



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

vs Connacht Rugby

European Rugby Challenge Cup Quarter-Final: 03.04.2015

Inside tonight's matchday programme we have an exclusive interview with flying winger Jonny May, an action replay of Gloucester-Hartpury Women's National Cup semi-final victory 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 TONIGHT'S QUARTER FINAL WITH CONNACHT AND WELCOME TO ALL OF OUR VISITORS FROM GALWAY.



IT seems a while since we were in European Rugby Challenge Cup action and tonight's exciting game is reward for the attitude and performance in the pool stages, and hands us a really tough challenge against a top team.

It's been a very short turnaround from Sunday, which in many ways is a positive thing as we could focus our minds on tonight, and build off what we didn't do well against Sale.

We had had a really strong week of training in the build-up, we put in a lot of energy and

focus and bonded as a squad, something we've not been able to do so much recently with international call-ups and fixtures. But we went into the game in a good place.

Of course, looking from the outside it may not have been our finest hour, we were kept at bay by a very streetwise Sale team who suffocated us and left us feeling very frustrated.

It was a quiet bus journey home, because we had not been able to build off the back of the Northampton performance. But we cannot dwell on that for a second longer, and we know the challenge ahead for us tonight.

Pat Lam possesses a wealth of rugby knowledge, and his influence on our visitors tonight has been significant and we know the threats that they pose.

But, that said, we need to put in the performance that we know we have in us. We are guilty of not being consistent enough, and it is something we need to change. We can't afford to waste the opportunities we have between now and the end of the season.

As a squad, we are massively looking forward to tonight's game, and we hope you are too.

Thank you for your support.



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WE ARE GUILTY OF NOT BEING CONSISTENT ENOUGH, AND IT IS SOMETHING WE NEED TO CHANGE. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WASTE THE OPPORTUNITIES WE HAVE BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF THE SEASON.

L

Billy

DIR. OF
RUGBY

DAVID
HUMPHREYS



DAVID
HUMPHREYS

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GOOD EVENING AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM FOR TONIGHT'S EUROPEAN RUGBY CHALLENGE CUP QUARTER-FINAL AGAINST CONNACHT RUGBY. AND, OF COURSE, A WARM WELCOME TO PAT LAM, HIS PLAYERS AND MANAGEMENT AND ALL THE VISITING SUPPORTERS FROM THE WEST OF IRELAND.

TONIGHT'S game is our most important game of the season. At the start of the season we talked about, and prepared for, the ups and downs of the season ahead and that has certainly been the case in terms of results and performances in the Aviva Premiership.

By contrast, our European performances have been of a consistently high standard, meaning we finished the pool stages unbeaten and qualified for the knock out stages as number one seeds.

Home advantage in any European Competition has been massively important and we're all looking forward to playing back at Kingsholm on a Friday night. It will be another great occasion and the prospect of a home semi final for the winners is a further incentive for us to perform and beat Connacht.

In our last home game, against Northampton,

of positives and confidence in how we can play from that game, but unfortunately weren't able to back it up with another good performance against Sale on Sunday.

With hindsight, the three week break after Northampton was a mixed blessing. Although it gave us the opportunity to give some players a short break before heading away on a training camp, it was a very disappointing

week have been about getting ourselves physically and mentally prepared for the challenge of Connacht and, like all good teams, I have no doubt that we will bounce back from the disappointment of Sunday with a big performance tonight.

For many years Connacht were considered the fourth Province in Ireland but under the direction of Pat Lam, and with a large increase in financial support from the IRFU, they are now challenging in the Pro12 for automatic qualification to next year's Champions Cup. They have developed much greater depth to their squad and, in Robbie Henshaw, they have uncovered a player who can fill the void left by Brian O'Driscoll's retirement.

Connacht have always brought a physical edge to every game they played, but have now developed a much greater variety to their style of play through the coaching team and players they have recruited.



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IN OUR LAST HOME GAME, AGAINST NORTHAMPTON, WE PLAYED SOME OF OUR BEST RUGBY OF THE SEASON, THE CLOSEST WE HAVE COME TO A GENUINE 80 MINUTE PERFORMANCE AND SHOULD REALLY HAVE BEATEN THE STRONGEST TEAM IN ENGLAND.

L we played some of our best rugby of the season, the closest we have come to a genuine 80 minute performance and should really have beaten the strongest team in England. We took a lot

afternoon at the AJ Bell Stadium.

We knew winning at Sale would be a tough proposition but, having prepared really well, on the day we didn't have the energy and enthusiasm in defence or attack that has been present all season. Credit to Sale, while they weren't on top of their game themselves, they found a way to win. That's something that we have to learn from and is the next big step forward in this team's evolution.

With only five days between games, preparations this

We've enjoyed terrific support all season and tonight, under lights and in a European knockout scenario, I'm sure it's going to be a fantastic atmosphere.

That backing is something the players thrive upon, it's a huge boost for everyone involved and undoubtedly makes a difference every time we play at Kingsholm.

Enjoy the game.

David



THE VIEW FROM The Citizen



SCAN THE
CODE FOR
MORE NEWS
AND STORIES
FROM OUR
WEBSITE

**NEW
SECONDARY
SCHOOL** for
Gloucester
ruled out

FOREST GREEN
character and
quality shone
through

**GLOUCESTER
CITY** claim
superb victory at
Solihull Moors

**BEN
VELLACOTT
SCORES** two
tries in Hartpury
College win

A BRIGHT FUTURE AHEAD

BRENDAN MACKEN is aiming to earn a long-term contract at Gloucester after making his debut in Sunday's defeat to Sale Sharks.

