

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

ISSUE
12



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

PRICE. £3

vs BATH RUGBY
AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY - ROUND 18



NICK WOOD

EXCLUSIVE PROGRAMME
INTERVIEW WITH THE
GLOUCESTER RUGBY
LEGEND ON PAGE 40



26.03.16
KICK-OFF 5.30 PM
KINGSHOLM
AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY

PLUS...
THE CITIZEN
BOB FENTON
ACTION REPLAY

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C CAPTAIN'S CORNER BILLY TWELVETREES

GOOD AFTERNOON, AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM WITH BATH THE VISITORS TODAY FOR ANOTHER CHAPTER IN THE LONG AND RICH HISTORY OF WEST COUNTRY DERBY GAMES.

FIRST things first, we have been hugely disappointed with how the last two weeks have gone. We feel that we have let ourselves down with the performances against two teams who were desperate for the wins.

We needed an emotional response against London Irish last Sunday, and we were unable to hold onto a lead that we had worked so hard to earn.

But, the making of a good team is how they respond to the tough times, and we have to dust

(RIGHT) We are looking to make amends for our last two results and record a second victory over our derby opponents Bath



ON A BIG AFTERNOON, OUR SUPPORTERS CAN REALLY PLAY THAT KEY ROLE AND AGAINST WASPS THE NOISE, THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE BACKING WAS SECOND TO NONE.

ourselves down and work harder than we have before to rediscover our confidence and form.

Last time out at home, we put in probably the best performance of the season to defeat Wasps, and this showed us the levels that we can reach against one of the form teams in the Aviva Premiership.

That game was demanding, both physically and emotionally, but we can have no excuses after defeats in the last two weeks. So we have got to dig really deep this week and there is no better game than this to bounce back in.

That is the challenge for us this week against a Bath side that will also be hunting the chance to climb the table, and exact some sort of revenge for the reverse fixture at the Rec back in February.

Our supporters have stuck with us through thick and thin, and we share their frustrations when things aren't going to plan. But as a squad, we are solid and honest with each other as we highlight what went wrong, and we will be doing all that we can this weekend to deliver a response.

It was great for the squad to see Ross Moriarty get his chance for Wales last weekend, and his performance more than deserved the two tries, and it was a big reward for the efforts he has



been putting in whilst in Cherry and White.

