

NEWCASTLE FALCONS

£3.00

Aviva Premiership • Friday 21st November 2014 • Kick off 8.00pm

V



GLOUCESTER
RUGBY



AVIVA PREMIERSHIP
RUGBY

AVIVA

LAND
ROVER

GreenFlag

RICOH
imagine. change.

GUINNESS

GILBERT

CITIZEN

BT Sport



TONIGHT'S TEAMS



NOTE: team line-ups may change before kick-off

Simon Hammersley	15	FULL BACK	15	Steve McColl
Sinoti Sinoti	14	RIGHT WING	14	Charlie Sharples
Gonzalo Tiesi	13	CENTRE	13	Billy Meakes
Adam Powell	12	CENTRE	12	Mark Atkinson
Alesana Tuilagi	11	LEFT WING	11	Henry Purdy
Juan Pablo Socino	10	FLY HALF	10	Aled Thomas
Ruki Tipuna	9	SCRUM HALF	9	Dan Robson
Rob Vickers	1	PROP	1	Nick Wood
George McGuigan	2	HOOVER	2	Darren Dawidiuk
Oliver Tomaszczyk	3	PROP	3	John Afoa
Calum Green	4	LOCK	4	Tom Palmer
Dom Barrow	5	LOCK	5	James Hudson
Ally Hogg	6	FLANKER	6	Tom Savage
Andy Saull (c)	7	FLANKER	7	Matt Kvesic
Mark Wilson	8	NO.8	8	Ross Moriarty
Alex Rogers	16	RESERVE	16	Luke Cole
Rob Hawkins	17	RESERVE	17	James Gibbons
Mark Irving	18	RESERVE	18	Yann Thomas
Scott MacLeod	19	RESERVE	19	Elliott Stooke
Sean Robinson	20	RESERVE	20	Gareth Evans
Mike Blair	21	RESERVE	21	Callum Braley
Rory Clegg	22	RESERVE	22	Billy Burns
Alex Tait	23	RESERVE	23	Tom Isaacs

Referee: Tim Wigglesworth

Assistant Referees: Ashley Rowden & Andy Watson

TMO: Trevor Fisher

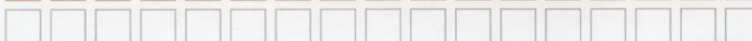
FALCONS POINTS



GLOUCESTER'S POINTS



TIME



SCORER

TONIGHT'S MAN-OF-THE-MATCH
CHAMPAGNE IS SUPPLIED BY

TODAY'S VISITORS

Gloucester Rugby make the long trip north to take on Newcastle this evening hoping to bounce back from the disappointment of defeat at home to Harlequins last Friday.

This has always proved to be a tough fixture for the Cherry and Whites. Last season's hard-fought 22-16 victory was the first since an Anglo-Welsh triumph in November 2008.

And, with the home side looking to attract a large, vocal crowd to Kingston Park, this evening's game will be as tough as ever.

What is for sure is that it will be another step along the learning curve for Gloucester Rugby in what has been an eventful season to date.

After the many changes in personnel during the close season, both on and off the field, the main message from Kingsholm was a plea for patience. Everything will take time to gel was the predominant theme.

After all, incoming Director of Rugby David Humphreys didn't take up his post until August 1st, and new Head



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Coach Laurie Fisher didn't arrive until after the Brumbies' Super Rugby season came to an end.

In hindsight, perhaps winning the Premiership Rugby 7s season for a second season running didn't help with the tempering of expectations!

Even then, "...judge us after the first phase of the Premiership is over..." was the Gloucester mantra, even after a heavy opening night defeat at reigning champions Northampton Saints.

Indeed, Gloucester have got steadily better. Premiership wins over Sale, London Welsh and Leicester have followed in addition to narrow defeats against Saracens, Exeter Chiefs and last weekend against Quins.