The Irish centre has joined the Cherry and Whites on loan from Leinster for the remainder of the season to cover for injured Henry Trinder but is out of contract in the summer.

He was one of Gloucester's better performers in their disappointing 23-6 loss to Sale Sharks which saw their losing streak on the road against the Salford-based outfit stretched to 14 years.

But Macken hopes that is just his first taste of action from his temporary club which could become his new home.

He said, "My contract with Leinster finishes at the end of the season but I'm trying to take it game by game and to get better in every training session and match.

"It's an opportunity to earn a contract at Gloucester but I have to see what happens. It's been great so far and I'm really enjoying it. There's a great bunch of lads and I said to them when I arrived that the rugby tradition is unbelievable.

"Against Northampton the crowd was like a 24th man, the



(above) Bright spark

The young Irishman was a bright spark in the defeat at Sale

Shed was amazing – I've never seen anything like that before."

Macken was bitterly disappointed with the defeat at the AJ Bell Stadium but believes Sale provided the perfect opposition to prepare for Connacht.

The European Rugby Challenge Cup is now the Cherry and Whites' best chance of securing a play-off to qualify for the Champions Cup with Connacht also in a battle to book their place

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IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO EARN A CONTRACT AT GLOUCESTER BUT I HAVE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS. IT'S BEEN GREAT SO FAR AND I'M REALLY ENJOYING IT. THERE'S A GREAT BUNCH OF LADS AND I SAID TO THEM WHEN I ARRIVED THAT THE RUGBY TRADITION IS UNBELIEVABLE. **Brendan Macken**



at the top tier.

They too lost on the weekend, a 42-20 defeat to Munster at Thomond Park, but Macken insists they are a much tougher proposition than in previous seasons.

He has plenty of knowledge about the Galway-based province and has identified Ireland centre Robbie Henshaw and scrum-half Kieran Marmion, a former Ireland Under-20s teammate, as particular threats.

The 23-year-old said, "Connacht are a great side and they have improved leaps and bounds this year.

"Pat Lam's got them firing on all cylinders and they're unbelievably tough, incredibly dogged and

they work incredibly hard for each other so it will be tough but the boys will be ready.

"They will have a great green wall firing at us, they have similar line speed to Sale, they will look to make tackles on the gain line and then flood us.

"Robbie will be a massive danger. Marmion and Henshaw are two players Connacht look for a lot. Kieran has played every single game in the last two seasons for Connacht and Robbie is coming in off the back of a really good Six Nations."

Wearing the number 13 jersey and a product of the illustrious Blackrock College, there have always been comparisons between Macken and his great predecessor

at Leinster, Brian O'Driscoll.

He admits he was very fortunate to have learnt from rugby's highest capped player but believes a change of style in the Premiership can help him add new dimensions to his game.

He added, "Dricco has been fantastic over the years. All the little things you wouldn't think of he gives you a hand with. I was very lucky to have him, to be able to learn from him and pick up those little things from him.

"It's a bit more physical over here and Sunday was a nice little test with (Sam) Tuitupou and (Johnny) Leota flying down my channel but it's enjoyable and I just want to kick on."



Citizen AVAILABLE DAILY

CHRIS
COLLIER'S
KINGSHOLM
MEMORIES

Peter Ford, the Gloucester captain leads his team out against Lydney on 10th September 1955 for a game which Gloucester won 16-6. Inset is an incident from the match. The young lad with his arm over the rail is Chris Collier, the author of this article

WHEN I was very young, I remember winter Saturday evenings after my dad and my elder brother returned from Kingsholm and relived the games that they had just witnessed.

I used to marvel at the names of those legendary Gloucester warriors, Bill Hook, Charlie Crabtree, Sid Dangerfield, Roy Sutton, Willie Jones, George Hastings, Bob Hodge, Gordon Hudson, Ernie Turner. I just couldn't wait until I was considered old enough to make my first pilgrimage to that place of rugby worship, Kingsholm.

At long last on 20 March

1954, my dad took me to watch an English Schools Trial game. Mickey Booth played for the Probables, and was unlucky not to make it into the England team. Anyway, I was immediately hooked on the game and have never missed a season since. Of course since my first visit to Kingsholm was in March, the season was drawing towards its close, but I can remember having time to see Gloucester beat Harlequins and Neath before time ran out. At that time as soon as the game ended lots of young boys would run on to the pitch to try and obtain autographs. After the Neath game I was very

pleased to get the signature of Rees Stephens the Welsh International. He wasn't smiling much, but Neath had just lost.

Kingsholm was very different in the fifties. At the Deans Walk end there was a shallow terrace topped by a mound of grass, which was known as "The Tump". A very old scoreboard was situated on the grass, and when there was a score a numbered plate would be placed on to the board. The responsibility for manning the scoreboard was inevitably taken by a youngster, who much to the amusement of the crowd often got the scores wrong. In my early years I took

position just outside the Shed, standing by the stairway down which the players took the field having come out of the old gymnasium building, now the Lions Bar. The smell of wintergreen with which the players smeared themselves was overpowering. The match programme cost 3d (older folk please translate for the young ones), and consisted of a single folded sheet of paper.

One of my early favourites was Roy Blair, a burly winger who scored plenty of tries but was a little vulnerable in defence. Then there was Derek Ibbotson, slight of build but a back rower who tackled around the ankles to devastating effect. Cyril Thomas was a hooker who, when scrums were still a thing of beauty, won countless strikes against the head through sheer skill. That 1953-54 season was record breaking, and a lot of that was down to the captaincy

had only lost one game all season and Gloucester had lost eight of their last ten. The only score was a massive Alan Holder penalty from at least 45 yards and wide out. I can still see it as clearly today as when he kicked it.