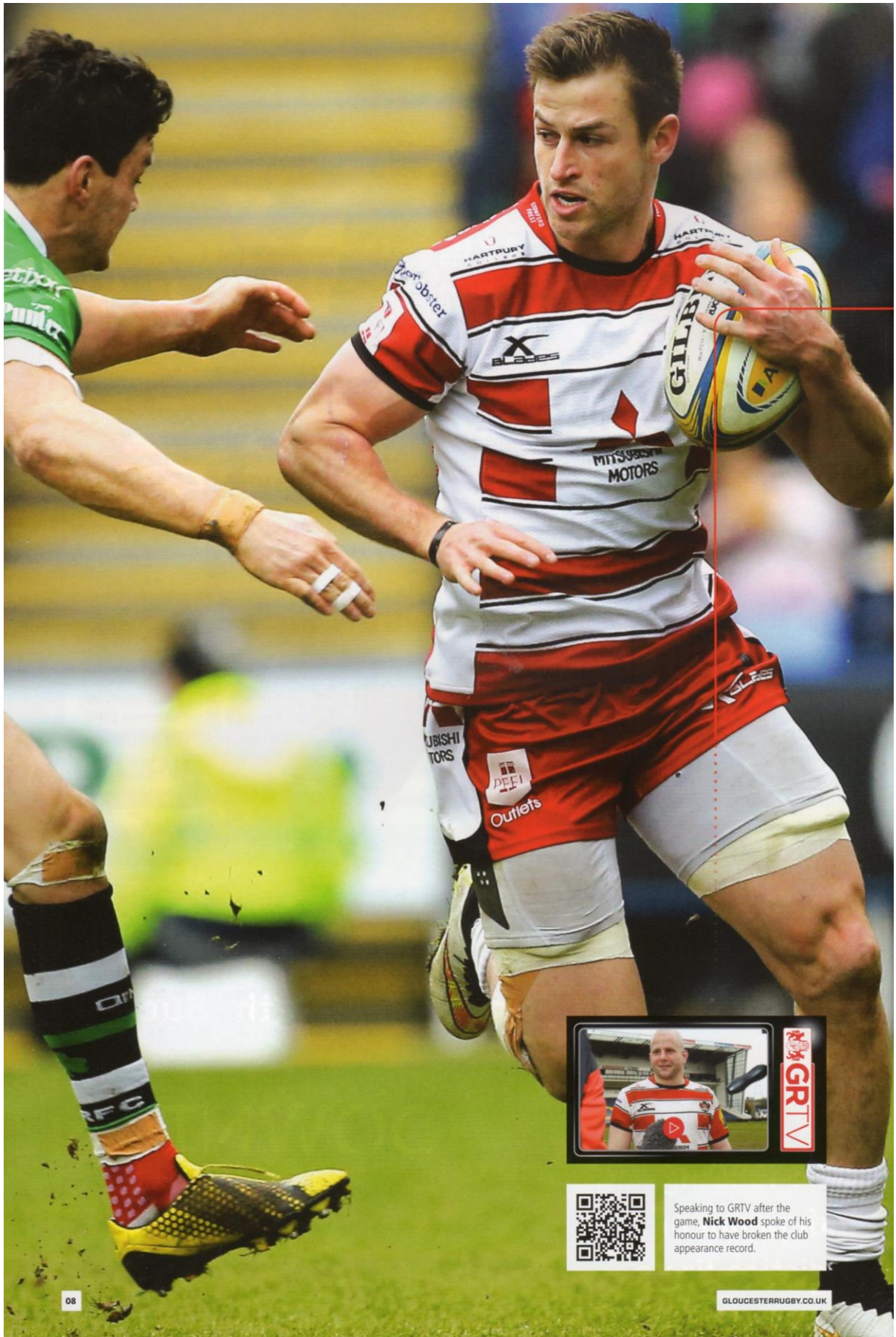
I know he loves playing for Gloucester, and it is great to see a club product progress to the test arena and earn rave reviews. It has been good to welcome both Ross and Greig back in to the group at Hartpury this week.

On a big afternoon, our supporters can really play that key role and against Wasps the noise, the atmosphere and the backing was second to none.

We also know that doesn't come as a given, so we have to deliver the reasons for you to shout for us.

Enjoy the game!

Billy



Speaking to GRTV after the game, **Nick Wood** spoke of his honour to have broken the club appearance record.



COMING UP...

EXCLUSIVE MATCHDAY PROGRAMME INTERVIEW
NICK WOOD



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DAVID HUMPHREYS

DIRECTOR OF RUGBY

AFTER A COUPLE OF DISAPPOINTING DEFEATS AWAY FROM HOME, WE'RE DELIGHTED TO BE BACK AT KINGSHOLM FOR A HUGELY IMPORTANT WEST COUNTRY DERBY AGAINST BATH RUGBY.

THROUGHOUT the course of this season, a lot has been said about the competitive nature of the Premiership and the small margins between winning and losing matches in this league.

After two good wins against Newcastle and Wasps, the form team in European rugby, we let ourselves down with the quality of our performances against both Worcester and London Irish.

Despite these two defeats, results elsewhere mean that we are still well positioned to fight for a top six spot and qualification for the European Rugby Champions Cup.

However, there is now very little margin for error and we can't afford to lose many more points in the final five rounds of Premiership competition.

Today's opponents are in a very similar position and with so much at stake, both teams know the significance of four points this afternoon.

Over the last few years Bath, last season's beaten Premiership finalists, have put together a squad with real strength in depth and will be delighted to welcome back their Grand Slam winners for the season run in.

It is also a huge boost to have Greig Laidlaw and Ross Moriarty back in the team after their Six Nations performances over the past few weeks.

With two tries last weekend, Ross has come back with a real spring in his step and it was great to see one of our Academy products making a real impact at international level. He's already looking for a new contract!

THE MODERN GAME SEES FEWER AND FEWER PLAYERS COMMIT TO ONE CLUB THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER, AND IT'S A HUGE HONOUR FOR NICK TO HAVE ACHIEVED TWO SUCH SIGNIFICANT MILESTONES.

