



# GLOUCESTER RUGBY

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## vs Ospreys

LV= Cup Round 3: 31.01.2015

Inside today's matchday programme we have an exclusive interview with young scrum-half Callum Braley, an exclusive player A to Z, world and local rugby news 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 AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO  
KINGSHOLM FOR TODAY'S MEETING WITH  
OSPREYS IN THE LV= CUP.



**W**RITING this off the back of four wins in a row, there is a real buzz around the squad and we're all preparing to recharge, reassess and get ready for the second half of the season, with plenty still to play for.

With a home quarter-final to look forward to in the spring, the team is really happy with the way we have performed in the European Rugby Challenge Cup, what a great opportunity to push forward in this tournament.

A bumper crowd at Kingsholm, in a knockout scenario would be great reward for the hard work put in across the pool stages.

Jonny and I are delighted last week to be named in the England squad for the upcoming RBS Six Nations, one of the most eagerly anticipated tournaments in years with it being a Rugby World Cup year.

To be involved in the international test environment is such a special honour. Learning new things every minute, around

new players and coaches. We have joined up with the squad at Pennyhill Park this week ahead of what will be an exciting few weeks.

What an exciting time to be involved with English rugby, this Six Nations, the World Cup at home, being in this England squad is a privilege for any player.

It goes without saying, I will be closely following the squad as they prepare to take on Ospreys. The potential in some of the younger boys is massive, and the hard work they have put in this season will be on show for you all today.

The LV= Cup yet again provides the platform for our wider squad to shine and is an exciting opportunity for supporters to see some exciting youngsters in action at first team level.

After two games away from the home in the tournament, we are still in with a chance of qualifying for the semi-finals. But it is a great chance first and foremost to carry on the form we have built up over the last few weeks, all then building towards facing Leicester in the Premiership in a few weeks time.

It's been a good January so far, hopefully we can keep things moving in the right direction this afternoon.

Enjoy the game.

*Billy*



**”** WRITING THIS OFF THE BACK OF FOUR WINS IN A ROW, THERE IS A REAL BUZZ AROUND THE SQUAD AND WE'RE ALL PREPARING TO RECHARGE, REASSESS AND GET READY FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE SEASON, WITH PLENTY STILL TO PLAY FOR.



DIR. OF  
RUGBY

DAVID  
HUMPHREYS



DAVID  
HUMPHREYS



...of our website...



GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM FOR THE LATEST ROUND OF ACTION IN THIS SEASON'S LV= CUP.

**H**AVING spent the past two weekends in European action, we now have two home games which will determine whether we progress to the knock out stages of the LV= Cup.

The performances against Oyonnax and Brive have seen us continue to make progress as a group and build on the momentum created by the two Premiership victories over Exeter and Saracens.

At the beginning of the season, we set out to secure a quarter-final spot, and to do so after just five rounds, was very pleasing. To then complete the job and qualify as top seeds was also very satisfying.

We now have a quarter-final against Connacht to look forward to in April, and that should be some occasion here at Kingsholm against a very good opponent.

One very positive aspect of the victory in Brive last

Burns, Callum Braley and Henry Purdy who were all England U20 internationals back in the summer. To see them featuring regularly at first team level, and looking at home, is excellent for the future of the club.

Developing young players and having strength in depth is a key requirement for any successful club, and our participation in the LV= Cup gives us an opportunity to provide game time for a number of members of the wider squad.

That group of players acquitted themselves very well in the first two rounds of this competition, only denied a victory at Exeter by the width of a post, then going to London Welsh and winning.

We will be looking for them to do likewise today as we try to get two victories to keep us in the race for a semi-final spot, but also to keep us moving forward in terms of performances and results.

That's very important for us as a team as we approach the business end of the season. After



format of the season being altered due to Rugby World Cup. Having more options throughout the squad will be very important, and we're looking forward to them both joining us and playing

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DEVELOPING YOUNG PLAYERS AND HAVING STRENGTH IN DEPTH IS A KEY REQUIREMENT FOR ANY SUCCESSFUL CLUB, AND OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE LV= CUP GIVES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE GAME TIME FOR A NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE WIDER SQUAD.

L

week was that we were able to clinch the win without a number of our international players in the side on the night.

Our matchday squad, for example, included the likes of Billy

these two rounds of the LV= Cup, it's back to Premiership action and we need to keep improving if we're to move up the table.

Away from the field of play, we've continued to look to strengthen the squad for next season. Following the signing of Jeremy Thrush, we also announced this week that props Paddy McAllister, Paul Doran Jones and Nicky Thomas will be joining us.

Next season will present different challenges with the

their part in Gloucester moving onwards and upwards.

For the moment though, our focus is very much on today's game. The Ospreys have a reputation for producing talented young homegrown players and I'm sure they will field a strong and skilful side today.

It should be an entertaining game and hopefully we can prevail.

David



# THE VIEW FROM The Citizen



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**FUNERAL  
FUND** means a  
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WEATHER:**  
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**NOISY M5  
TRAFFIC** is  
also driving us  
crazy

## A PROVEN BREEDING GROUND FOR TALENT

**WITH the Six Nations looming on the horizon, the Gloucester faithful could be forgiven for taking one eye off affairs at Kingsholm.**

In a World Cup year the Championship is of increased importance, it sets the tone for the entire year, both winning and losing as we all know can become habits.