Place kicking was not a strength the club possessed through the fifties and early sixties. I recall a game against Coventry (and they were probably the strongest club in England at the time) in 1964, when we played them off the park and scored tries through Terry Hopson, "Baggy" Hudson, Nick Foice and Peter Ford. Unfortunately, no try was converted and Coventry scored a single try, but won 14-12 through the boot of George Cole.

By this time I had moved into the Shed, on the half-way line and have remained there ever since, apart from when I attended university, and even then I used

(he was no kicker) which hit the post, bounced on the cross bar and went over. He told me he remembered the game and after scoring the try and walking back with the ball, he heard someone in the crowd say, "I wonder who he's going to get to kick this one." Several kicks had been missed and Peter thought he might as well try himself!

At this time Terry Hopson arrived at Kingsholm. He was another player who had he played for a London club, I am convinced he would have been England's regular fly half. He had a magical half back partnership with Mickey Booth. His only problem was that he could be inconsistent, and Mickey used to say that he could tell, before the kick off, from the look in Terry's eye what sort of game he was going to play. But I have seen Terry score some brilliant tries, including one where he received the ball on his own try line and scored without a hand being laid on him.

One of the sad features of the modern game is that the traditional fixtures against Stroud, Lydney and Cheltenham have all disappeared. Maybe these did not produce the most flowing rugby but they were gripping affairs where Gloucester by no means always got the upper hand. It seemed to me that nearly all the players, being local, knew each other and local bragging rights were up for renewal each season. The games were nearly always close, until in later years Gloucester just became too powerful and the series ended.

However, professionalism has been a great success and the crowds now seen at Kingsholm dwarf the amateur era. I have to say that when the team does its run in front of the shed before the game, the hairs stand up on the back of my neck every time. I firmly believe there is no better atmosphere in which to experience rugby than at Kingsholm.

C'mon Glaws!



The Gloucester team against Lydney in 1955 (L-R): back row: Rev M Hughes (chairman), R Parry, P Meadows, D A Jones, B Green, R Hodge, C Thomas, L Morgan, J Willis; front row: I Sheen, G Hastings, D Ibbotson, P Ford (capt), R Sutton, M Baker, R Blair

of John Taylor. He then moved away from Gloucester, but played several more seasons for Leicester.

A lot of the players from that record breaking season promptly retired, including Gordon Hudson, Charlie Crabtree, John Gwilliam, Ernie Turner, John Hobbs and the following season under the captaincy of George Hastings was not a good one, at one point Gloucester lost 14 out of 15 games. I still remember the long walks home in utter despair. In fact the club went through a difficult time, but we always seemed to produce one or two great performances in each season. One I remember in particular was against Cardiff just after Christmas 1957. Cardiff

to time home weekends for the big games. Crowds were not so big in those days, one of 3,000 was reckoned to be good and you could find your favourite spot by arriving 10 or 15 minutes before kick-off. Now I'm on the half way line at least an hour in advance.

Peter Ford captained the team for five seasons out of six from 1955 to 1961. What a player, who deserved far more than the four England caps he actually obtained. Only a few weeks ago I was talking to him and recalled a game against Plymouth Albion in December 1960 when he had scored a try close to full time to level the scores. Much to everybody's astonishment Peter took the conversion himself

I FEEL THE NEED...

KNOCKOUT RUGBY HAS ARRIVED, AND WITH EVERY INCH SET TO BE BATTLED FOR, THE TRY-SCORING JET-HEELS OF JONNY MAY ARE READY TO TRY AND DELIVER THE KNOCKOUT BLOW.

AFTER a few weeks splitting his time between club and country, the England international is relishing locking horns with the men from Galway tonight, an opponent he has good memories of facing in years past.

"It's going to be a real tough test for us, but a really exciting one. I've played against Connacht a couple of times, at their

ground in Galway and here at Kingsholm, and they are a team that has strengths right across the pitch and they challenge the breakdown really hard.

"Equally for us, it's a big game for both teams and we are treating it like a cup final, if we lose we're out so it is a must win."

May delivered the late try when Connacht last pitched up on Kingsholm Road, and that Heineken Cup clash in December



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...IT'S A BIG GAME FOR BOTH TEAMS AND WE ARE TREATING IT LIKE A CUP FINAL, IF WE LOSE WE'RE OUT SO IT IS A MUST WIN.

PLAYER FEATURE

JONNY
MAY

2011 is a memorable moment for the 25-year old who celebrated his birthday on Wednesday this week.

"I can remember that game quite well, I think I came off the bench, and scored in the corner quite late in the game. It had been really tight up to then and that try pretty much decided it.



"I can imagine the game will be quite similar this time round. It will be tight and go right to the wire, just like all knockout rugby is and it will be decided on small things because it is going to be a tight one.

"Potentially they have some names we know in Robbie (Henshaw) and Mils (Muliaina), but we have to analyse them as a team rather than be focused on just one or two individuals.

"They have threats across the board and we have to give respect to all of their backs, because they have shown themselves to be a real danger across the board."

With the top seed spot secured with a bonus point win in Brive, May insists that the Cherry and Whites must make the most of the home advantage they worked hard for in navigating the tricky pool stages.

"The home advantage is a huge thing and something that we have to maximize. Having the home crowd is going to be a massive boost and inspire us on to dig deeper and deliver a big performance.

"The boys can take a big boost from our last home game against Saints, and it shows how far that we have come as a team seeing as we lost by fifty points to them

at the start of the year and we drew with them now.