Having led Scotland to their best Six Nations Championship finish for many seasons, Greig will play a key role over the next few weeks. His goal kicking, leadership and experience will be crucial in delivering the level of performance required to move up the Premiership and retain the European Rugby Challenge Cup.

It is also appropriate to recognise Nick Wood's recent achievements in breaking Peter Buxton's appearance record of 274 competitive appearances for the club and also making his 200th Premiership appearance. The modern game sees fewer and fewer players commit to one club throughout their career, and it's a huge honour for Nick to have achieved two such significant milestones.

Back to this afternoon's game and I'm sure you're looking forward to a typically ferocious derby match. We will need to be near our best to claim the victory but we're all really looking forward to another sold out, passionate Kingsholm.

I'm delighted to welcome Mike Ford, his team and all the Bath supporters to Gloucester and I hope you'll give them all a typical Kingsholm welcome!

David



Despite the disappointing result last weekend it was great to see Tom Marshall and Henry Trinder both return from injury

The Citizen

BY MIKE BROWN



THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT

AFTER GRABBING A BRACE ON HIS SIX NATIONS DEBUT ROSS MORIARTY IS EYEING A PLACE ON WALES' SUMMER TOUR TO NEW ZEALAND – BUT HE KNOWS HE MUST SHINE FOR GLOUCESTER FIRST.



THE Cherry and Whites back-row star was handed his Championship debut in the record-breaking victory over Italy as he came off the bench early in the first half following

an injury to Justin Tipuric.

He responded with a barnstorming performance in which he made more metres than any other forward, but will be remembered for two second-half

touchdowns.

Moriarty said, "It's always nice to get a try but to get two for your country, at your home stadium in front of 74,000 Welsh fans and a few others... I can't describe how that felt but my celebration said a lot, even if I looked a bit silly.

"I was happy to do my family and friends proud, the people who have helped me along the way. This is what I always wanted to do.

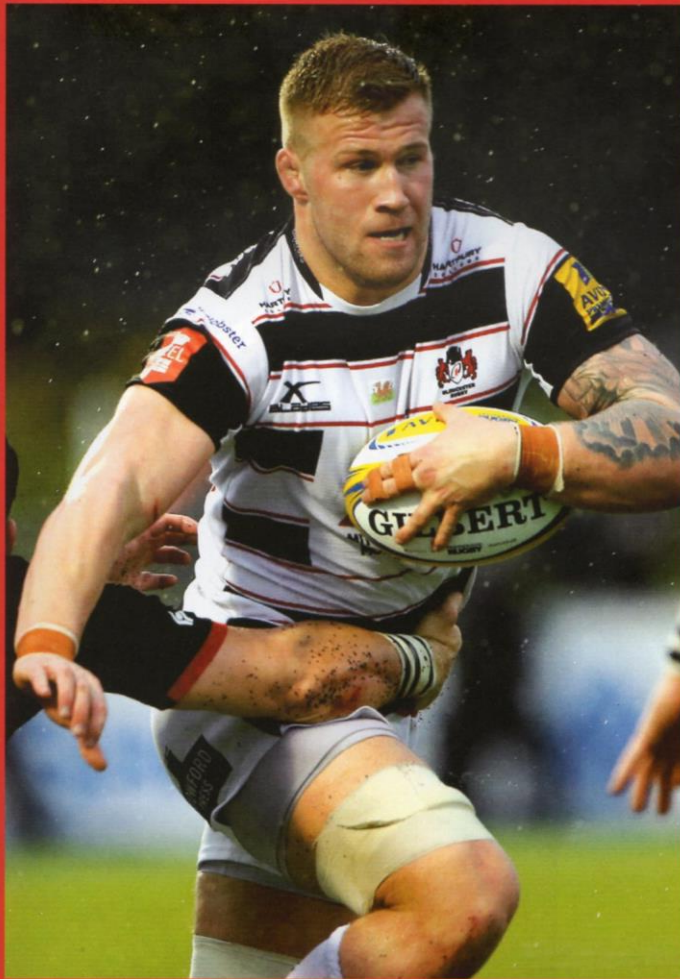
"The summer tour is a target but we still have a few games left during the Premiership season and in the Challenge Cup which is big for Gloucester.

"I need to keep my performances up here if I want to be considered for the New Zealand tour, I can't just rely on one good game in the Six Nations to be on that flight."

