



# Redpath not ducking the challenges of forthcoming season

Anyone observing Gloucester Rugby's recent open training session at Kingsholm would have been struck by the youthful looking nature of the squad.

The experienced pros – the Browns, the Buxtons, the Hazells – were all still there of course. But, more than the usual number of Academy aged players seemed to be taking part in drills.

The reason is obvious. With the club currently missing a host of players who are away preparing for the Rugby World Cup with their respective countries, there are opportunities for the rest of the squad to shine.

Gloucester Rugby are, of course, not the only team in this situation. Plenty of the other Aviva Premiership Rugby clubs are in exactly the same situation.

It's not dissimilar to what happens during the Autumn international or Six Nations periods although the situation is exascerbated by the absence of the likes of Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu and Akapusi Qera who would normally be available at these times.

But, Head Coach Bryan Redpath, talking as the team embarks upon its final preparation for the club's two preseason friendlies, is still relaxed and smiling and even welcoming the additional challenge of working with some new players.

"It's been an unusual mindset really.
You've got Academy boys stepping up as well
as guys who may have been second or third
choice in previous seasons suddenly now
taking centre stage and being asked to front
up massively."

"In some ways it's good, as a coach, to go back and work with some people that you perhaps haven't spent as much time with in the past as you'd have liked. And that gives you the chance to go back and coach and make them better as individuals."

"And the improvement you see in some of these players can be quite dramatic and they come on quite quickly. That's fine in a training environment but, in a match situation, you may find the reasons why they haven't played so much."

"Is it because there's someone in their



position who is that much better? Or is it because we haven't spent as much time with them or they haven't had the opportunities?"

Despite the number of players away with their countries, as previously mentioned, you'll find no grumbles from Redpath as he prepare to enter his third season as Head Coach.

"I've no issues. Our starting back line is still pretty strong even with the players we have away but some of the new ones coming in are going to have to step up."

"There's a transition period for every squad and, for us, it's coinciding with a World Cup which obviously only happens every four years."

"Players are coming through and facing bigger challenges, the squad is smaller because of the World Cup and players are going to get tested. But I'm happy with the group."

"Everyone's in the same boat. Squads are small. James (Simpson-Daniel) has come back which has helped with the backs situation but we're not sure whether Charlie will be back or will stay with England."

"I'm pretty sure the Scottish boys will stay and Eli and Q (Akapusi Qera) will stay as well."

"It's exciting but it's a big challenge and a nervy time for some. I'm not too nervous about it, what will be, will be."

There may be some news faces but one thing that Redpath is still expecting to see present is the character and team spirit that was evident in bucket loads throughout the course of 2010-11.

"We've got to build on the character that we showed last year, the attitude that we had as a group in terms of playing for each other and for Gloucester. If that's there then our supporters will be behind us

"We can't worry about what's happening with other teams. I don't know who will have the most players away. We know we'll have seven or eight away and we've just got to accept it. We can't feel sorry for ourselves."

"It's about livelihoods, reputations, representing the City of Gloucester. That can bring a different stress level in itself for players. It'll be tough and some of the players will thrive on this increased expectation and some won't. That's the nature of the beast."

And, despite the second of this season's preseason friendlies being James Simpson-Daniel's Testimonial match, the former Scotland international scrum half insists that both matches will be taken very seriously indeed.

"London Welsh are a good side, they won't be missing players to the World Cup and they'll be very enthusiastic about coming to Kingsholm."

"Russia will be exactly the same. We'll be the fourth game they'll play so they'll have some match action under their belts and they'll be looking to keep improving with the World Cup in mind."

"This preseason has been hard on them (the players) and training has been pretty lively at times. We now need to start getting a little battle hardened because it's not about how far and how quick you can run or how much you can lift."

"It's about how you can channel that into playing rugby and we have to be tough on ourselves over the next couple of weeks."