"It shows how much improvement we have experienced and built as a squad."

It is full steam ahead now between tonight and the end of the season, no more international call-ups or distractions and May is glad of the chance to focus, along with his team mates on the domestic goals and ending a campaign of transition on a high.

"The week away (in Tenerife) has brought us together as a team and there is a real focus that we all back together and look ahead to the end of the season.

"The end of the season is massively important for us and we are focused on taking on every challenge as a team."



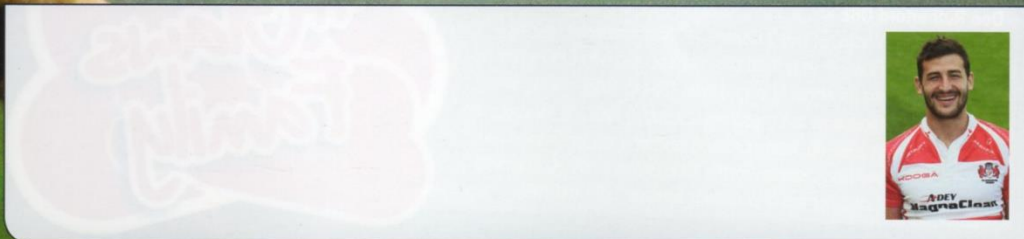
DID YOU KNOW? | JONNY WAS SEVENTH IN THE GREAT BRITAIN U15 POLE VAULT IN 2003.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

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THE HOME ADVANTAGE IS A HUGE THING AND SOMETHING THAT WE HAVE TO MAXIMIZE. HAVING THE HOME CROWD IS GOING TO BE A MASSIVE BOOST AND INSPIRE US ON TO DIG DEEPER AND DELIVER A BIG PERFORMANCE.

GLoucester Rugby AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION



f gloucesterrugby @gloucesterrugby

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BOB FENTON'S

KINGSHOLM NEWS

IT REALLY WAS ONE OF THE MOST DISAPPOINTING PERFORMANCES OF THE SEASON, WE NEVER GOT OUT OF THE TRAPS. NO DOUBT THE POST MORTEM WAS LONG AND PAINFUL - IN FACT I THINK SUPPORTERS WOULD BE DISAPPOINTED IF IT WASN'T.

WELCOME back to Kingsholm! It seems we have been away so long that we almost need another pre-season to get back into it!

The Northampton Saints game seems to be almost lost in the mists of time it was that far back. What a game that was - we were roundly written off by the pundits going into the game and, yes, I would have snatched your hand off if you had offered me a draw

before kick off.

It turned out to be a complete classic though. We played our best rugby of the season against them, putting them under all sorts of pressure.

For once their 'toaster' scrum tactics (ie apply a little heat and pressure and everyone pops up) went against them and we murdered them in the forwards. In the end though a couple of soft tries after half time and a bit of the rub of the green with some

questionable decisions saw them grab an equalising score just before the end.

I suppose when you think back to last season, and that somewhat dubious penalty we were awarded at the end, it was a case of what goes around, comes around. A great game for the neutrals watching on TV, but for us it was one that got away.

Then it was an elongated break for more Six Nations. Most of it was its usual mediocre self, with a whole heap of once a year rugby 'fans' getting excited about - well not very much really. But then the last weekend...

Well if you had written it down and submitted it as a film script you would have got laughed out of the door. It was the kind of weekend that had defensive coaches throwing their books away and covering their eyes as defending became a redundant option and try after try was run in.

Having watched the Italy v Wales game (and wouldn't we all like to know what went on at half time there - what happened to the Italian team??!!), I missed the Ireland game having been taken prisoner and made to go to Bristol and be dragged around Cabot Circus. Fortunately though I managed to escape in time to catch up with the England game in the Bristol Ram - which was err... rammed!





It was almost unbelievable - not only did France remember that there was a point to the lines at both ends of the pitch, they found them at pretty regular intervals too. But, not as regularly as England. Quite an end to the tournament, I hope none of the once-a-year experts expect the World Cup to be anything like that!

Finally last weekend we got back to a bit of Premiership action, and after a week away training in the sunshine of the Canary Islands, the boys landed in Manchester to take on Sale. To say the climate change was extreme would be an understatement, from sunshine to a typical Manchester damp, cold afternoon.

And in celebration we produced some damp, cold rugby and came away with everything a performance like that deserves - nothing. It really was one of the most disappointing performances of the season, we never got out of the traps. No doubt the post

mortem was long and painful - in fact I think supporters would be disappointed if it wasn't.

But that was then and this is now. When all is said and done that game was probably the nail in the coffin that carried our dreams of sneaking into the top European competition next season. So it makes today's game all that more important.

Realistically this competition is a chance at a bit of redemption for a disappointing season. We know that a win today will give us a home semi-final against Exeter and a real chance of progressing to the final. But that same situation applies to our visitors from Connacht too. They are mid table in the Pro-12 and because of the strange way the Ireland Provinces work, their chances of getting into the big boys tournament are somewhat limited. So this is a must-win game for them too.

And like us they came unstuck last weekend, going down at

Munster. Unlike their far better funded opposites in Ireland, they do not have the luxury of a bunch of megastars drawn from across the rugby world.

But if you look at their team sheet you will see that the vast majority of their squad have played representative rugby at some levels - and one name jumps of their team sheet: Mils Muliaina.

Here's a man with over 100 appearances for the All Blacks under his belt, and a record of over 30 tries scored. His experience alone is enough to make up for everyone else. I really hope he plays today, always good to see one of the game's greats running out on the Kingsholm turf.

