 years old

### ...is for **CAREER...**

If you weren't a rugby player what would you be? I would have utilised my Sports and Exercise Science degree to work within sports somewhere, not where or what though



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

Ford Fiesta to travel back and forth to Wales, and a Kia Sportage to drive the family around.

### ...is for **EMBARRASSED...** most embarrassing moment on the field?

Having a conversion in front of the post charged down

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### ...is for **MATCH...**

What is the best match you have played in/watched? Rugby World Cup Sevens Final in 2009 v Argentina

### ...is for **NICKNAME...**

What's yours? Henry Trinder calls me Dai Dai Dai, but otherwise a few boys just go with Al Butt

### ...is for **OPPONENT...**

Who is the best player you have faced up against? Christian Cullen; whilst at Munster, although not at his peak at that point, he was an unbelievable player

### ...is for **PRIDE...**

What is your proudest moment? Winning the Rugby World Cup Sevens in 2009

### ...is for **QUICKEST...**

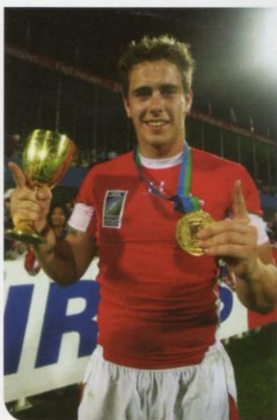
Who is the fastest player you have played with or against? Still waiting to play with Charlie and Jonny, so I'll have to go with Aisea Havili whilst at the Scarlets

### ...is for **RUN OUT MUSIC...**

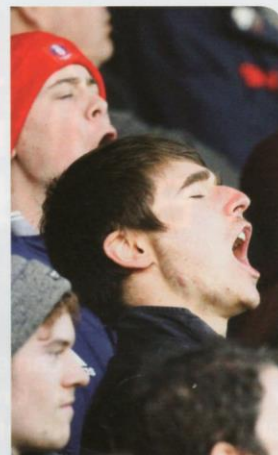
what's your tune to run out to? Not one for listening to music before games, I rather keep a clear head to concentrate on my jobs

### ...is for **SUPPORT...**

What teams do you support? Llanelli Scarlets; as they were the biggest team in the area playing top flight rugby







...is for  
**FASHION...**  
Who is the worst dressed player in the squad?  
Simply because he loves a full kit after training, I'll go with Shane Monahan, (sorry pal!)

...is for  
**GLOUCESTER RUGBY...**best thing about Gloucester Rugby?  
The passion to support the team from the home game crowds

...is for  
**HARDMAN...**  
Who is the toughest opponent you have played against?  
Chris Hala'ufia; definitely try and avoid his channel!

...is for **IDOL...**  
Who is your sporting idol?  
Neil Jenkins; the ultimate cool head under pressure, and a points machine

...is for **JOKER...**  
Who is the funniest person you have shared a dressing room with?  
Mike Powell; whilst at London Welsh, all round mental bloke! Hilarious

...is for  
**KINGSHOLM**  
...describe Kingsholm in three words?  
Full, loud, passionate

...is for **LIFE after rugby...**  
What are your future plans?  
Tough question, one I don't have an answer to yet!

**F**

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...is for **TRY...**  
What is the best try you have ever scored?  
The winning try in the RWC Sevens Final in 2009

...is for  
**UNBELIEVABLE...**  
Tell us something surprising about yourself  
I can speak fluent Welsh

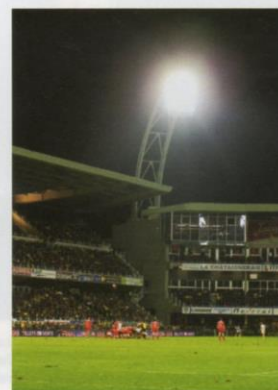
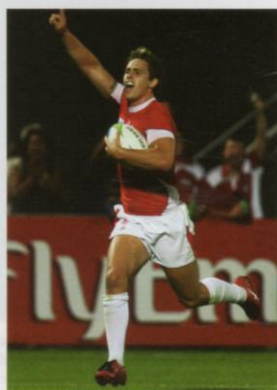
...is for **VISITOR...**  
What is your favourite ground to play at?  
Tough one, but jointly Parc des Sports Marcel Michelin, Clermont and Thomond Park, Munster. The noise and the atmosphere during big European games I've played there was unreal.