MORE FROM THE OPEN TRAINING SESSION AT KINGSHOLM, PAGE 30

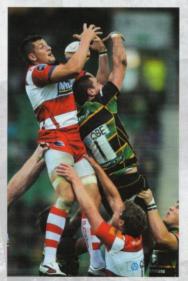




## **Round Up**









A youthful Gloucester Rugby squad gave a good account of themselves in the second JP Morgan Asset Management Premiership Rugby Sevens tournament last month but came up just short in terms of progression.

Gloucester Rugby opened the campaign at Franklin's Gardens with a 24-14 win over Northampton Saints but slipped to defeats in the second and third games and failed to qualify for the final stages.

It all started well as Gloucester defeated the host team and would have fancied their chances of beating Wasps with the Wycombe based side having just been defeated by Saracens and playing their second game in succession.

However, Wasps took the spoils leaving Gloucester needing to beat a powerful Saracens side to go through which they so nearly did.

Qualification for the final stages was still possible but it needed Northampton to defeat Wasps but it never really looked on the cards with the Saints going down 19-7 in an error strewn affair.

#### NORTHAMPTON SAINTS 14

#### **GLOUCESTER RUGBY 24**

Gloucester quietened the home crowd by nilling the Saints in the second half after trailing 14-10 at half time.

Saints' wing Anders Mogensen showed great pace to open the scoring but Mark Woodrow followed up his own kick to get Gloucester back in it.

Gareth Evans made the most of a turnover to gallop away and put Gloucester into the lead only for Scott Armstrong to reply somewhat against the run of play.

England U20 scrum half Dan Robson was introduced at half time and it was all Gloucester. Rob Langley was tackled into touch at the corner before Evans bravely secured possession for Fred Burdon to score and Evans' second try settled matters.

#### GLOUCESTER RUGBY 7

#### **LONDON WASPS 34**

The opening stages of this one were cat and mouse and Ryan Brend was almost away for Gloucester but just hauled down.

Will Robinson slipped a tackle to open the scoring but Gloucester were back on terms when Rob Langley followed up a kick well and Fred Burdon scored under the posts.

Joe Tariperiajua scored directly from the kick off to give Wasps a 12-7 half time lead.

Brend was almost away again at the start of the second but Wasps showed clinical finishing skills to ease their way clear to a comfortable win as Gloucester tired and defensive gaps opened.

#### **GLOUCESTER RUGBY 22**

#### **SARACENS 28**

Gloucester were denied a second win in heartbreaking fashion as Scott Spurling scored with the last play of the game to clinch the win.

Gloucester had stunned unbeaten Saracens with tries from Ian Clark and Olly Robinson with Gareth Evans adding a lung bursting third on the stroke of half time.

Saracens hit back and looked to be heading for the win but Reuben Haile burrowed over to secure a 22-21 lead until Spurling's late intervention.

### Much has been made of the group of young English backs who have burst onto the scene in Gloucester Rugby colours in recent seasons.

Freddie Burns, Dave Lewis, Jonny May, Charlie Sharples and Henry Trinder have all 'graduated' into the first team squad via the Gloucester Rugby Academy and racked up an impressive level of first team experience in the process.

Potential is a word that has often been used when talking about them but, according to centre Henry Trinder, the days of talking about potential are over – it's now all about delivering in the here and now.

Trinder was a late arrival at preseason training having been given some much needed time off having represented England against the Barbarians in a non cap international at Twickenham and helping the England Saxons to successfully defend the Churchill Cup in June.

His introduction into life in the Gloucester Rugby midfield has traditionally been as the 'junior partner' to the likes of Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu and Mike Tindall.

However, with both of then likely to be away on World Cup duty this Autumn with England and Samoa respectively, the Swindon born centre knows that it's time to step things up as he explained during a break from training at the club's training base at Hartpury College.

"We can't sit back on our few years that have passed and still think we're youngsters, it's got to be about the here and now. We've all got to step up and make sure we can do the job.