Finally, have you got your copy of @Holm yet? Lots of really good stuff in this issue, even though I say so myself! If you haven't read it, pick one up from the shop on your way out - for four quid it really is a very good read!

IAN RANDALL'S RUGBY TALK

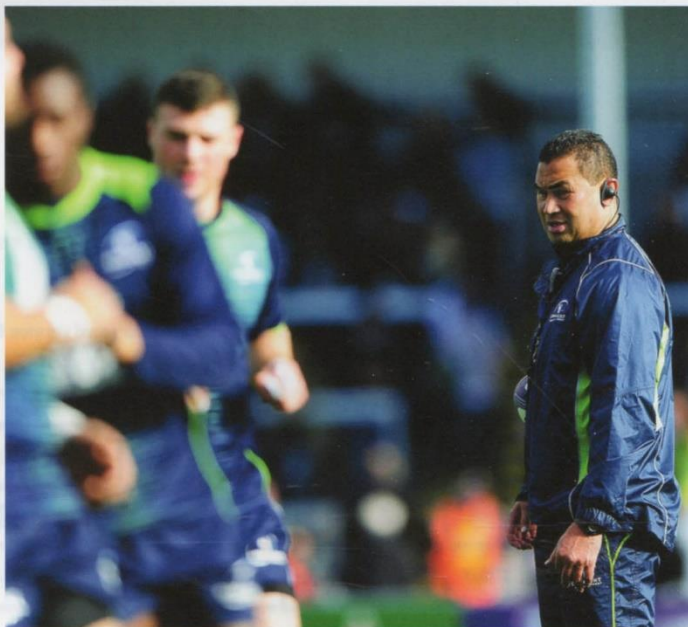
THE BELL HAS SOUNDED. THE LAST LAP OF THE SEASON STARTS HERE AND GLOUCESTER WILL HOPE THERE ARE STILL A MINIMUM OF SEVEN GAMES REMAINING, FOUR IN THE PREMIERSHIP AND THREE, INCLUDING TONIGHT'S MATCH AGAINST CONNACHT, IN THE CHALLENGE CUP.

WITH a home draw for the victors in the semi finals, both teams will feel a place in the final on May 1st at the Stoop is well within range. It is then that the plot thickens.

Gloucester's defeat at Sale last Sunday has left them well adrift of Champions Cup qualification through their league position, and the selection at the AJ Bell Stadium suggested this evening's game was seen as more important.

Why? Not only because it is the shortest route to any silverware, but also because by winning the Challenge Cup, Gloucester would put themselves into a two stage play off for a Champions Cup place next season, where they would have to beat a side from the Pro 12 and a side from the French Top 14.

It could mean they are still playing meaningful matches at the end of May, with a considerable carrot on the end of the last one. That, though, is rather putting the cart before the horse, and Connacht must be respected.



They've played here before, and so know what Kingsholm is about. It promises to be close, just as it was 24 years ago when Ireland's national side paid one of only two visits here.

The year was 1991 - as this year, a World Cup year. It was also the

centenary of rugby on Kingsholm. To mark the event, Gloucester played two celebration matches against England (which they lost), and Ireland, who they beat 14-13 with tries by Jerry Perrins and Simon Morris, and two penalties from Tim Smith.

BACK IN TIME

HEINEKEN CUP, Pool 6 - Gloucester, 17 December 2011



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

23

TRIES: Taylor (20), May (75) **CONS:** Taylor (21), Burns (76) **PENS:** Taylor (7), Burns (57, 68)



CONNACHT RUGBY

19

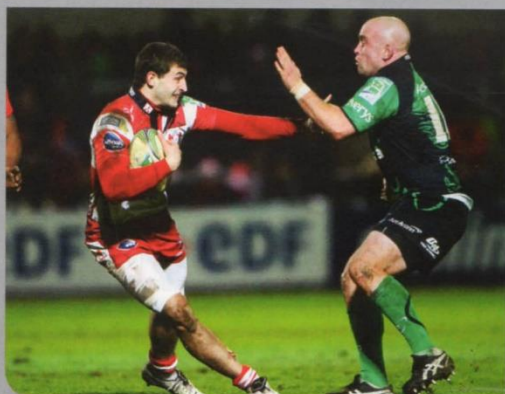
TRY: O'Halloran (11) **CON:** N O'Connor (12) **PENS:** N O'Connor (30, 37, 45, 72)

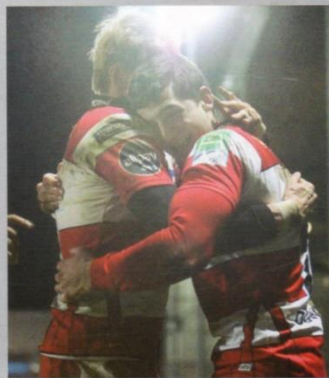
THE LAST TIME TODAY'S TEAMS MET AT KINGSHOLM, BACK IN DECEMBER 2011, GLOUCESTER WERE INDEBTED TO A SUPERB SOLO SCORE FROM JONNY MAY AS THEY EDGED A TIGHT ENCOUNTER BY 23 POINTS TO 19.

C ONNACHT played with great spirit on the day, Tiernan O'Halloran scoring a try, and Niall O'Connor contributing 14 points from the boot.

They were clinging on to a narrow lead and threatening a massive upset when May, who had started on the bench, made his decisive break.

Taking the ball at a standstill, May handed off Jonny O'Connor's tired attempted tackle before accelerating between two Connacht defenders and outpacing the final man to touch down in the corner and swing the game decisively Gloucester's way.