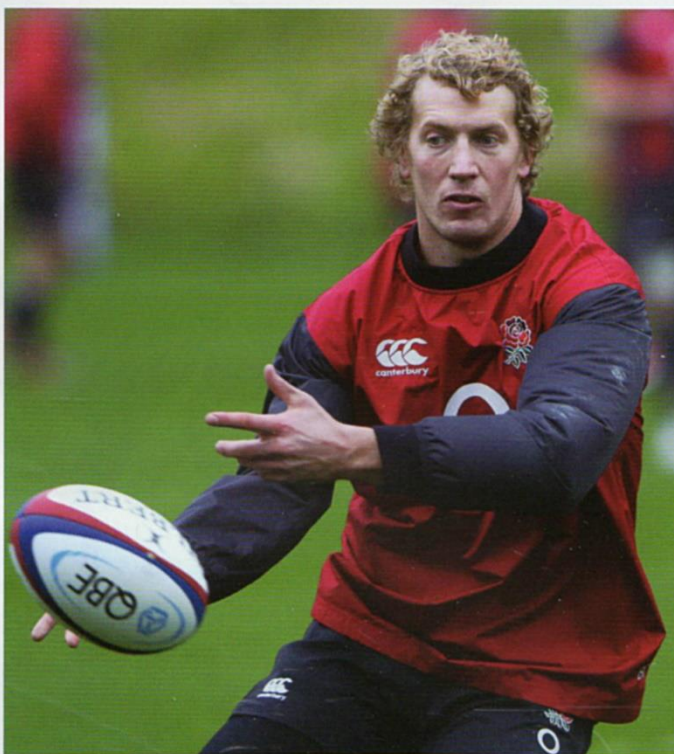
The coaches of the six respective countries will be weighing up the importance of success now to success at the global gathering. I'm sure most will chose the latter but it is all about balance.

As it stands England will enter the Millennium Stadium decimated by injury – the likes of Manu Tuilagi, Owen Farrell and Gloucester's own Ben Morgan have already been ruled out of the tournament in its entirety.

Brad Barritt and a trio of locks will definitely miss the opener and others hang in the balance. A patched up England will enter the Dragons' lair with the scars of their last visit still raw.

On that occasion in 2013 Wales romped to a record 33-3 victory to retain the Championship and deny England a first Grand Slam since 2003.

Billy Twelvetrees was the only English player in action on that



**Midfield** Twelvetrees will be looking to transfer his recent club form for Gloucester into some strong 6 Nations performances

disastrous day and he will be aiming to continue in the Red Rose midfield.

Gloucester's captain fell out of favour with England in the autumn but was restored to the number 12 jersey by the time of the final Test – a much-needed victory over Australia.





I'M NOT LOOKING TO HAVE A REST NOW, I HAVEN'T REALLY PLAYED SO I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO A GOOD RUN IN THE LV=CUP AND THE OSPREYS TODAY. **Elliott Stooke**



England's glut of midfield injuries have left the door ajar for Twelvetrees to tackle the might of Wales and he is relishing the prospect.

He said, "It's certainly a big one to start with. Whoever plays in Cardiff on that Friday night will be in an electric atmosphere.

"Hibbs and Hooky (Wales internationals Richard Hibbard and James Hook) have been telling us what it will be like and it will be a great occasion to be involved in.

"You want to be involved in every game, any time you're in the squad you want to play. I will go there, train hard and whatever happens, happens."

Twelvetrees can go into the Six Nations content that Gloucester are in good shape. Having led

his club into the knockout stages of the Challenge Cup, domestic attention turns to the LV=Cup and today's clash with the Ospreys.

The competition may not boast the dazzling array of stars now being rested or on the international stage but it is a proven breeding ground for talent.

No one can question the potential in Elliott Stooke and this season has proved a frustrating one for the giant lock.

After being a virtual ever present feature throughout last season, opportunities have been few and far between under the current regime.

But Stooke is determined to make the most of the coming weeks as he continues his development at the top of the game.

He added, "It has been frustrating but, if anything, I didn't expect to have a season like I did last season. It's not great but I have to work hard, that's what rugby is about.

"I haven't really played so I wouldn't say it's second season syndrome or anything like that, you just have to put your head down and put the work in.

"It's just little things, working off the ball a bit harder and stuff that requires no skill – just working harder and getting in positions to help the team

"I'm not looking to have a rest now, I haven't really played so I'm looking forward to a good run in the LV=Cup and the Ospreys today."

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WELCOME  
TO THE  
OSPREYS

The visit of the Ospreys (formerly the Neath-Swansea Ospreys) to Kingsholm this afternoon provides us with an opportunity to look at past matches between Gloucester and both the Ospreys and the founding clubs of the region, Neath and Swansea.

Neath-Swansea Ospreys were formed by the merger of Neath RFC and Swansea RFC in 2003 as part of the Welsh RFU's regional restructuring. They initially played their fixtures at The Gnoll, Neath and St Helens, Swansea, before moving to share the new Liberty Stadium in Swansea with Swansea City AFC at the start of the 2005-06 season. With the demise of the fifth regional team Celtic Warriors, the region was extended east to take in Bridgend and Aberavon and the club became the Ospreys.

**GLOUCESTER v  
NEATH (1909-93)**

P 50 W 18 D 5 L 27 F 367 A 512

**At Neath**

P24 W4 D0 L20 F: 118 A: 323

**At Kingsholm**

P26 W14 D5 L7 F: 249 A: 189

Gloucester always found Neath, the legendary "Welsh All-Blacks", to be formidable opponents and only achieved wins in 4 of their 24 visits to The Gnoll. The last of these wins was in 1981-82, when Gloucester resumed fixtures with Neath after a break of 14 years.

**NEATH 6  
GLOUCESTER 13  
20 FEBRUARY 1982**

1981-82 was arguably

Gloucester's greatest-ever season. Under Steve Mills' captaincy the club lost just 3 of their 48 games. Success, particularly against Welsh clubs, meant that Gloucester became the first English club for five years to win the Daily Mail Anglo-Welsh merit table.

Gloucester started this match quietly and Neath dominated the early stages. Soon however, the power of the Gloucester pack started to tell and, with John Orwin and Steve Boyle controlling the lineout and John Gadd and Mike Teague powerhouses in the loose, they gained the upper hand.



Neath still held a 6-3 lead against the run of play early in the second half but Steve Boyle, who had an outstanding game, scored a try coming up in support of a well executed back row move. Paul Ford kicked two penalties to add to his first half score and Gloucester were deservedly home and dry.

The match referee was John

Groves of Pontypridd, the ex-Gloucester winger and vice captain, who played 159 games for the Cherry and Whites in the sixties.