"I might be maybe a young back, but I'm 22 and I'm far from the youngest out there, so I've got to make sure I'm playing well and playing up to the standard, whether I'm 22 or 30.

"There's a lot of youngsters last year who showed they can play, guys like Jonny May who came through very rapidly last term. In the last few seasons guys like that have just improved massively, and this year they've got to step up another level.

"But we've all got to step up, we're

not just youngsters coming up now. You've got to see yourself as a player just in the squad, in the mix, and it doesn't really matter about age any more."

Former Wallabies coach Bob Dwyer once said that you can never have too many centres or back row forwards because the nature of playing those positions is that impact injuries are commonplace meaning that strength in depth is vital.

Gloucester have been blessed with a number of quality centres at their disposal in recent seasons and, even taking into account the probable absence of Fuimaono-Sapolu and Tindall, Trinder is wise enough not to take selection for granted.

"There's Tim (Molenaar), there's

"The team is coming together really well and everyone is buzzing."

Jonny (May) and Ryan Mills as well, all of whom can play centre and they are all excellent players.

"It's a younger group without Tins, Tim is probably the oldest centre, even though he wouldn't want to be known as that!

"I'm fighting for the starting shirt along with everyone else, and if you're good enough to play it doesn't matter what age you are.

"But also if you want to start and keep that shirt, you've got to be better than everyone else. So that does add pressure and it puts a lot on your shoulders. But if you want to be playing and starting, that's what you've got to do."

"With Tins away that means there's more fierce competition for centres, everyone's in there and everyone's looking to get that starting shirt. "But also I think it will go up again when they come back because they've gone away, they will have a bit of a break before they return – but they will not just want to sit on the bench, they'll be fighting for their position. So that's why we've got two months to put our foot down."

He may have missed the start of preseason training because of his belated time off but admitted that he's been making up for it ever since.

"I did manage to get some time off. To be fair, the coaches and conditioning stuff have looked after us really well. So, I did get some holiday which was good as it had been a long 12 months.

"So, I came in late and I've been doing a bit of catch up since. Fitness is one area of my game that I've been looking to improve from last season. I've been a few metres behind the rest of the boys but I'm making progress.

"It's good to see how hard the boys have been working while you've been away and the strides they've made. It also gives you a nudge and drives you towards getting to the same level as them."

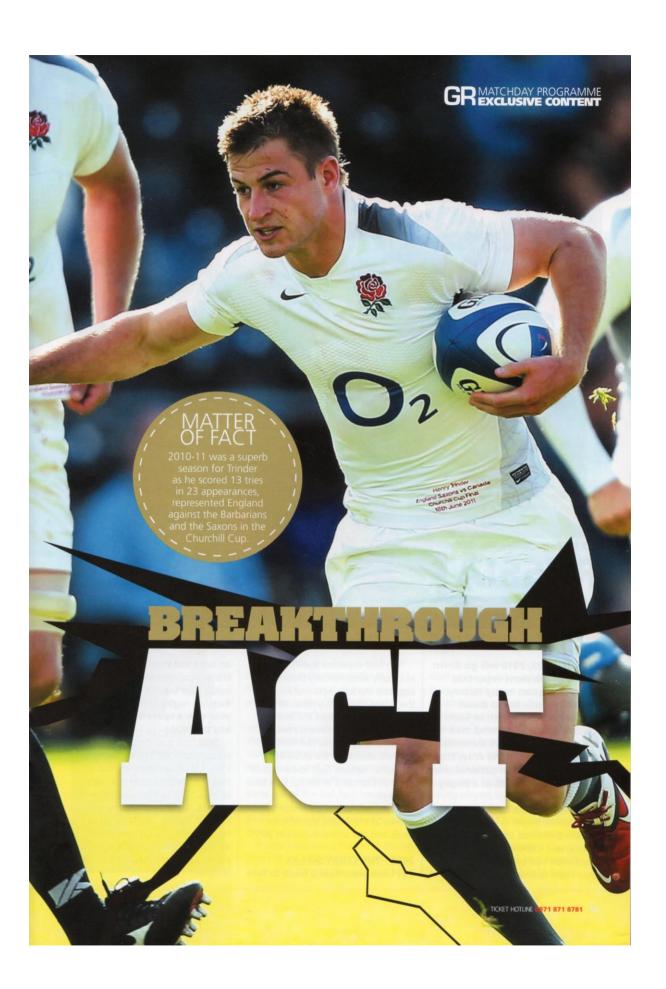
"I want to be stronger and fitter and faster. If you want to step your game up a level then you've got be above where you were at this point a year ago. Every player should be looking to build on what's gone before and get better."