PLAYER A to Z CALLUM BRALEY



...is for
ATMOSPHERE...

What is the best
atmosphere you
have experienced?

Without a doubt
Kingsholm,
especially
Gloucester v
Saracens

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

My two
housemates; Elliott
Stooke and Henry
Purdy



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

If you weren't a
rugby player what
would you be?

Hopefully my Dad
will employ me,
if not, work for
myself



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

Mercedes C Class



...is for
EMBARRASSED...

most embarrassing
moment on the
field?

When I was young,
I dived for the line
to score, only to
realise it was the
halfway line.

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?
Junior World
Championship
Final 2013 against
Wales.

...is for
NICKNAME...

What's yours?
C Breezy or Cal
Bray

...is for
OPPONENT...

Who is the best
player you have
faced up against?
Piri Weepu

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

What is your
proudest moment?
Making my
Premiership debut

...is for
QUICKEST...

Who is the fastest
player you have
played with or
against?

Not sure who is
quicker Jonny May
or Steph Reynolds.

...is for **RUN OUT
MUSIC...** what's
your tune to run
out to?

Say Something
— Karen Harding
(remix)

...is for
SUPPORT...

What teams do you
support?
Bristol





...is for **FASHION...**
Who is the worst dressed player in the squad?
Matt Kvesic



...is for **GLOUCESTER RUGBY...**best thing about Gloucester Rugby?
The people, staff and supporters



...is for **HARDMAN...**
Who is the toughest opponent you have played against?
Ross Moriarty



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



...is for **JOKER...**
Who is the funniest person you have shared a dressing room with?
Steph Reynolds or Joe Joyce



...is for **KINGSHOLM**
...describe Kingsholm in three words?
Passion, history, excitement

...is for **LIFE after rugby...**
What are your future plans?
Working for my Dad.

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?
Easiest but my favourite was vs Sarries this year.

...is for **UNBELIEVABLE...**
Tell us something surprising about yourself
I'm ¼ Italian and eligible to play for them.

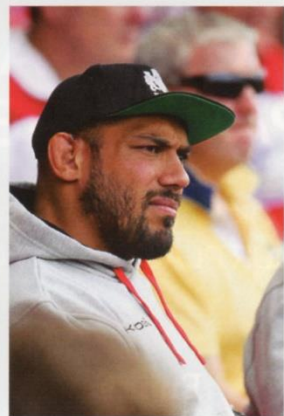
...is for **VISITOR...**
What is your favourite ground to play at?
Played at Twickenham a few times, which was good.

...is for **WORST...**
What is the worst thing about being a rugby player?
Losing, or at Gloucester, all the speed bumps at Hartpury.

...is for **X-RAY...**
What is the worst injury you have suffered?
Touch wood nothing serious, but a broken wrist.

...is for **YOUTH...**
What advice would you give to aspiring rugby players?
Work hard and have a balanced lifestyle.

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



Gloucester Rugby is a proud member of the Aviva Premiership



ACTION REPLAY

VS
NORTHAMPTON
SAINTS

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

LINE-UP

15	FB	STEVE MCCOLL
14	W	CHARLIE SHARPLES
13	C	BILL MEAKES
12	C	BILLY TWELVETREES (C)
11	W	JONNY MAY
10	FH	JAMES HOOK
9	SH	GREIG LAIDLAW
1	P	DAN MURPHY
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	GARETH EVANS

REPLACEMENTS

16	H	DARREN DAWIDIUK
17	P	YANN THOMAS
18		SILA PUAFISI
19	N8	ELLIOTT STOOKE
20	F	ROSS MORIARTY
21		DAN ROBSON
22	FB	BILLY BURNS
23	W	HENRY PURDY



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

33

TRIES: Sharples (23), Hibbard (28), Murphy (45) **CONS:** Laidlaw (24, 29, 46) **PENS:** Laidlaw (8, 12, 20, 75)



NORTHAMPTON SAINTS

33

TRIES: Wilson (42, 48), Manoa (78) **CONS:** Myler (43, 49, 79) **PENS:** Myler (3, 6, 40, 56)



NORTHAMPTON SAINTS

LINE-UP

15	FB	JAMES WILSON ■
14	W	KEN PISI
13	C	GEORGE PISI
12	C	TOM STEPHENSON
11	W	JAMIE ELLIOTT
10	FH	STEPHEN MYLER
9	SH	KAHN FOTUALI'I
1	P	ALEX CORBISIERO
2	H	MIKE HAYWOOD
3	P	SALESI MAAFU
4	L	COURTNEY LAWES
5	L	CHRISTIAN DAY
6	F	TOM WOOD (C)
7	F	CALUM CLARK
8	N8	SAMU MANOA

REPLACEMENTS

16		MATT WILLIAMS
17	P	ALEX WALLER
18	P	GARETH DENMAN
19	L	SAM DICKINSON
20	F	PHIL DOWSON
21	SH	LEE DICKSON
22		SAM OLVER
23	W	AHSEE TUALA

THRILLING DRAW AT KINGSHOLM

GLOUCESTER'S DEVELOPMENT THIS SEASON WAS UNDER TIGHT SCRUTINY AS THEY FACED THE CURRENT AVIVA PREMIERSHIP CHAMPIONS AGAIN, WITH MEMORIES OF THE 53-6 DEFEAT ON OPENING NIGHT WELL AND TRULY BANISHED.

In reflection, this was a game that the hosts should have won, and won well but Northampton Saints produced a second half comeback to snatch a last-gasp draw.