And the development has continued through the first two weeks of European action. A 55-0 victory over CA Brive at Kingsholm was followed by a hard fought win in France over Oyonnax – wins on French soil are not to be sniffed at.

That French 'double header' was followed by the return of the LV= Cup, and a tough opener against the current holders, Exeter Chiefs. The Chiefs sneaked that one with a last minute penalty try, but Gloucester bounced back with a dogged win on the road at London Welsh.

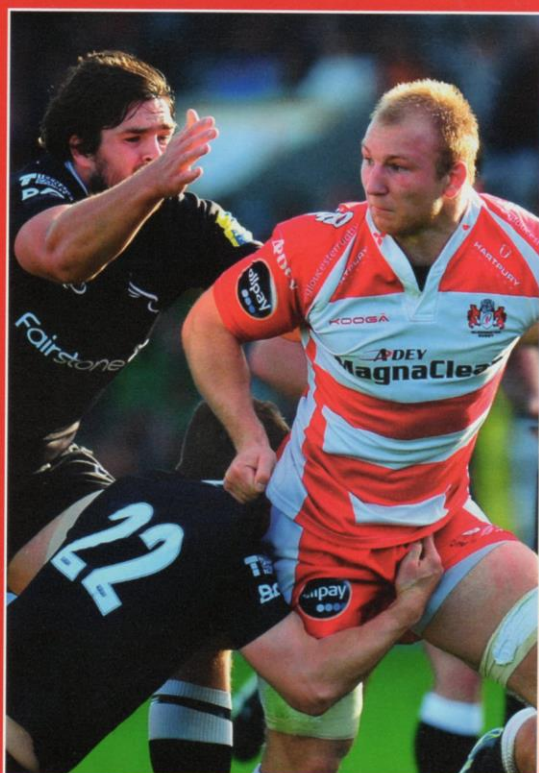
That set up the return to Aviva Premiership action at home to Harlequins, a game that Gloucester will feel slipped away from them having led 12-0 at one point.

The goal now is to respond to that disappointment with a strong performance this evening, and one of the challenges for David Humphreys and Laurie Fisher is establishing who exactly they have at their disposal their evening.

Last Friday evening, as has been widely reported in the media, Richard Hibbard was available to sit on the bench. However, James Hook was retained by Wales but spent the entire 80 minutes against Fiji warming the bench. At the time of writing, their status this week is unknown.

In addition to Hook, Gloucester were missing three Tongans (Kalamafoni, Lutui and Puafisi), two England players (May and Morgan) and Greig Laidlaw with Scotland. Again, until the various international sides are announced, it's not clear who will (or won't) be back. Matt Kvesic and Billy Twelvetrees may come into the reckoning for England....

Whoever dons the Cherry and White this evening though, they will have to be at their best as a solid team performance is what is required to leave with the points.

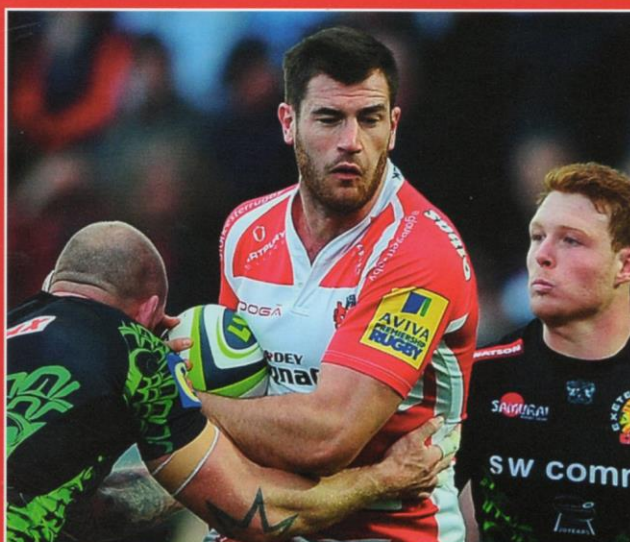


THREE TO WATCH

MARK ATKINSON

A summer signing from Bedford Blues, centre Atkinson has impressed massively in Cherry and White. Having spent his formative years with Wasps and Sale, Atkinson found his feet at Goldington Road before moving to Kingsholm ahead of the new season as one of the most sought after players in the Championship.