...is for **WORST...**  
What is the worst thing about being a rugby player?  
Has to be training on wet, freezing cold, windy days

...is for **X-RAY...**  
What is the worst injury you have suffered?  
Been pretty lucky over the years, a Grade 2 hamstring tear is probably the worst injury I've had

...is for **YOUTH...**  
What advice would you give to aspiring rugby players?  
Enjoy playing and training, Work hard and see where it can take you

...is for **ZZZZ...**  
Which player has the worst banter?  
Too tough to call that one... Pass





## ZEBRE RUGBY

### LINE-UP

15	FB	HENNIE DANILLER
14	W	GIOVANBATTISTA VENDITTI
13	C	MIRCO BERGAMASCO
12	C	MATTEO PRATICETTI
11	W	MICHELE VISENTIN
10	FH	LUCIANO ORQUERA
9	SH	GUGLIELMO PALAZZANI
1	P	ANDREA LOVOTTI
2	H	ANDREA MANICI
3	P	DARIO CHISTOLINI
4	L	GEORGE FABIO BIAGI
5	L	MARCO BORTOLAMI
6	F	VALERIO BERNABO
7	F	FILIPPO CRISTIANO
8	N8	DRIES VAN SCHALKWYK

### REPLACEMENTS

16	R	OLIVIERO FABIANI
17	R	ANDREA DE MARCHI
18	R	LUCIANO LEIBSON
19	R	QUINTIN GELDENHUYS
20	R	JACOPO SARTO
21	R	BRENDON LEONARD
22	R	DAVID ODIETE
23	R	KELLY HAIMONA



## ZEBRE RUGBY

16

**TRIES:** Venditti (67), van Schalkwyk (72) **PENS:** Orquera (13, 22)



## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

32

**TRIES:** McColl (27), Purdy (46), Sharples (54), Morgan (59) **CONS:** Hook (28, 47, 59) **PENS:** Hook (34), Burns (76)



## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

### LINE-UP

15	FB	STEVE MCCOLL
14	W	CHARLIE SHARPLES
13	C	HENRY PURDY
12	C	BILLY TWELVETREES
11	W	JONNY MAY
10	FH	JAMES HOOK
9	SH	CALLUM BRALEY
1	P	YANN THOMAS
2	H	RICHARD HIBBARD
3	P	SILA PUAFISI
4	L	TOM SAVAGE
5	L	JAMES HUDSON
6	F	GARETH EVANS
7	F	MATT KVESIC
8	N8	BEN MORGAN

### REPLACEMENTS

16	R	ALEKI LUTUI
17	R	NICK WOOD
18	R	SHAUN KNIGHT
19	R	ELLIOT STOOKE
20	R	ROSS MORIARTY
21	R	DAN ROBSON
22	R	BILLY BURNS
23	R	MARK ATKINSON





ROUND 04

# GLOUCESTER COMPLETE THE ITALIAN JOB

THE CHERRY AND WHITES PICKED UP THEIR THIRD BONUS POINT WIN OF THE EUROPEAN RUGBY CHALLENGE CUP WITH A PROFESSIONAL 16-32 VICTORY IN PARMA OVER A SPIRITED AND ORGANISED ZEBRE SIDE.

**T**HE visitor's task in Italy was made that much easier with the 39th minute red card shown to Zebre replacement David Odiete, who was shown his marching orders following an ill-timed tackle on the air borne Steve McColl.

But, roared on by a fantastic visiting tribe of supporters, the

Zebre were first on the scoreboard, Italian fly half Luciano Orquera with a pair of penalties before the visitors scored 29 points without reply to all but secure the game.