With the RBS Six Nations taking a weekend off, the Cherry and Whites were able to call upon their international talent, and their contribution was clear to see as the hosts dominated the first half.

Stephen Myler chipped over a pair of penalties early on, before Greig Laidlaw responded with three of his own as the hosts

right delivered a kick on a plate for his winger who strolled over.

It nearly got even better for the hosts, first phase ball saw Steve McColl hit the line and produce a brilliant offload to set Sharples away but he lost his footwork at the key moment.

The Cherry and Whites kept the move alive, and with James Wilson sent to the sinbin, Richard Hibbard powered his way over for his first try for the club from a catch and drive.

Kingsholm was buzzing, although Myler had the last say of the first period as he kicked over

CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



James Hook was the creative genius behind a superb try for winger Charlie Sharples. The fly half stepped out of two attempted tackles, broke downfield before, showing great vision, kicking through off the outside of his boot for Sharples to gather and score.

”

WE'RE STILL SEARCHING FOR THAT 80-MINUTE PERFORMANCE THAT WILL ALLOW US TO WIN GAMES AGAINST THE TOP TEAMS.. **David Humphreys**

started to impose their game on Jim Mallinder's men, although the jet heels of Jonny May had to be in top gear to race after Ken Pisi who had escaped with a clear run to the line in the sunshine.

The Cherry and Whites' backs were purring off the back of a scrum platform that was wrestling ascendancy in all eyes at Kingsholm barring those of referee Greg Garner.

With ball in hand however, the hosts were a huge threat, and roared on by a typically vociferous bumper crowd, James Hook sprinkled some stardust in setting up a try for Charlie Sharples.

The Welshman collected the ball in midfield, stepped out of one tackle before shimmying past another, accelerating through a gap and with options left and

a penalty.

So far so good, but against the Champions nothing was certain, and the visitors delivered a timely reminder of their quality as Wilson dotted down from a grubber kick through to get his side back into the game.

But, the hosts' response was top class, McColl again worked an opening with Hook, and although Bill Meakes was brought down metres from the line, the ball was patiently kept alive, allowing Dan Murphy to power through a weak tackle from Calum Clark and touch down.

The end-to-end nature of the game continued however, as Saints scored a superb try through Wilson again, benefitting from good support play from Samu Manoa, Jamie Elliott and

George Pisi.

It was breathless and a fantastic advert for Premiership Rugby, and the Cherry and Whites thought they had crossed for their bonus point score, one which would surely have clinched the game, but Henry Purdy's fine finish was chalked off by the TMO for an earlier knock on.

Myler and Laidlaw then traded penalties and the gap remained at seven points.

Key decisions went the way of the hosts in the closing stages, handing them a position to score, which they duly did as Manoa dotted down from a rolling maul, but, after the event, the key scrum and line out decisions were hotly disputed!

But to take the Champions that far, shows the development in the Cherry and Whites, who will rue not taking maximum points.

ACTION REPLAY

VS
SALE
SHARKS

SALE SHARKS

LINE-UP

15	FB	MIKE HALEY
14	W	TOM ARSCOTT
13	C	JOHNNY LEOTA
12	C	SAM TUITUPOU
11	W	MARK CUETO
10	FH	DANNY CIPRIANI
9	SH	CHRIS CUSITER
1	P	ROSS HARRISON
2	H	TOMMY TAYLOR
3	P	VADIM COBILAS
4	L	ANDREI OSTRIKOV
5	L	NATHAN HINES
6	F	DAN BRAID (C)
7	F	DAVID SEYMOUR
8	NB	JOSH BEAUMONT

REPLACEMENTS

16	H	CAMERON NEILD
17	P	EIFION LEWIS-ROBERTS
18		CIARAN PARKER
19	L	JONATHAN MILLS
20	F	MAGNUS LUND
21	SH	WILL CLIFF
22	W	JOE FORD
23	W	TOM BRADY



SALE SHARKS

23

TRIES: Leota (21), Beaumont (58) **CONS:** Cipriani (22, 59) **PENS:** Cipriani (40, 47, 56)



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

06

PENS: Hook (14, 33)



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

LINE-UP

15	FB	BILLY BURNS
14	W	CHARLIE SHARPLES
13	C	BRENDAN MACKEN
12	C	BILLY TWELVETREES (C)
11	W	JONNY MAY
10	FH	JAMES HOOK
9	SH	CALLUM BRALEY
1	P	NICK WOOD
2	H	RICHARD HIBBARD
3	P	JOHN AFOA
4	L	ELLIOTT STOOKE
5	L	TOM PALMER
6	F	TOM SAVAGE
7	F	MATT KVESIC
8	NB	SIONE KALAMAFONI

REPLACEMENTS

16	H	DARREN DAWIDIUK
17	P	YANN THOMAS
18	P	SILA PUAFISI
19	L	MARIANO GALARZA
20	F	JAMES HUDSON
21	SH	DAN ROBSON
22	FB	BILL MEAKES
23	NB	ROSS MORIARTY

SUBDUED GLOUCESTER LOSE OUT TO IN-FORM SHARKS

AFTER THE SCINTILLATING 33-33 DRAW WITH NORTHAMPTON SAINTS THREE WEEKS AGO, IT WAS PUT TO DIRECTOR OF RUGBY DAVID HUMPHREYS THAT THE GAP IN THE FIXTURE CALENDAR HAD COME AT A BAD TIME FOR GLOUCESTER WHO WERE PLAYING SOME GOOD RUGBY AT THE TIME.

AND it seemed to be the case at the AJ Bell Stadium last weekend when Gloucester put in one of their poorer performances of the season, coming off second best against an opponent who are always tough on their own turf.