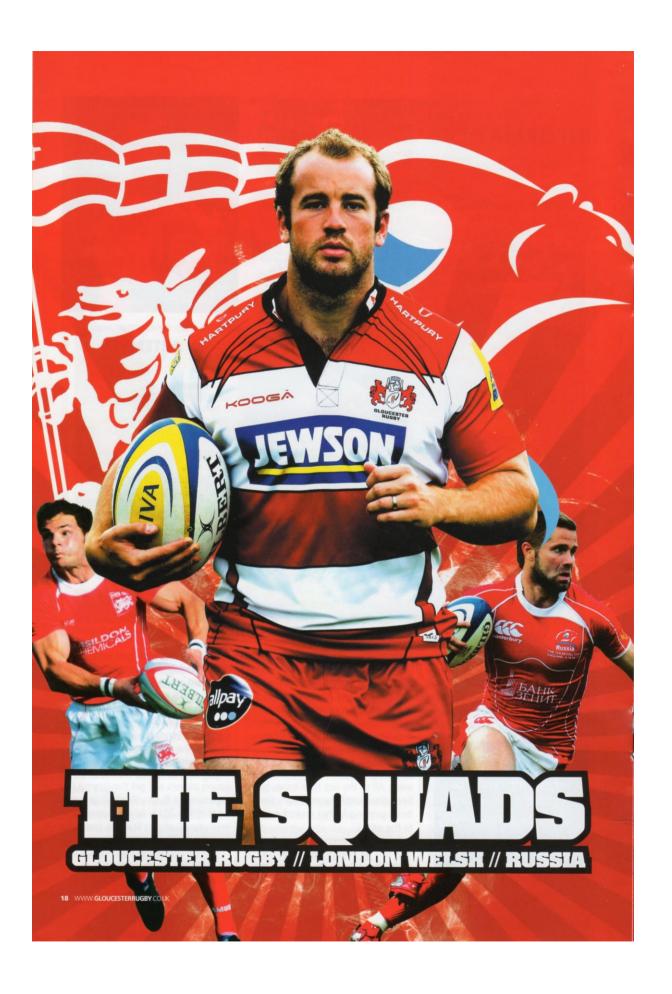
For all the fitness work, however, he admitted that there's nothing quite like the physical side of the game and the London Welsh and Russia games mean a lot

"We've done all the fitness work and now everyone is really looking forward to these two games. We've been doing our contact and it's been good to get a few shots in on everyone and get back into it"

"The team is coming together really well and everyone is buzzing. There's a lot of positional competition and everyone just wants to get out there to show Brush and Hoggy what they can do."