After working several phases, Jonny May burst through a gap, and although his offload found Italian hands, Steve McColl swooped on a loose ball to ghost

”

ONE OF THE TARGETS WE'D SET OURSELVES WAS, BY THIS STAGE, TO BE TOP OF THE POOL. WE ARE, HAVING GOT THREE BONUS POINT WINS. WE'RE VERY MUCH IN CONTROL OF GETTING A HOME QUARTER FINAL. **David Humphreys**

Cherry and Whites scored four well-worked tries to take a step closer to the European Challenge Cup quarter finals as they opened up a seven point lead at the top of the pool.



through the cover and slide under the posts.

Sila Puafisi was then sinbinned for reacting to hands in his face, but referee Neil Paterson leveled up the numbers, when Odiete was shown red for taking McColl out in the air.

It was an exciting game, Zebre were limited in their attacks but stubborn in defence as the visitors attempted to break through.

The Cherry and Whites, however, were ruthless in the third quarter of the game, and secured the bonus point with an impressive blitz of tries.

First, Billy Twelvetrees spotted space and stepped his way past three defenders to feed Henry Purdy, who had a lot to do but the young centre shrugged off a tackle to finish smartly.

## CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



The smart play that led to Ben Morgan's try was a joy to behold. Hook and Twelvetrees timed their loop to perfection off of first phase and the Welshman unselfishly played in the returning Morgan who raced away untouched.

Then, Charlie Sharples made the most of space on the right wing to get on the end of good interplay from Dan Robson and James Hook and the wing sped his way past the cover tackles.

The bonus point was then secured, as Hook and Twelvetrees worked an excellent loop for the fly half to feed Ben Morgan on his inside for the number eight to romp under the posts without a finger laid on him.

Gloucester were rampant and the impressive spell looked to have stunned the Italians. But to their complete credit, the 14-men rallied really impressively to cross for two late consolation tries through Gio Venditti and Dries van Schalkwyk as the Cherry and Whites spent much of the final quarter in defensive mode.

Only a Billy Burns penalty which put the result in no doubt late on relaxed the nerves of the travelling party.

sportlobster

gloucesterrugby @gloucesterrugby

69



## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

### LINE-UP

15	FB	STEVE MCCOLL
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	YANN THOMAS
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	NB	ROSS MORIARTY

### REPLACEMENTS

16	H	DARREN DAWIDIUK
17	P	NICK WOOD
18	P	SILA PUAFISI
19	L	JAMES HUDSON
20	NB	ELLIOTT STOOKE
21	SH	DAN ROBSON
22	C	MARK ATKINSON
23	FB	DAVID HALAIFONUA



# GLOUCESTER RUGBY

# 16

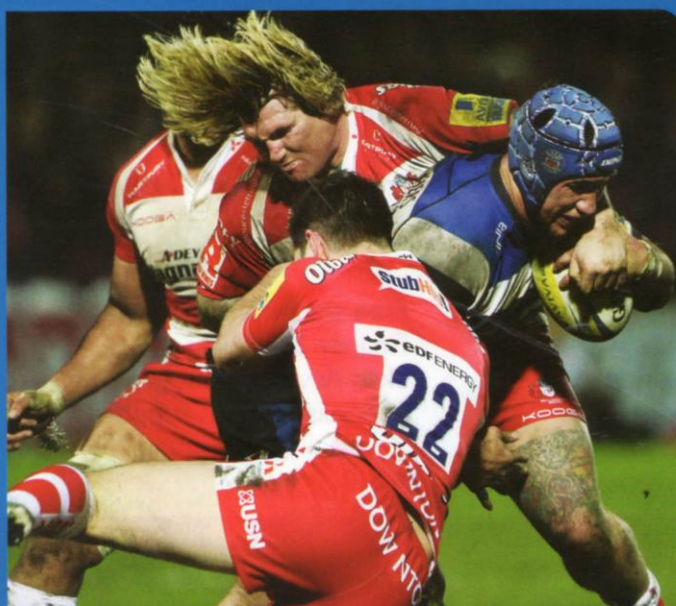
**TRY:** Robson (70) **CON:** Hook (71) **PENS:** Laidlaw (1, 16, 37)