**GLOUCESTER v  
SWANSEA (1889-1999)**

P 121 W 34 D 13 L 74 F 770 A 1388

(before 1889-90 and the introduction of the points scoring system: P7 W2 D1 L4)

**At Swansea (1889-1999)**

P59 W5 D2 L52 F: 283 A: 979

**At Kingsholm (1889-1999)**

P62 W29 D11 L22 F: 487 A: 409

The record shows that Gloucester found the All Whites of Swansea even more challenging opponents than their neighbours Neath. It was not until Gloucester's Diamond Jubilee season 1933-34, at their 41st attempt, that the Cherry and Whites won at Swansea for the first time.

**SWANSEA 6  
GLOUCESTER 8  
4 NOVEMBER 1933**

After a first half of mediocre rugby, in which Gloucester's poor tackling had presented the home side with a number of chances, Swansea led by a soft try to nil. Gloucester were transformed in the second half, but after they'd had a try disallowed, Swansea broke away and Powell, in diving on the ball, appeared to lose it over the dead ball line. The referee, who appeared to be unsighted, awarded the try to the astonishment of home and away supporters alike.





6-0 down, but far from disheartened, Gloucester took hold of the game. The pack gained the upper hand and played a final twenty minutes of irresistible rugby. Tries were scored by back row Franklin and prop and captain Fred Wadley. Full back Harold Boughton made the crucial conversion of Franklin's try – and history was made.

Gloucester went on to win the return match at Kingsholm 10-3 and to complete the first double over Swansea in their history. But it was to be 14 years before the two sides met again...

### **GLoucester 3 SWANSEA 0 31 JANUARY 1948**

This was the first post war match in the series – and the first for 14 years. Played in a high wind the game developed into a hard fought forward battle. There were some good phases of open rugby, however, in a contest that was played at a furious pace. It was from one of these movements that Sid Dangerfield scored the only try of the game. Swansea retaliated in the second half and a handling movement involving six of their players resulted in a touch down by Beynon, but a pass was judged to be forward.

Although Willie Jones's kicking at outside half was prodigious in the conditions and the Gloucester pack were outstanding, a draw might

have been a fair result. As it was, Gloucester completed their third consecutive win over their old rivals – admittedly spread over 14 years!

The Gloucester hooker in the 1948 game was Denzil Carpenter, son of Denzil "Bumps" Carpenter who had hooked for Gloucester in the two matches in 1933-34. In the second row was the legendary Roy "Digger" Morris who played in all three games.

### **GLoucester v OSPReys (2005-13)**

**P 6 W 3 D 0 L 3 F: 127 A: 139**

**At Swansea**

**P 3 W 0 D 0 L 3 F: 61 A: 114**

**At Kingsholm**

**P 2 W 2 D 0 L 0 F: 49 A: 25**

**At Ricoh Stadium Coventry**

**P 1 W 1 D 0 L 0 F: 17 A: 0**

Gloucester and the Ospreys have met six times, with honours

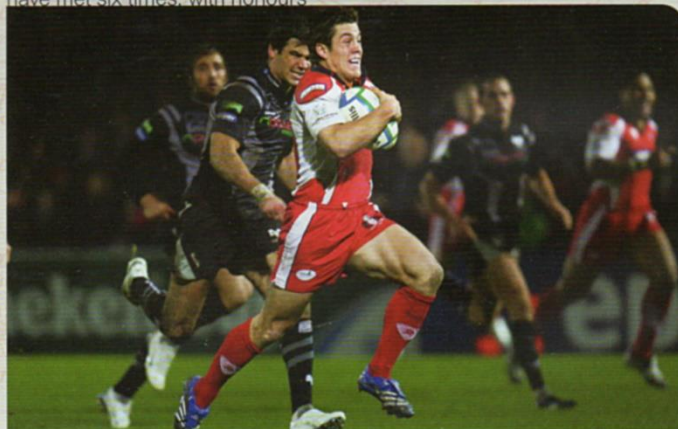
even. Their four previous meetings in the Anglo-Welsh Cup have brought two wins to either side, although the most meaningful was the 17-0 win for Gloucester in the semi-final at the Ricoh Stadium in 2009. Perhaps the best encounter was the 26-18 win by Gloucester in 2007-08 in the Heineken Cup.

### **GLoucester 26 OSPReys 18 16 NOVEMBER 2007 HEINEKEN CUP**

Gloucester came into this match, having scored four tries in the first twenty minutes of their game with Ulster in Belfast the previous week. But for the first hour of this critical encounter they were dominated by the Welsh side, who led 12-9 at half time through two Sonny Parker tries (one converted by James Hook) to three penalties by Ryan Lamb.

A brilliant try by Anthony Allen put Gloucester into the lead early in the second half. He danced through the first wave of defenders and burnt off his pursuers in a 55 metre dash for the line.

Hook restored the visitors' lead with two penalties but Gloucester were now getting well on top, and another splendid try by James Simpson-Daniel from a move started by Iain Balshaw and a Chris Paterson penalty sealed the match.







PLAYER  
FEATURE

CALLUM  
BRALEY

# IN THE MIX

THE LV= CUP YET AGAIN PROVIDES THE CHANCE TO SHOWCASE UP AND COMING TALENT IN THE ENGLISH AND WELSH GAME, AND CALLUM BRALEY IS PUTTING HIS BEST FOOT FORWARD TO LAY DOWN A MARKER IN A CHERRY AND WHITE SHIRT.

**B**EFORE arriving at Kingsholm in the summer, Braley captained England Under 20 to Junior World Championship glory, and has hugely fond memories of the tournament.

"It was a massive honour to lead such a talented group of boys in what was such a tough competition, and it is only getting tougher.

"It was an experience that I will never forget. The tournament has showcased that players can make the step up to senior rugby and it's been clear across the domestic season, and in Europe that the progression is there.

"There's been a lot of boys that have made the step up in the last year or so, the likes of Ollie Devoto, Luke Cowan-Dickie and Henry Slade who are in this year's Saxons squad, and then to Anthony Watson and Jack Nowell in the EPS squad.

