

## The Coucester

Gloucester Rugby come into this afternoon's opening fixture of the Aviva Premiership Rugby season looking to play the role of party poopers on the Chiefs' big day.

Bryan Redpath's side are, of course, the first ever Premiership visitors to Sandy Park with Exeter having clinched their place in the top flight following their dramatic play-off win over Bristol.



GLOUCESTER

It's sure to be an exciting, and emotional, occasion here this afternoon and the Chiefs will be straining every sinew to show that they well and truly belong in the highest level of English club rugby.

However, Gloucester are here to do a job and there will be absolutely no room for sentiment as they look to get their own season off to a flier.

It's been a reasonably settled close season at Kingsholm, particularly compared to just over a year ago when there had been significant turnover on the playing front and Head Coach Bryan Redpath was entering his first season at the helm.

Just three new faces have arrived to join the playing squad this summer with only a handful of departures so continuity has been the name of the game for Gloucester which could be significant in the opening weeks of the season when other teams may still be in that 'getting to know you' phase.

The pre-season friendlies that Gloucester have played to date have seen the side working on a couple of things ahead of the new season.

The first has been defence. Gloucester were amongst the great entertainers last season, they scored a lot of tries, but also conceded a lot as well!

The desire to play attacking rugby, when it's appropriate, is still there. But a lot of work has been done over the summer to tighten things up when the opposition has the ball.

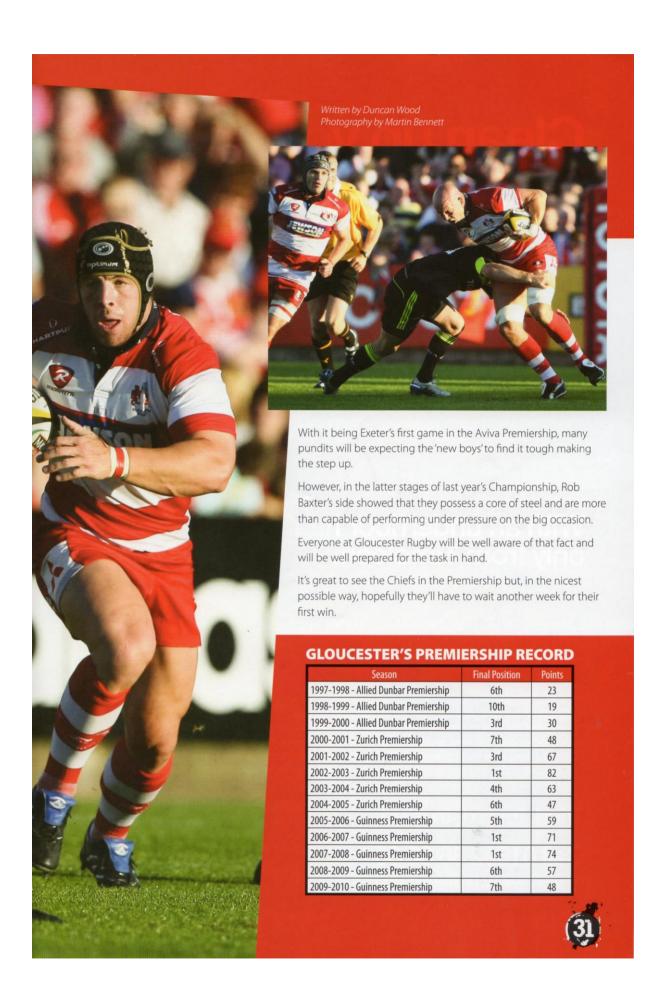
And, this was certainly evidenced in the club's first two pre-season friendlies when the Scarlets and the Ospreys were restricted to six points and 14 points respectively. Admittedly, it's tricky to read too much into pre-season performances, but the signs were promising.

Similarly, Redpath has been quite open in his desire to see his team secure more victories on the road. In the Premiership last season, Gloucester won just twice away from Kingsholm – at Leeds and at Worcester – although away wins were achieved in other competitions.



As a result, testing pre-season fixtures at the likes of the Ospreys and Munster were scheduled in order to fine tune performances on the road ahead of this afternoon's big opener.







WITH his father Phil the captain of hometown club Otley, Mike Tindall was always destined to follow in his stud marks and turn his hand to the sport of rugby union.

Educated at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Wakefield, Tindall's talents with ball in hand were captured at an early day by top flight side Bath, who recruited him as an 18-year-old in 1997.