# BATH RUGBY

# 39

**TRIES:** Penalty try (58), Garvey (67, 80) **CONS:** Ford (58, 68, 80) **PENS:** Ford (6, 18, 22, 28, 40, 49)



## BATH RUGBY

### LINE-UP

15	FB	ANTHONY WATSON
14	W	SEMESA ROKODUGUNI
13	C	JONATHAN JOSEPH
12	C	KYLE EASTMOND
11	W	MATT BANAHAN
10	FH	GEORGE FORD
9	SH	CHRIS COOK
1	P	PAUL JAMES
2	H	ROSS BATTY
3	P	DAVID WILSON
4	L	STUART HOOPER (C)
5	L	DOM DAY
6	F	ALAFOTI FAOSILIVA
7	F	FRANCOIS LOUW
8	NB	LEROY HOUSTON

### REPLACEMENTS

16	H	ROB WEBBER
17	P	NICK AUTERAC
18	P	HENRY THOMAS
19	L	MATT GARVEY
20	F	CARL FEARNES
21	SH	MICKY YOUNG
22	C	OLLIE DEVOTO
23	W	SAM BURGESS



# GLOUCESTER GROUND DOWN BY PRAGMATIC BATH

A SELL OUT 16,000 KINGSHOLM CROWD WAS AN APPROPRIATE AUDIENCE FOR THIS LATEST WEST COUNTRY DERBY BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, IT WAS THE VISITORS WHO STARTED THEIR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS EARLY AS A CLINICAL DISPLAY CLINCHED A 39-16 WIN.

**W**ITH the benefit of hindsight, it was one of those games where the final scoreline didn't really do justice to what happened on the field of play.

In terms of possession, Gloucester won the tussle as they enjoyed 61% of the ball. They also had 64% of the territory. However, they spent much of that time hammering away at the blue, black and

opportunities were just out of the range of Laidlaw and Twelvetrees respectively.

And what had been a ding-dong battle up front swung decisively at half time when John Afoa failed to reappear for the second half. Referee Garner then judged Bath's scrum to be in the ascendant and the decisions against Gloucester started to mount.

Sila Puafisi was sinbinned

”

BATH SHOWED WHY THEY'RE SECOND IN THE LEAGUE AND WE PROBABLY SHOWED WHY WE'RE DOWN AT NINTH. **David Humphreys**

white defensive line without getting any joy whatsoever.

This fruitless struggle was neatly summed up quite early in the first half, when Gloucester went through the best part of 30 phases in the Bath 22 without making any real progress and had to settle for a drop goal attempt from James Hook which drifted wide.

In fact, the first half was very much a tale of the goal-kickers. Seemingly every time Bath entered the Gloucester half, they came away with three points – George Ford kicked six penalties before half time.

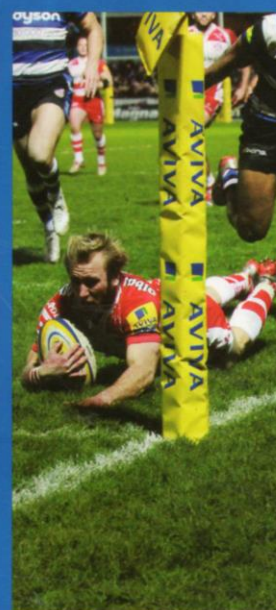
The Cherry and Whites responded with two of their own from Greig Laidlaw. However, crucially, two more penalty

and, sensing a great opportunity, Bath went for the jugular. Their catch and maul was well set and, minus a man, Gloucester were powerless to stop it. A penalty try was the outcome.

There was still plenty of fight from Gloucester but they simply couldn't break Bath down. The visitors rubbed salt into the wound by soaking up the pressure and moving downfield to score through Matt Garvey.