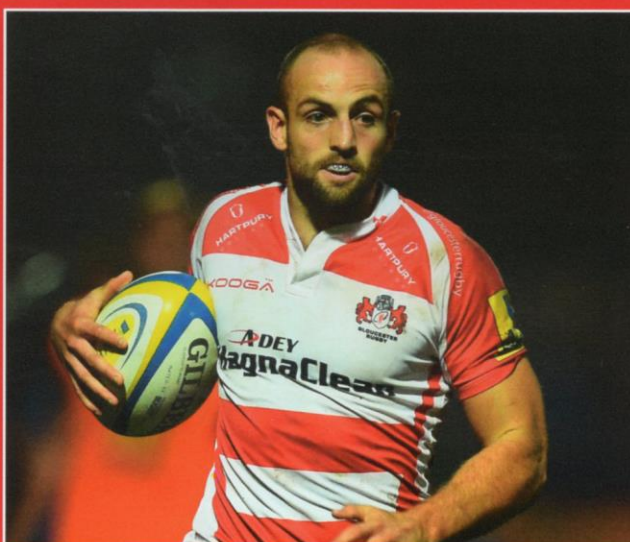
Comfortable at fly half or centre, Atkinson picked up two tries against London Welsh in Round Four and made his first Premiership start against Harlequins in Round Seven. A powerful, quick-stepping centre, with a penchant for an offload, Atkinson is one to watch.



CHARLIE SHARPLES

Sharples recently brought up his 150th competitive appearance for the club, and at the age of 25, there are hopefully plenty more to come. After making his debut in 2007, Sharples has crossed for 58 competitive tries and in 2011 made his England debut in the RBS Six Nations in Paris.

The Hong Kong-born flyer signed a new deal in January and celebrated his 150th appearance with a hat-trick against CA Brive in the European Rugby Challenge Cup in October.

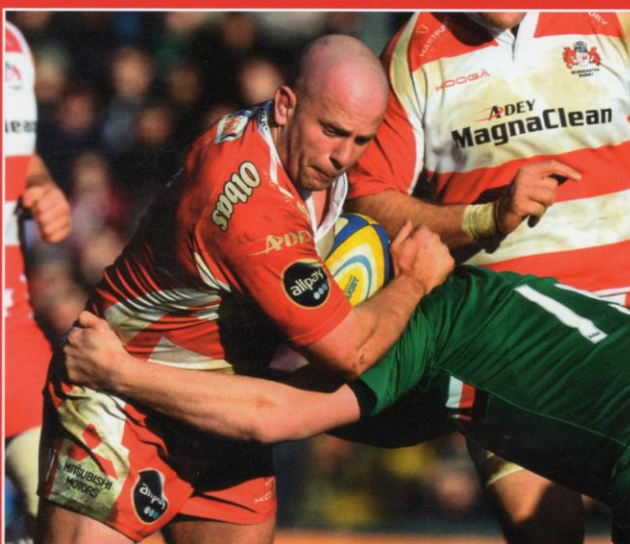


NICK WOOD

Gloucester's recent trip to Oyonnax in the European Rugby Challenge Cup was a milestone for the front row, with Gloucester winning 25-15. Wood registered his 250th competitive appearance, second only to Peter Buxton and James Simpson-Daniel at Kingsholm in recent times, crossing for nine tries in the process.

In last Friday's clash with Harlequins, Wood marked the accomplishment of becoming Gloucester's top Premiership appearance maker with 185.

The new 'Squadfather' is a key part of the Cherry and White pack in recent seasons.