Although first team chances were somewhat limited for Tindall in his early years at the Recreation Ground – former England internationals Phil de Glanville and Jeremy Guscott were the mainstays at the time – the Yorkshireman began to make his mark following the 1999 Rugby World Cup, establishing himself as not only a regular start within the Bath ranks, but also that of the England national team for whom he made his a try-scoring debut in 2000 against Ireland.

Brushing aside criticism from certain sections of the national media about his game play, the hard-running centre was still very much part of Clive Woodward's plans as he teamed up alongside Will Greenwood to form a formidable midfield partnership.

It was a well-crafted and workmanlike partnership which worked a treat as the duo teamed up for much of England's World Cup winning campaign of 2003. Indeed, Tindall missed just one game during the success Down Under – that coming in the semi-final when Woodward opted for the kicking game of Mike Catt against France instead.

Sadly, injuries began to curtail his progress in the intervening years and he was forced to miss out on the British & Irish Lions tours of New Zealand (2005) and South Africa (2009), as well as the Rugby World Cup in 2007 because of a broken leg.

His eight–year stay at Bath was also coming to an end in 2005 and following a falling out with then club owner Andrew Brownsword, Tindall joined local rivals Gloucester on an initial three-year deal.

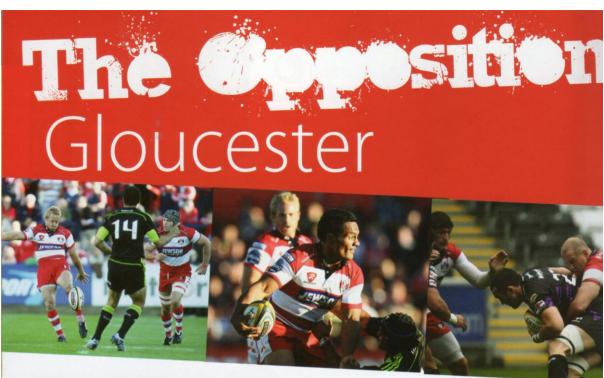
Now entering into his sixth season with the Kingsholm club, Tindall is widely regarded as an integral part of the Cherry and Whites back division, where he has now amassed 96 games for the club, scoring 83 points in the process.

However, the player himself admits he is just happy to still be alive following a potential life-threatening ordeal back in February 2008. Playing for England against Wales at Twickenham, Tindall was seriously injured after diving onto the foot of Lee Byrne as he looked to collect a loose ball. Although he was stretchered from the field at the time, it was not until later that he was rushed to hospital.

Following extensive tests, it was soon revealed Tindall had punctured his lung and torn two inches of his liver. It was a sickening injury and he was placed in intensive care for almost a week before eventually being released home to recuperate.

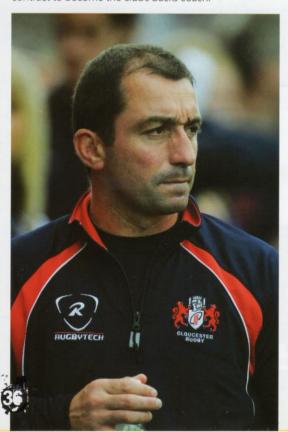
Two years on from that incident, Tindall is happily back doing what he loves best out on the field. As well as his rugby life, he is also a keen poker player and horse-racing enthusiast, whilst his partner is Zara Phillips, the daughter of HRH Princess Anne, the Princess Royal.

D.O.B	18/10/78
Birthplace	Otley
, Height	1.88m (6ft 2ins)
Weight	102kg (16st)
Position	Centre
Clubs	Bath, Gloucester
Honours	England (63 caps)



Scotsman Bryan Redpath is the man once again entrusted with leading Gloucester's assault on the Aviva Premiership this season.

Born in Galashiels, the 39-year-old initially joined the Cherry & Whites in 2007 when he signed a two-year contract to become the club's backs coach.



It was a position the former Scottish international, who won 60 caps for his country, held until he was elevated to the role of head coach in June 2009 following the departure of Dean Ryan.

Before joining Gloucester he previously played for Sale Sharks in the Premiership and also appeared in the 1999 and 2003 Rugby World Cups.

Ahead of today's Premiership opener against Exeter Chiefs, Redpath is in upbeat mood regarding his side's chances this term.

Following a narrow 15-10 loss to Munster in their final preseason friendly last Friday, he said: "We are where we want to be, most definitely. We have done a lot of good things, we made 11 changes to the starting side and that always has a little bit of disruption along the way.

"We have done that in every game, so I think we will take some confidence and belief out of this game and really push hard for Exeter."