There was finally a glimmer of hope for Gloucester as Dan Robson scored a fine individual effort to give the home crowd something to shout about, but Bath had the final word as Garvey scored from close range with the final action of the game.

## CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



**Dan Robson's solo try was the one moment where Gloucester found the key to unlock the previously watertight Bath defence.**

The scrum half spotted a gap down the blindside and scampered down the five metre channel from 25 metres out to slide over in the corner.





# TODAY'S TEAMS

## GLOUCESTER RUGBY vs SARACENS

REFEREE: JP Doyle ASSISTANTS: Kelvin Stewart and Nigel Carrick

TEAMS CORRECT AT TIME OF PRINT

T P C D  
□ □ □ □CHARLIE **SHARPLES**  
FULL-BACK

□ □ □ □

DAVID **HALAIFONUA**  
RIGHT WING

□ □ □ □

MARK **ATKINSON**  
OUTSIDE CENTRE

□ □ □ □

BILLY **TWELVETREES (C)**  
INSIDE CENTRE

□ □ □ □

JONNY **MAY**  
LEFT WING

□ □ □ □

JAMES **HOOK**  
FLY-HALF

□ □ □ □

GREIG **LAIDLAW**  
SCRUM-HALF

□ □ □ □

NICK **WOOD**  
LOOSEHEAD PROP

□ □ □ □

DARREN **DAWIDIUK**  
HOOKER

□ □ □ □

JOHN **AFOA**  
TIGHTHEAD PROP

□ □ □ □

TOM **SAVAGE**  
LOCK

□ □ □ □

TOM **PALMER**  
LOCK

□ □ □ □

SIONE **KALAMAFONI**  
BLINDSIDE FLANKER

□ □ □ □

MATT **KVESIC**  
OPENSIDE FLANKER

□ □ □ □

BEN **MORGAN**  
NUMBER EIGHT

□ □ □ □

□ □ □ □

RICHARD **HIBBARD**  
REPLACEMENT 1

□ □ □ □

YANN **THOMAS**  
REPLACEMENT 2

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SHAUN **KNIGHT**  
REPLACEMENT 3

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ELLIOTT **STOOKE**  
REPLACEMENT 4

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GARETH **EVANS**  
REPLACEMENT 5

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DAN **ROBSON**  
REPLACEMENT 6

□ □ □ □

BILLY **BURNS**  
REPLACEMENT 7

□ □ □ □

BILL **MEAKES**  
REPLACEMENT 8

□ □ □ □

15

BEN **RANSOM**  
FULL-BACK

14

CHRIS **WYLES**  
RIGHT WING

13

NICK **TOMPKINS**  
OUTSIDE CENTRE

12

DUNCAN **TAYLOR**  
INSIDE CENTRE

11

DAVID **STRETTLE**  
LEFT WING

10

OWEN **FARRELL**  
FLY-HALF

9

NEIL **DE KOCK**  
SCRUM-HALF

1

MAKO **VUNIPOLA**  
LOOSEHEAD PROP

2

JAMIE **GEORGE**  
HOOKER

3

PETRUS **DU PLESSIS**  
TIGHTHEAD PROP

4

GEORGE **KRUIS**  
LOCK

5

ALISTAIR **HARGREAVES (C)**  
LOCK

6

JACKSON **WRAY**  
BLINDSIDE FLANKER

7

JACQUES **BURGER**  
OPENSIDE FLANKER

8

BILLY **VUNIPOLA**  
NUMBER EIGHT

16

BRETT **SHARMAN**  
REPLACEMENT 1

17

RICHARD **BARRINGTON**  
REPLACEMENT 2

18

JAMES **JOHNSTON**  
REPLACEMENT 3

19

MARO **ITOJE**  
REPLACEMENT 4

20

KELLY **BROWN**  
REPLACEMENT 5

21

BEN **SPENCER**  
REPLACEMENT 6

22

NILS **MORDT**  
REPLACEMENT 7

23

TIM **STREATHER**  
REPLACEMENT 8T P C D  
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