"But Maro Itoje at Saracens is the most recent success, gaining a place in the Saxons recently. However there are still some of the younger boys with great talent that have great potential, like Charlie Ewels, Paul Hill, Jack Walker, Nathan Earle and Scott Wilson just to name a couple.

"Even in my group, there are some really exciting centres in Tom Stephenson and Harry Sloan."





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I HAVE LOVED THE GAMES I'VE PLAYED IN AND ENJOYED PLAYING WITH THE TEAM AND THE WAY WE ARE TRYING TO PLAY AND THE IMPROVEMENTS WE ARE MAKING.



## PLAYER FEATURE

CALLUM  
BRALEY

Off the back of a memorable summer, Braley found himself reunited with Nick Walshe at Kingsholm, and the continuity was a good factor to help him settle in.

"For sure! After an exciting summer in New Zealand it was nice for the excitement to carry on when starting at Gloucester. I have worked with Walshe for two years before that, so we know each other well and I like his coaching style so that was a positive in itself to carry on working with him."

The first taste of action for Braley came in the form of the Premiership Rugby Sevens, and the scrum half picked up his second silverware of the summer – not bad, even before making his Premiership debut.

"The Sevens were fantastic, I couldn't have wished for a better way to start the season and my time at Gloucester. It gave us an early opportunity to put the jersey

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MAKING MY  
PREMIERSHIP DEBUT  
DEFINITELY WAS A  
MASSIVE HONOUR  
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INVOLVEMENT I CAN AT  
THE MOMENT.

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DID YOU KNOW? | CALLUM ALSO REPRESENTED GLOUCESTERSHIRE AT AGE GROUP CRICKET.

on for the first time and the win was even better.

"Making my Premiership debut definitely was a massive honour for my family and I, and I'm loving getting whatever involvement I can at the moment.

"I have loved the games I've played in and enjoyed playing with the team and the way we are trying to play and the improvements we are making."

One stand out moment for Braley so far in a Cherry and White shirt must be the Try of the Week in Round 13 against Saracens, a great way to score your first try no doubt!

"That was very surreal being voted for Try of the Week, it wasn't bad for running in a straight line. The credit has to go to Gareth and Jonny though!"

With the LV= Cup on the agenda for the next fortnight, Braley is fully focused on the importance of the competition and the chances that it brings.

"For sure it's a step up, and a chance to play in the first team environment is one a lot of us will be thankful for. It gives players a chance to put their hand up for selection during the Six Nations period.

"And, to have two home games is great, playing at Kingsholm is so special. It is also important for us to carry on the momentum that we have created this year so far, every game we try and win it's that simple!"

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THAT WAS VERY SURREAL BEING VOTED FOR TRY OF THE WEEK, IT WASN'T BAD FOR RUNNING IN A STRAIGHT LINE. THE CREDIT HAS TO GO TO GARETH AND JONNY THOUGH!

GLOUCESTER RUGBY AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION





# BOB FENTON'S

## KINGSHOLM NEWS

**”** SPEAKING FOR MYSELF I WOULD MUCH RATHER HAVE A STRAIGHTFORWARD KNOCK-OUT TOURNAMENT WITH, MAYBE, THE CHAMPIONSHIP SIDES JOINING THE PARTY - AWAY TRIPS TO PLACES LIKE BEDFORD OR NOTTINGHAM ARE ALWAYS WELCOME. THOSE OF US WITH GREY HAIR AND LONG MEMORIES WILL REMEMBER THE EXCITEMENT OF THOSE ONE-OFF CUP-TIES AND THE FAR-FLUNG PLACES WE GOT TO GO TO.

**A** S we spiral helter-skelter like towards the Six Nations and the devastation that it causes to our season (see earlier rant in an earlier programme), we take a break from all the serious stuff like the Premiership and European competitions and delve into the slightly confusing world of the LV= Cup.

As I sat to write this piece, I couldn't for the life of me remember where we sit in our Pool (bottom) or who is top of it (Saracens). When I say bottom, we have the same number of points as the two teams above us (5) - three behind our leaders. But, as we don't play any of those guys, it's hard to fathom out what we need to do to progress further. Actually I do - win our next two

home games and hope that the others don't do the same.

I think the fact that this tournament is so difficult to understand is one of the reasons why supporters find it so hard to engage with it. Speaking for myself I would much rather have a straightforward knock-out tournament with, maybe, the Championship sides joining the party - away trips to places like Bedford or Nottingham are always welcome. Those of us with grey hair and long memories will remember the excitement of those one-off cup-ties and the far-flung places we got to go to.

The flip side of that is that for some teams there would be just the one game as they get dumped out of the tournament. Along with the ignominy of defeat would be a loss in revenue from having no games to play for a while and that is, undoubtedly, an issue for the clubs.

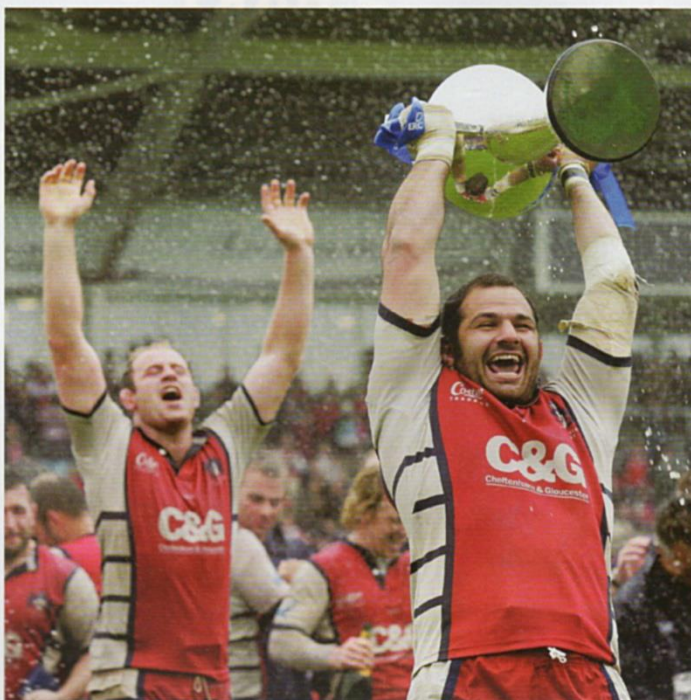
If you take a look at the LV= website their billing of the tournament is quite interesting, it says:

'...The LV= Cup offers a fantastic platform for today's club players to develop into tomorrow's international player...' So, when you look at it like that it does, as a competition, have a lot of merit.