#### **GLOUCESTER RUGBY**

TOM AILES ALEX BROWN **KOREE BRITTON FREDDIE BURNS** PETER BUXTON **DARIO CHISTOLINI** IAN CLARK **MATIAS CORTESE MATT COX DARREN DAWIDIUK BRETT DEACON GARETH EVANS** WILL GRAULICH **RUPERT HARDEN** ANDY HAZELL TOM HEARD **WILL JAMES** SHAUN KNIGHT **ROB LANGLEY DAVE LEWIS DAVE MARKHAM JONNY MAY RYAN MILLS TIM MOLENAAR OLLY MORGAN DAN MURPHY LUKE NARRAWAY DAN ROBSON NICK RUNCIMAN** TOM SAVAGE SIMPSON-DANIEL LOUIS SPENCER TIM TAYLOR **YANN THOMAS HENRY TRINDER LESLEY VAINIKOLO** TOM VOYCE

**NICK WOOD** 

ALEX WOODBURN



#### **LONDON WELSH**

JOE AJUWA **GREG BATEMAN ADAM BROWN MATT CORKER ALEX DAVIES** MIKE DENBEE **DAN GEORGE JAMES HARRIS** MICHAEL HILLS WILL HURRELL **ED JACKSON ROWAN JENKINS SEB JEWELL GARY JOHNSON JAMES LEWIS ROB LEWIS** VILI MA'ASI **PAUL MACKEY JONATHAN MILLS JACK MOATES BILLY MOSS MIKE POWELL GORDON ROSS ASHLEY SMITH EPI TAIONE JAMES TIDESWELL** SIMON WHATLING

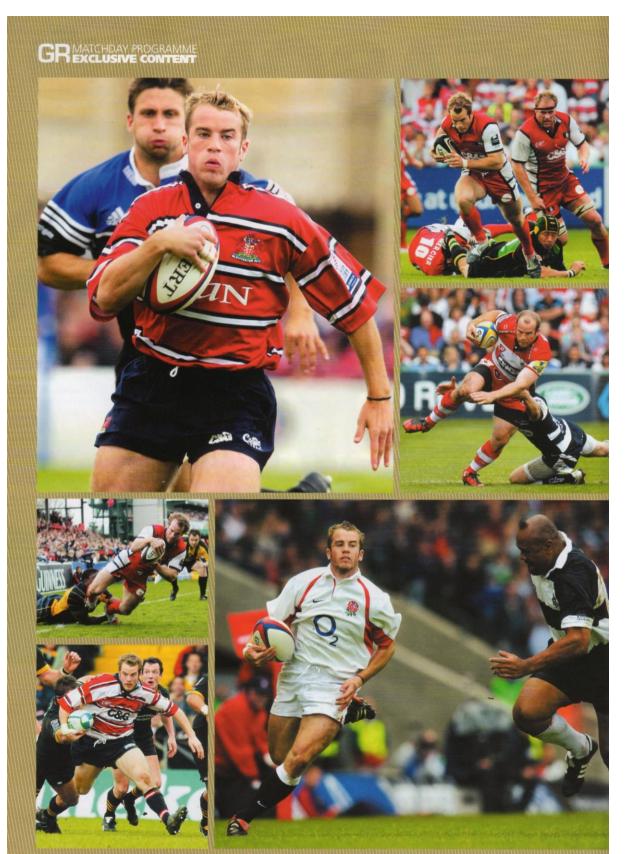




#### RUSSIA

GDENIS ANTONOV **VASILY ARTEMYEV MIKHAIL BABAEV VLADIMIR BOTVINNIKOV** ANDREY BYKANOV **ADAM BYRNES** ARTEM FATAKHOV **IGOR GALINOVSKIY** ANDREY GARBUZOV VIATCHESLAV GRACHEV **VICTOR GRESEV ALEXANDER KHROKIN IGOR KLYUCHNIKOV** KIRILL KOPESHKIN **VLADISLAV KORSHUNOV** YURY KUSHNAREV KIRILL KUSHNAREV ANDREY KUZIN **ALEXEY MAKOVETSKIY EVGENII MATVEEV ANDREY OSTRIKOV VLADIMIR OSTROUSHKO SERGEY POPOV IVAN PRISHCHEPENKO KONSTANTIN RACHKOV ALEXANDER SHAKIROV MIKHAIL SIDOROV** SERGEY SUGROBOV **ANDREY TEMNOV ALEXEY TRAVKIN SERGEY TRISHIN VALERIY TSNOBILADZE ALEXANDER VOYTOV ALEXANDER YANYUSHKIN** 

Gloucester Rugby vs Russia officials: Referee: Greg Garner Assistant Referees: Andrew Watson, Don Helme







# James Simpson-Daniel is intent on soaking up his testimonial match – but said Gloucester cannot afford it to be a circus.