FLOWN THE NEST

This evening's visit of Gloucester Rugby sees former Falcons captain, James Hudson make a welcome return to the Kingston Park pitch.

Hudson joined the Falcons in 2009 after making a name for himself with Bath and London Irish and was a firm fans' favourite during his four season stay on Tyneside which came to a close after the club won promotion back to the Aviva Premiership at the end of the 2012/2013 season.

Joining Gloucester in search of a new challenge, Hudson has now fully settled into his new West Country club and is thoroughly enjoying the experience.

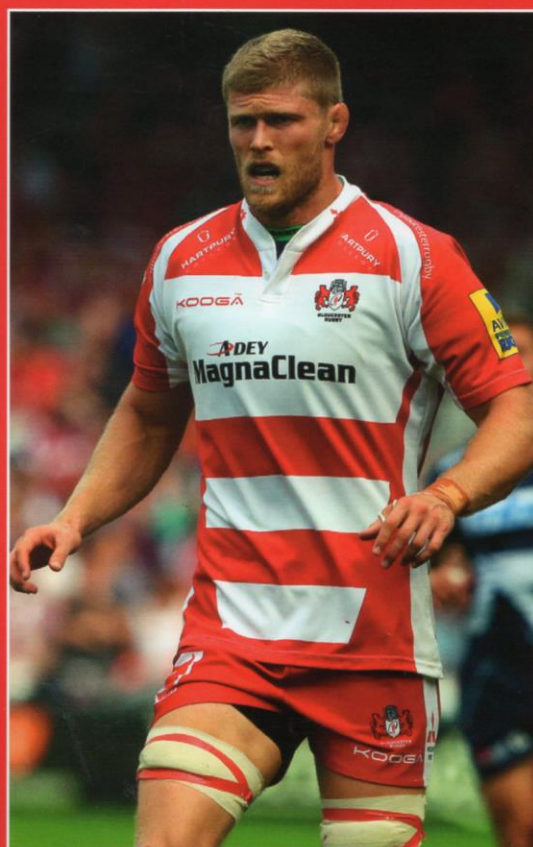
"It was a big move to make, but it was the right one for me when I made it. I had four years at Kingston Park which was enjoyable and saw me make a lot of firm friends but the move to Kingsholm gave me a chance to take on a new challenge and allowed my wife and I to move closer to our families."

"That made it a bit easier to settle in and get my head around all the new elements, from the training facilities out at Hartbury College to all the new staff."

"We have a really good squad down here with a number of characters, including Richard Hibbard who arrived in the summer. He is a good guy who after arriving in the summer is already in charge of fines and the players social calendar and we are all a fairly close knit group."

The archetypal "Rugby City" Gloucester is renowned for the club being at the very core of the city's being, a position that ensures extremely passionate support.

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"I've played in front of supportive crowds all through my career, but Gloucester is like nothing else, the sheer volume is unbelievable! With the club being at the heart of the city's consciousness, that support does bring with it its own pressures, but that just means when things to go well its part of the reward and it's nice to have The Shed on your side!

Looking forward to tonight's Aviva Premiership encounter, Hudson and his side are preparing

"Kingston Park is traditionally a tough place to come and play and I think in my time up at Kingston Park, the Falcons won most of those games. They were tight and nery games but they provided plenty of entertainment and hopefully it will be more of the same on Friday."

"It will be a game featuring two sides who are given licence to play and have a lot of potency in attack and with the new synthetic surface up at Kingston Park, both teams will be encouraged to express themselves."

"It will be the first time I've played against the Falcons at Kingston Park, as I missed the game at the start of last season with injury. It was another close game and one I think Gloucester had to play very well to secure so while it will be good to run out again at KP, we know it will be a test on Friday."

"We've seen the weather forecast for the game and if the wind and rain arrive, then hopefully I can bring a bit of inside info on the prevailing winds around the ground!"