Just make it easier for old







codgers like me who have one too many rotted brain cells to understand!

We go into it in a good run of form and on the back of a highly successful start to our European campaign. Six wins out of six, with just one point dropped is pretty good going by anyone's standard. Last time we did that we went on to claim the trophy at The Stoop - the sight of James Forrester aquaplaning in from about the 22 metre line to score will stay with me forever.

The last two wins against French opposition have been particularly pleasing for me, not just because I work for a French company, but also it gives me massive bragging rights over a few colleagues.

Ending the pool stage as the best placed side was good and secured us another home match for the quarter-final, and we know that our opponents on the day/night will be Connacht.

That's going to be some evening, and we can be absolutely sure that they are

going to come over with more than a few fans in tow. They are going well at the moment, pretty much what you expect from a side with Pat Lam pulling the strings. If they play in his image they are going to be tough, tough, tough!

But now we also know that if (when) we win that quarter-final

we will be at home for the semi-final against either Exeter or Newcastle. Tough games, but we can do it.

I hope we avoid the deadly Thursday night fixture spot though. This is a terrible time for paying supporters - and not just those who have a bit of travelling to do either. I know that the TV money is huge and the clubs can't do without it, I also know that having shelled out a heap of cash the TV companies have some say on when games are played.

The fact that the TV companies know that there will be a crowd at Kingsholm whenever the game is played makes me think I'd better clear my diary for that Thursday...

Like the LV= Cup, the European Rugby Challenge Cup is seen by some as a lesser competition. I don't really understand that mentality. At the end of the day there are only so many competitions you can win at the start of the season: two European trophies, the Premiership and the LV=Cup - and I guess that these days you can add the JP Morgan Sevens too.

I don't remember many people who were at The Stoop last time we won the then European Shield, or any of the thousands of people who trekked up to Franklin's Gardens the season we beat Newcastle to win this trophy complaining so much.

It's good to see the team stringing a few wins together too, a couple of excellent results in the Premiership and two wins in Europe have lifted the mood no end. Winning is a good habit to have and confidence and morale will be high.

Mind you last time the domestic game got knocked sideways to make room for international fixtures we were going well. When we came back to the rugby that really matters things took a decidedly sharp turn for the worst!

Fingers crossed that we don't do the same thing again.





# IAN RANDALL'S RUGBY TALK

IT ALWAYS BEMUSES ME WHY ANY SPECTATOR WOULD LEAVE A SPORTING EVENT BEFORE THE END. SOMETIMES THE RESULT MAY BE A FOREGONE CONCLUSION, BUT THERE ARE MANY FINISHES WHICH ARE BALANCED ON A KNIFE EDGE.

**S**O it was against Saracens earlier this month, which got me thinking about a top 10 of cliff-hangers here at Kingsholm in the professional era. You'll have your own memories I'm sure, and hopefully I'll revive a few with my own personal selections.

## 8/4/97 V LEICESTER (32-30)

The atmosphere of this Wednesday night league game was heightened as it quickly followed a Cup semi final at Kingsholm which Tigers won.

Gloucester produced a perfect catch and drive from a line out to level the scores with a classic forwards try, later claimed by Phil Greening.

Mark Mapletoft's touchline conversion was the winning kick in front of a crowd of 6310, small by today's levels.

## 4/4/98 V NEWCASTLE (27-29)

Referee John Pearson was the central figure here. No fewer than three Newcastle tries hinged on debatable decisions

in the build up, and the Shed was outraged that a trip on Mark Mapletoft by Falcons' prop Paul Van Zandvliet wasn't punished more severely.

Mapletoft had the chance to win the game with a last gasp drop goal, but it went narrowly wide.

## 13/1/2001 V LLANELLI (28-27)

Another drop goal decider, this

time as Gloucester scrambled into the quarter-finals of the European Cup.

27-25 down and camped close to the Llanelli line, scrum half Elton Moncrieff's effort clipped the shoulder of Daffyd Jones and somehow looped over the bar at the Deans Way end.

Cue the sort of bedlam that greeted James Hook's penalty





against Saracens.

#### **12/4/2003 V NEWCASTLE (25-23)**

The Saturday after the Powergen Cup win at Twickenham against Northampton, Gloucester produced a remarkable recovery to maintain a 100% home league record.

Trailing by 20 points to the Falcons early in the second half, tries by Trevor Woodman and Andy Hazell opened the door to an unlikely win which was sealed by an injury time touchdown from Thinus Delport and Ludovic Mercier's conversion.

#### **19/2/2005 V BATH (17-16)**

Without doubt Brad Davies' finest hour among his 16 appearances for Gloucester. Still in the Academy at the time, he came off the replacements bench to slot a drop goal in the final seconds.

Davies went on to play for Plymouth, Bedford and Moseley before joining Cinderford.

#### **18/5/2008 V LEICESTER (25-26)**

The dislike of the play-offs among Gloucester supporters is born out of days like this. Top at the end of the regular season, they faced Tigers for a place at Twickenham.

Gloucester led 12-3 at half time and 22-13 after an hour but they couldn't shake Leicester off. Willie Walker's drop goal looked to have won it with less than five minutes left before Andy Goode coolly matching Walker's score to decide the contest.

#### **30/10/10 V LEICESTER (19-12) A third dramatic duel with Tigers, which again shows why the fixture is regarded so highly.**

Lesley Vainikolo was a big signing for Gloucester, and this was his last significant contribution, deciding a match locked at 12-12 with the game's only try.



Five metres out, in the corner in front of the old dressing rooms and with under two minutes remaining, Vainikolo was deadly.