The 29-year-old Gloucester speed king has admitted the Cherry and Whites' pre-season clash against Russia will be a night he will never forget.

Along with his Gloucester debut, his first try against Rotherham and a host of other standout moments, Sinbad expects his testimonial night at Kingsholm to live long in the memory.

But just because he has been granted the specific special honour of a testimonial match, Simpson-Daniel said there is no room for any kind of lighthearted approach in the vital clash.

Gloucester complete their pre-season programme with the intriguing Russia clash – and the match doubles as Sinbad's testimonial night.

The former Sedbergh School pupil hopes the fans will create a carnival atmosphere on the night – to enjoy both Gloucester's final season preparations, and also his own special night.

Former Gloucester skipper Kingsley Jones coaches Russia, and will team up with Bryan Redpath for a question and answer session in the 1873 Suite at 6pm before kick-off.

Ex-Gloucester centre Henry Paul is Russia's backs coach, and he will be on hand in the Shogun Bar ahead of kick-off, to answer fans' questions there too.

Sinbad said: "It's an absolute honour and a privilege to be granted a testimonial, let alone a testimonial match at Kingsholm.

"It's not something that they had to do, so I'm hugely grateful to them for allowing this to happen.

"It's a night I know I'll always remember, and I feel very humbled to have been allowed such an honour.

"Hopefully the fans will come out and support the night, because it will be the last chance to see how the team is shaping up before the league starts as much as anything else. "We want to make it a carnival atmosphere because it's a Friday night, the committee feel the tickets are at a good price and hopefully that will go down well."

Sinbad said Gloucester's pre-season preparations must take precedence over everything else on the night.

He continued: "Playing Russia is a very intriguing prospect, because it's always a big deal whenever a club side plays an international side.

"Look at games like Munster against the All Blacks over the years.

"Then obviously it was great when Gloucester played Australia two years ago.

"They are coming on tour to finalise their preparations for the World Cup, so there's no messing the opportunity to see who is in form and how combinations are coming together.

"So it's a deadly-serious game, it's not a light-hearted testimonial game with me selecting the side or anything like that – it definitely won't be me taking conversions!"

Question-and-answer sessions ahead of the Russia clash will allow the fans to catch up with some old favourites, and also check on Gloucester's progress ahead of the big Premiership kick-off.

Simpson-Daniel added: "Russia have Kingsley Jones and Henry Paul as coaches, so it hopefully adds another level of interest for them to be back at Kingsholm.

"Brush and Kingsley will be doing a Q and A in the 1873 Suite before the

# HONOUR AND A PRIVILEGE TO BE GRANTED A TESTIMONIAL, LET ALONE A TESTIMONIAL MATCH AT KINGSHOLM.

around from them.

"And this is Gloucester's last preseason game before the start of the Premiership, so it's hugely important for us too.

"So it's going to be a big contest and a very interesting one too.

"It will be pretty unforgiving and Bryan and Carl will need to use it to finalise preparations, and as players we'll need the match practice.

"These are the games where players can stake their claim for the start of the season, and when the coaches get game which will be a good chance for fans to see how things are shaping up ahead of the season from a Gloucester point of view.

"But also in the Shogun Bar Henry Paul will do the same before kick-off, so hopefully there will be lots of different things going on for the supporters.

"I'm really pleased with the range of events we've been able to put together during the testimonial year, but obviously now this is a great chance for a larger number of the fans to get involved."