Redpath bolstered his squad during the close season with the captures of Brett Deacon from Leicester, Matt Cox (Worcester Warriors) and Jim Hamilton (Edinburgh). Out of Kingsholm, however, went Adam Eustace (Northampton), Semi Tadulala (Leeds), Andy Williams (Worcester), Greg Somerville, Gareth Delve (both Melbourne Rebels) and Marco Bortolami

## **GLOUCESTER'S PREMIERSHIP RECORD**

**GAMES PLAYED: 294** 

BIGGEST WIN: 68-12 (v Bath, 2002) TOTAL POINTS SCORED: 6,938

MOST POINTS IN A MATCH: 68 (v Bath, 2002)

**TOTAL TRIES SCORED:** 709

MOST TRIES IN A MATCH: 9 (v Bath, 2002)

**TOTAL CONVERSIONS** 474

MOST CONVERSIONS IN A MATCH 7 (v Bedford Blues, 2000)

**TOTAL PENALTY GOALS SCORED: 766** 

MOST PENALTY GOALS IN A MATCH: 9 (v Harlequins, 2000)

**TOTAL DROP GOALS SCORED: 49** 

MOST DROP GOALS IN A MATCH: 3 (v Sale Sharks, 2001)
MOST APPEARANCES: Adam Eustace 161 appearances

HIGHEST ATTENDANCE: 59,400
TOTAL HOME ATTENDANCE: 2,835,282
TOP POINTS-SCORER: Ludovic Mercier 855 points
TOP TRY-SCORER: James Simpson-Daniel 53 tries



Dave Attwood   4/5/1987   Bristol   Lock   2.01m (6ft 7in)   115kg (18st)   Bristol	riors tes Scotland Should be length of the l
Alex Brown   5/17/1979   Bristol   Lock   2.01m (6ft 7in)   116kq (18st 3lbs)   Bristol	riors tes Scotland Should be length as the l
Freddie Burns         5/13/1990         Bath         Fly-Half/Centre         1.85m (6ft 1in)         80kg (12st 8lbs)           Pete Buxton         8/21/1978         Cheltenham         Back-Row         1.93m (6ft 4in)         115kg (18st)         Newport           Pierre Capdevielle         3/30/1974         Oldron         Prop         1.85m (6ft 1in)         123kg (19st 4lbs)         Brive           Matt Cox         3/6/1988         Redditch         Back-Row         1.91m (6ft 3in)         98kg (15st 5lbs)         Worcester War           Darren Dawiduik         9/21/1987         Truro         Hooker         1.80m (5ft 7in)         95kg (14st 12lbs)         Cornish Pirat           Brett Deacon         3/7/1982         Leicester         Lock         1.95m (6ft 4in)         110kg (17st 4lbs)         Leicester Tigh           Alasdair Dickinson         9/11/1983         Dundee         Prop         1.88m (6ft 2in)         110kg (17st 4lbs)         Leicester Tigh           Paul Doran-Jones         5/2/1985         Enfield         Prop         1.88m (6ft 2in)         116kg (18st 3lbs)         London Well           Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu         10/31/1980         Apia         Centre         1.88m (6ft 2in)         124kg (19st 7lbs)         Edinburgh           Rupatr Harden         5/9/1985	riors tes ers Scotland sh England
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	England
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Nicky Robinson 1/3/1982 Cardiff Fly-Half 1.85m (6ft 1in) 93kg (14st 8lbs) Cardiff Blue	es Wales
Charlie Sharples         8/17/1989         Hong Kong         Wing         1.83m (6ft)         93kg (14st 8lbs)	-
James Simpson-Daniel         5/30/1982         Stockton-on-Tees         Wing         1.83m (6ft)         92kg (14st 6lbs)	England
Alasdair Strokosch 2/21/1983 Paisley Back-Row 1.91m (6ft 3in) 107kg (16st 11lbs) Edinburgh	
Tim Taylor         10/4/1982         Derby         Fly-Half         1.83m (6ft)         88kg (13st 12lbs)         Nottingham	n
Yann Thomas         4/16/1990         Bristol         Prop         1.88m (6ft 2in)         120kg (18st 12lbs)	
Mike Tindall         10/18/1974         Otley         Centre         1.88m (6ft 2in)         102kg (16st 1lb)         Bath	England
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Dan Williams         2/1/1989         Rugby         Back-Row         1.96m (6ft 5in)         104kg (16st 5lbs)	4.5
Nick Wood         1/9/1983         Swindon         Prop         1.85m (6ft 1in)         112kg (17st 8lbs)	