#### **22/2/13 V WORCESTER (29-23)**

If Gloucester felt hard done by in the 1998 game against Newcastle, fortune favoured them here.

One point behind against a Warriors side in a scrap to avoid relegation, Jonny May was sent clear from a deep position. As he tried to evade Errie Claassens, he was brought down by the full back's trailing leg.

The TMO deemed it deliberate, Claassens was sent off and Gloucester were awarded a penalty try which decided the game.

#### **21/9/13 V NORTHAMPTON (26-24)**

Gloucester were staring at a third successive defeat at the start of last season when

Stephen Myler converted a late try from Jamie Elliott.

Enough chances had come and gone for Gloucester to be well clear by then, but they were indebted to Billy Twelvetrees, who boomed over a last minute penalty when Saints were penalised at a scrum.

#### **9/1/15 V SARACENS (24-23) A firecracker of a game to start the year at Kingsholm which will be difficult to match in the coming 12 months.**

Injuries to Wood and Morgan meant it was nearly 10 o'clock when a series of scrums concluded not with the penalty the home fans were calling for but a Saracens break and what seemed a decisive touchdown by Chris Ashton.

The TMO disallowed the try as Ashton was offside, and James Hook - from inside his own half - snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.





## PLAYER A to Z DAN ROBSON



...is for  
**ATMOSPHERE...**  
What is the best atmosphere you have experienced?  
The recent game against Saracens at home was the best I've ever experienced. It was amazing, especially at the end.



...is for best mate  
...**BEST MATE** in rugby?  
Ryan Mills. We shared a flat for ages when he was here. Also Elliot Daly at Wasps.



...is for **CAREER...**  
If you weren't a rugby player what would you be?  
Professional golfer

...is for **DRIVE...**  
what car are you driving?  
A 57 plate VW Golf.



...is for **EMBARRASSED...**  
most embarrassing moment on the field?  
I'm still getting stick about it, and I still can't believe I did it, but the knock on near the line against Tigers when we were going for the bonus point.

A

B

C

D

E

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

...is for **MATCH...**  
What is the best match you have played in/watched?  
Probably the Saracens game. That match had everything, it swung back and forth and went down to the last kick

...is for **NICKNAME...**  
What's yours?  
Dobby

...is for **OPPONENT...**  
Who is the best player you have faced up against?  
Jan Serfontein the Springbok centre. I faced him in the U20s World Cup and he was class

...is for **PRIDE...**  
What is your proudest moment?  
Running out at Twickenham against the Barbarians

...is for **QUICKEST...**  
Who is the fastest player you have played with or against?  
Charlie Sharples

...is for **RUN OUT MUSIC...** what's your tune to run out to?  
You're On by Madeon

...is for **SUPPORT...**  
What teams do you support?  
Sale to be honest, Stoke City at football







...is for **FASHION...**  
Who is the worst dressed player in the squad?  
Ben Morgan

...is for **GLOUCESTER RUGBY...**best thing about Gloucester Rugby?  
The passion of the fans



...is for **HARDMAN...**  
Who is the toughest opponent you have played against?  
Andy Hazell



...is for **IDOL...**  
Who is your sporting idol?  
Jonny Wilkinson



...is for **JOKER...**  
Who is the funniest person you have shared a dressing room with?  
Mark Atkinson – very dry, very northern, very funny



...is for **KINGSHOLM**  
...describe Kingsholm in three words?  
Loud, fortress, passionate

...is for **LIFE after rugby...**  
What are your future plans?  
Fashion designer

**F**

**G**

**H**

**I**

**J**

**K**

**L**

**T**

**U**

**V**

**W**

**X**

**Y**

**Z**

...is for **TRY...**  
What is the best try you have ever scored?  
It's the Saracens game again. The one I scored in that game

...is for **UNBELIEVABLE...**  
Tell us something surprising about yourself  
I'm a dog person and have two dogs.

...is for **VISITOR...**  
What is your favourite ground to play at?  
Thomond Park, Munster away last season.

...is for **WORST...**  
What is the worst thing about being a rugby player?  
Not being able to go skiing

...is for **X-RAY...**  
What is the worst injury you have suffered?  
I've been pretty lucky really – dislocated shoulder I guess.

...is for **YOUTH...**  
What advice would you give to aspiring rugby players?  
Make sure you enjoy it and play as many sports as possible at a young age

...is for **ZZZZ...**  
Which player has the worst banter?  
John Alofi





# ACTION REPLAY

VS  
SARACENS

## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

### LINE-UP

- 15 FB CHARLIE SHARPLES
- 14 W DAVID HALAIFONUA
- 13 C MARK ATKINSON
- 12 C BILLY TWELVETREES (C)
- 11 W JONNY MAY ■
- 10 FH JAMES HOOK
- 9 SH DAN ROBSON
- 1 P NICK WOOD
- 2 H DARREN DAWIDIUK
- 3 P JOHN AFOA
- 4 L TOM SAVAGE ■
- 5 L ELLIOTT STOOKE
- 6 F SIONE KALAMAFONI
- 7 F MATT KVESIC
- 8 NB BEN MORGAN

### REPLACEMENTS

- 16 H RICHARD HIBBARD
- 17 P YANN THOMAS
- 18 SHAWN KNIGHT
- 19 TOM HICKS
- 20 NB GARETH EVANS
- 21 SH CALLUM BRALEY
- 22 FB BILLY BURNS
- 23 BILL MEAKES



# GLOUCESTER RUGBY

# 24

**TRIES:** Robson (35), Braley (60) **CON:** Hook (61) **PENS:** Hook (16, 20, 59, 80)



# SARACENS

# 23

**TRIES:** Penalty try (6), M. Vunipola (43), B. Vunipola (68) **CONS:** Ford (58, 68, 80) **PENS:** Ford (6, 18, 22, 28, 40, 49)