In truth, it wasn't a great game. The Sharks didn't look especially on top of their game, perhaps

in the first half and took an early 3-0 lead through a James Hook penalty. However, Sale made the most of their first real attack as Johnny Leota touched down after a period of pressure.

Hook got Gloucester back to within a point at 7-6 with his second penalty, but Cipriani restored the four point advantage with the last kick of the half after Sale caught the defence napping

” I WAS MOST DISAPPOINTED WITH THE PERFORMANCE. OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS WE WOULD SAY AS A TEAM AND AS A SQUAD WE'VE PERFORMED PRETTY WELL FOR MOST OF THE TIME. **David Humphreys**

also showing a bit of rustiness after a similar lay off. However, they had just enough when it mattered to clinch victory.

Neither side enjoyed massive superiority. Sale's driving maul looked a dangerous weapon throughout, Gloucester's scrum looked to be on top while neither set of backs really got the upper hand.

It came down to making the most of scoring opportunities. The Sharks managed to convert two of their visits to the Gloucester 22 into tries, whereas Gloucester spent large periods of time in the second half hammering away at the Sale line without success. That proved to be the difference.

Despite being well below their best, Gloucester were competitive

with a short lineout to the front.

Still very much in the game, what Gloucester needed was a strong start to the second half. However, they fell foul of the referee at the breakdown and leaked two early penalties to Cipriani.

The Sharks then took a decisive hold of the game as a good rolling maul set up a position from which Tom Arscott came in off his wing to break through the defensive line. He was halted but the ball was swiftly moved to Josh Beaumont to score.

Now up 23-6, the home team went into damage limitation mode. Gloucester had plenty of territory and possession but couldn't make it count, even though the Sharks had Hines and Cipriani yellow carded.

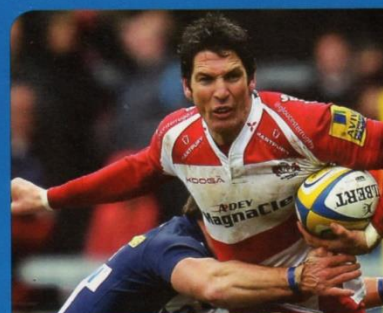
There wasn't even the

CHAMPAGNE MOMENT



One bright moment on what proved to be a difficult day at the office for Gloucester was the appearance of Mariano Galarza.

The Argentinian international has been sidelined with a shoulder injury since arriving at Kingsholm so it was good to see him make a belated debut.



consolation of a late try for the travelling Gloucester fans to cheer as referee Carley's whistle brought a close to proceedings on a very disappointing afternoon in the North West.

TODAY'S TEAMS

GLoucester RUGBY vs CONNACHT RUGBY

REFEREE: Romain Poite (FRA) ASSISTANTS: Cedric Marchat (FRA), Thomas Charabas (FRA)

TEAMS CORRECT AT TIME OF PRINT

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STEVE **McCOLL**
FULL-BACK
CHARLIE **SHARPLES**
RIGHT WING
BILL **MEAKES**
OUTSIDE CENTRE
BILLY **TWELVETREES (C)**
INSIDE CENTRE
JONNY **MAY**
LEFT WING
JAMES **HOOK**
FLY-HALF
GREIG **LAIDLAW**
SCRUM-HALF
DAN **MURPHY**
LOOSEHEAD PROP
RICHARD **HIBBARD**
HOOKER
JOHN **AFOA**
TIGHTHEAD PROP
TOM **SAVAGE**
LOCK
TOM **PALMER**
LOCK
SIONE **KALAMAFONI**
BLINDSIDE FLANKER
MATT **KVESIC**
OPENSIDE FLANKER
GARETH **EVANS**
NUMBER EIGHT

DARREN **DAWIDIUK**
REPLACEMENT 1
NICK **WOOD**
REPLACEMENT 2
SILA **PUAFISI**
REPLACEMENT 3
JAMES **HUDSON**
REPLACEMENT 4
ROSS **MORIARTY**
REPLACEMENT 5
DAN **ROBSON**
REPLACEMENT 6
BILLY **BURNS**
REPLACEMENT 7
HENRY **PURDY**
REPLACEMENT 8

15

14

13

12

11

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1

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23

TIERNAN **O'HALLORAN**
FULL-BACK
DARRAGH **LEADER**
RIGHT WING
ROBBIE **HENSHAW**
OUTSIDE CENTRE
CRAIG **RONALDSON**
INSIDE CENTRE
MATT **HEALY**
LEFT WING
JACK **CARTY**
FLY-HALF
KIERAN **MARMION**
SCRUM-HALF
DENIS **BUCKLEY**
LOOSEHEAD PROP
TOM **MCCARTNEY**
HOOKER
RODNEY **AH YOU**
TIGHTHEAD PROP
MICK **KEARNEY**
LOCK
ALY **MULDOWNEY**
LOCK
JOHN **MULDOON (C)**
BLINDSIDE FLANKER
EOGHAN **MASTERSON**
OPENSIDE FLANKER
GEORGE **NAOUPU**
NUMBER EIGHT

SHANE **DELAHUNT**
REPLACEMENT 1
RONAN **LOUGHNEY**
REPLACEMENT 2
FINLAY **BEALHAM**
REPLACEMENT 3
QUINN **ROUX**
REPLACEMENT 4
ANDREW **BROWNE**
REPLACEMENT 5
IAN **PORTER**
REPLACEMENT 6
SHANE **O'LEARY**
REPLACEMENT 7
DANIE **POOLMAN**
REPLACEMENT 8

TPCD

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