## SARACENS

### LINE-UP

- 15 FB BEN RANSOM
- 14 W CHRIS ASHTON
- 13 C MARCELO BOSCH
- 12 C DUNCAN TAYLOR
- 11 W DAVID STRETTLE ■
- 10 FH ALEX GOODE
- 9 SH RICHARD WIGGLESWORTH
- 1 P MAKO VUNIPOLA
- 2 H JAMIE GEORGE
- 3 P PETRUS DU PLESSIS
- 4 L GEORGE KRUIS ■
- 5 L JIM HAMILTON
- 6 F KELLY BROWN (C)
- 7 F JACQUES BURGER
- 8 NB BILLY VUNIPOLA

### REPLACEMENTS

- 16 BRETT SHARMAN
- 17 RHYS GILL
- 18 JAMES JOHNSTON
- 19 C MARO ITOJE
- 20 F ERNST JOUBERT
- 21 SH NEIL DE KOCK
- 22 C NICK TOMPKINS
- 23 L TIM STREATHER



# HOOK THE HERO AS GLOUCESTER SECURE SUPERB VICTORY

SOME GAMES AT KINGSHOLM JUST STAY IN THE MEMORY OF FOLLOWERS OF THE CHERRY AND WHITES, AND THIS ROUND 13 CLASH WILL NO DOUBT BE ONE OF THOSE MEMORABLE NIGHTS AFTER A GAME THAT SEE-SAWED ALL THE WAY INTO THE FINAL SECONDS.

**B**UOYED by the victory at Sandy Park the week previously, the home side targeted another strong display to build momentum and confidence after a tricky festive period.

An impressive performance was duly delivered against a Saracens side that continues to compete at the top end of the table, and the scriptwriter delivered controversy, stunning tries and late drama.

”

I THINK WE WERE DUE A BIT OF LUCK AND THE ONE THING THAT PEOPLE CANNOT QUESTION IS THIS TEAM HAS CHARACTER. **David Humphreys**

Gloucester were without experienced duo Tom Palmer and Greig Laidlaw, late withdrawals through illness and injury, whilst England pivot Owen Farrell was a late withdrawal for the visitors.

Saracens were first on the scoreboard, as a rolling maul was sacked illegally and referee JP Doyle trotted under the posts to award a penalty try. It was an inauspicious start for Gloucester.

James Hook slotted two confident penalties to get Gloucester off and running, before Alex Goode did likewise for the Men in Black.

The hosts were enjoying the majority of the possession with the visitors seemingly content to soak up pressure in defence and then play the territory game to

eke out mistakes.

Instead, Gloucester had to get creative and Dan Robson very nearly snuck in down the blindside. Minutes later, he tried again and to devastating effect, sniping down the left wing, chipping the cover and winning the race to dot down one handed.

The Cherry and Whites kept probing, and Saracens' tackle and penalty count was rising. Although the first half ended with no further

scores, David Strettle was shown a yellow card for a deliberate knock on.

Just like they did at the start of the first half, the visitors started the second by returning to the tried and tested rolling maul. Tom Savage was yellow carded at the first attempt, before Billy Vunipola was trucked over at the second.

A bit of a sucker punch after a strong finish to the first half from the hosts.

The third quarter was overshadowed by a serious leg injury to Ben Morgan and, after a lengthy delay, the England international was stretchered off.

The hosts kept their concentration however and Hook added a penalty, as the Cherry and Whites dug deep to get back into

## CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



the game.

From the restart, they struck, and crossed for a try that will be shown time and time again on highlight reels in seasons to come.

Callum Braley fed Jonny May who weaved past three defenders before offloading to Gareth Evans who stormed past a further four defenders. Scrum half Callum Braley took a great supporting line and dived over under the posts for his first Premiership try.

As the roars of the crowd subsided, from the restart, George Kruis will thank his lucky stars to have only been shown a yellow for a tip-tackle on David Halaifonua, and Saracens were back down to 14-men.

Shortly after however, it was Gloucester down to 14 as Nick Wood was stretchered off after suffering a neck injury and May was shown a yellow for side-entry at the maul.

Mako Vunipola stuck the knife in to a previously buoyant Kingsholm as he stretched over after more powerful carries from the visiting pack to put his side in a two-point lead.

As Gloucester tried to rescue the game, they threw caution to the wind but disaster struck with just seconds left as Chris Ashton dotted down after hacking through a loose ball.

But, JP Doyle disallowed the try with pantomime villain Ashton ruled offside, and awarded Gloucester a long-range penalty attempt, with no time left on the clock.

Up stepped James Hook, and from just inside his own half, the fly half bisected the posts to send Kingsholm into raptures to secure a memorable victory.



# ACTION REPLAY

VS  
OYONNAX

## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

### LINE-UP

15	FB	JAMES HOOK
14	W	DAVID HALAIFONUA
13	C	MARK ATKINSON
12	C	BILLY TWELVETREES
11	W	JONNY MAY
10	FH	BILLY BURNS
9	SH	GREIG LAIDLAW
1	P	YANN THOMAS
2	H	RICHARD HIBBARD
3	P	JOHN AFOA
4	L	TOM SAVAGE
5	L	JAMES HUDSON
6	F	SIONE KALAMAFONI
7	F	MATT KVESIC
8	N8	GARETH EVANS

### REPLACEMENTS

16		DARREN DAWIDIUK
17	R	DAN MURPHY
18	R	SHAUN KNIGHT
19	R	ELLIOTT STOOKE
20	R	ROSS MORIARTY
21	R	DAN ROBSON
22	R	BILL MEAKES
23	R	STEVE MCCOLL



# GLOUCESTER RUGBY

# 33

TRIES: Burns (3), May (7), Atkinson (10), Penalty try (38), Robson (80) CONS: Laidlaw (4, 8, 39, 80)



# OYONNAX

# 3

PEN: Lespinas (5)



## OYONNAX

### LINE-UP

15	FB	RIAAN SMIT
14	W	DUG CODJO
13	C	GUILLAUME BOUSSES
12	C	HEMANI PAEA
11	W	JEAN-FRANCOIS COUX
10	FH	REGIS LESPINAS
9	SH	FABIEN CIBRAY
1	P	LUKAS RAPANT
2	H	PAULA NGAUAMO
3	P	ANTOINE GUILLAMON
4	L	THIBAUT LASSALLE
5	L	DAMIEN LAGRANGE
6	F	GUILLAUME BERNAD
7	F	VALENTIN URSACHE
8	N8	PEDRIE WANNENBURG

### REPLACEMENTS

16	R	CLEMENT JULLIEN
17	R	ANTOINE TICHIT
18	R	MARC CLERC
19	R	PATRICK SOBELA
20	R	YOHAN DOMENECH
21	R	ROIMATA HANSELL-PUNE
22	R	FLORIAN DENOS
23	R	GEOFFREY FABBRI





ROUND 05

# GLOUCESTER CLINCH POOL 5 WITH HARD FOUGHT WIN

THE CHERRY AND WHITES MADE IT FIVE FROM FIVE IN EUROPE WITH AN IMPRESSIVE VICTORY OVER TOP 14 SIDE OYONNAX AT KINGS HOLM.

**T**HE result secured a home quarter-final in the inaugural European Rugby Challenge Cup, and top spot in pool five, after a blistering start laid the foundations for the hosts to cruise to a bonus point win.

Three tries in a stunning ten minute period early in the game put the result beyond doubt, although spirited resistance from the visitors led to a frustrating

from Billy Twelvetrees to dive over. Regis Lespinas kicked three points in response, before the Cherry and White back division ran riot.

First, committed and direct phases from the forwards gave Greig Laidlaw space, and via smart hands from Burns and Mark Atkinson, Jonny May skated down the wing to dot down.

Oyonnax then made the mistake to kick loosely to May,

”

I THOUGHT WE TOOK EVERY OPPORTUNITY IN THE FIRST HALF THAT CAME ALONG. IN THE SECOND HALF I THOUGHT WE DEFENDED MAGNIFICENTLY, WE STOPPED THEM SCORING TRIES, WE'VE WORKED HARD AND WE'VE HAD A GOOD BONUS-POINT WIN. **David Humphreys**

and largely forgettable, scrum dominated second half.

The scoring was started by Billy Burns who, making his first start of the competition at fly-half, latched onto a smart grubber

who spotted several gaps to race into midfield, before lofting a perfect pass to fellow wing David Halaifonua who drew the last man and sent Atkinson in for the score.

The Cherry and Whites were full of confidence and hunted more tries, but the Oyonnax game plan tightened, their defence improved and chances were restricted.

The bonus point came at the end of the half, with evidence of a hugely improved Cherry and White scrum who earned a penalty try from referee Andrew McMenemy.

Much of the Kingsholm crowd, braving the chill, would have anticipated more scores in the second half, but the hosts spent most of it in defensive mode as the French side kept possession without really threatening.

## CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



Jonny May is England's lethal weapon for the RBS Six Nations now, and the flyer proved his threat with a scorching run leaving defenders in his wake en route to setting up Mark Atkinson for the hosts' third try.



Plenty of scrums and reset scrums were on show, as the Cherry and Whites made a raft of replacements which inevitably affected the flow of the game.

The final score did eventually come and it was delivered from the final play as Dan Robson, deployed as a winger, picked a smart line off James Hook to power over from short range.





# TODAY'S TEAMS

## GLoucester RUGBY vs OSPReys

REFEREE: Andrew Jackson ASSISTANTS: Darren Gamage and Kelvin Stewart

TEAMS CORRECT AT TIME OF PRINT

TPCD  
□□□□

ALED **THOMAS** (C)  
FULL-BACK

□□□□

OLLIE **THORLEY**  
RIGHT WING

□□□□

HENRY **PURDY**  
OUTSIDE CENTRE

□□□□

BILL **MEAKES**  
INSIDE CENTRE

□□□□

STEPH **REYNOLDS**  
LEFT WING

□□□□

BILLY **BURNS**  
FLY-HALF

□□□□

CALLUM **BRALEY**  
SCRUM-HALF

□□□□

DAN **MURPHY**  
LOOSEHEAD PROP

□□□□

DARREN **DAWIDIUK**  
HOOKER

□□□□

SILA **PUAFISI**  
TIGHTHEAD PROP

□□□□

ELLIOTT **STOOKE**  
LOCK

□□□□

TOM **HICKS**  
LOCK

□□□□

DAN **THOMAS**  
BLINDSIDE FLANKER

□□□□

JACOB **ROWAN**  
OPENSIDE FLANKER

□□□□

ROSS **MORIARTY**  
NUMBER EIGHT

□□□□

ALEKI **LUTUI**  
REPLACEMENT 1

□□□□

YANN **THOMAS**  
REPLACEMENT 2

□□□□

SHAUN **KNIGHT**  
REPLACEMENT 3

□□□□

JOE **BATLEY**  
REPLACEMENT 4

□□□□

LEWIS **LUDLOW**  
REPLACEMENT 5

□□□□

DAN **ROBSON**  
REPLACEMENT 6

□□□□

ELLIOTT **CREED**  
REPLACEMENT 7

□□□□

KAI **LITTLE**  
REPLACEMENT 8

15

RICHARD **FUSSELL**  
FULL-BACK

14

DAFYDD **HOWELLS**  
RIGHT WING

13

HANNO **DIRKSEN**  
OUTSIDE CENTRE

12

ASHLEY **BECK**  
INSIDE CENTRE

11

AISEA **NATOGA**  
LEFT WING

10

SAM **DAVIES**  
FLY-HALF

9

MARTIN **ROBERTS** (C)  
SCRUM-HALF

1

MARC **THOMAS**  
LOOSEHEAD PROP

2

SAM **PARRY**  
HOOKER

3

DAN **SUTER**  
TIGHTHEAD PROP

4

RORY **THORNTON**  
LOCK

5

RYNIER **BERNARDO**  
LOCK

6

IFEREIMI **BOLADAU**  
BLINDSIDE FLANKER

7

ROB **DUDLEY-JONES**  
OPENSIDE FLANKER

8

IEUAN **JONES**  
NUMBER EIGHT

TPCD  
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