As he walked back to the Wales half following his first try, the 21-year-old appeared to look up to the heavens.

It was as though he could not quite comprehend what had happened and he admits it has been a whirlwind year.

Moriarty continued, "In that



▼ I ENJOYED MYSELF AND FELT I PLAYED A GOOD ROLE IN THE GAME. IT'S BEEN A PRETTY SURREAL YEAR. ▼

short time (walking back) I was just thinking about how far and fast things have happened.

"It was a shock to be called up to the summer camps and then to be dropped and called back up was very nice, especially getting a few games at the World Cup.

"I've been in and out of camp since the start of the Six Nations and trying to do what I can in training. They gave me an opportunity on the weekend and I got on early due to an injury, which wasn't nice for Tips but good for me to get 60 minutes in.

"I enjoyed myself and felt I played a good role in the game. It's

been a pretty surreal year."

Moriarty has received plenty of plaudits following the power-packed performance with Wales greats Barry John, Martyn Williams and Shane Williams all queuing up with praise.

His Six Nations debut came exactly 28 years to the day that father Paul bowed out of the old Five Nations and Moriarty already boasts a superior try record in the Championship.

There are certainly high hopes that the former two-time England Junior World Championship winner will enjoy a long international career at senior level.

And while a flight to the Land of the Long White Cloud is undoubtedly at the back of the mind, he is fiercely focussed on Gloucester and putting their season back on track.

Following back-to-back defeats to Worcester Warriors and London Irish their campaign is in danger of petering out, but with Bath up next there is no lack of motivation.

Moriarty added, "It's always good to get those kind of words from pundits but in a way it puts more pressure on you to perform, which is a good thing and I will be working hard to make sure I keep those performances up.

"My Dad had quite a few more caps than me and will always make sure I'm doing what I need to be playing at my best. I've already scored more Six Nations tries than him and hopefully I can match his number of caps.

"I've been feeling good in recent weeks although we've had a few disappointing games with Gloucester. I was involved in the one against Worcester, but prior to that beating Wasps was a big achievement and it was nice to be involved and play quite a big role in that.

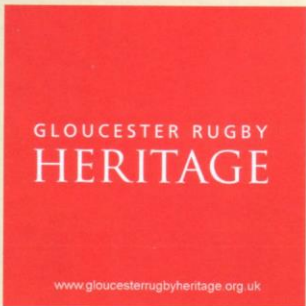
"It's very disappointing for us to have beaten a top four team to have then struggled in the last two weeks against 'weaker' teams in the Premiership, who aren't actually that weak because they are fighting just as hard to stay in this league.

"It doesn't stop in the Premiership; every game is big and for it to be Bath makes it even more exciting.

"Bath are renowned for having a physical pack, they've just got Amanaki Mafi in as well so he is a destructive ball carrier, and there are internationals coming back from England duty."

"They will be back to their best this week and we need to match that. We have to bounce back this week with a performance and a win."

Citizen
AVAILABLE DAILY



GLOUCESTER SECOND ROW FORWARDS PART 4

IN THE EARLY DAYS OF RUGBY THERE WERE NO SPECIALISTS IN THE FORWARDS. WHEN A SCRUM FORMED, THE FIRST TO ARRIVE MADE UP THE FRONT ROW AND SO ON. IT WAS MANY YEARS BEFORE PLAYERS WOULD BECOME ASSOCIATED WITH PARTICULAR POSITIONS.

Gloucester have always been blessed with top class second row forwards. The tradition continued with the approach of professional rugby.

The final part of the story covers the last two decades.

ROB FIDLER

ROB, son of John, had a big act to follow when he made his debut for Gloucester against Cheltenham in December 1994. He had already played for Cheltenham, which was his place of birth on 21 September 1974.

He would go on to make 222 appearances for the Cherry and Whites, including 148 league games. That first appearance was at No.6, where he continued until 1996 when he moved up a row. He soon settled into a formidable second row partnership with Dave Sims.

Rob was a very good front jumper and in addition an aggressive tackler. He was in the teams which lost Pilkington Cup semi-finals in 1996 to Bath and 1997 to Leicester. The transition to professional rugby was proving difficult, and Rob led the club for several games in 1998-99 in the absence of club captain Dave Sims.

Rob was soon considered an international prospect and made 14 England 'A' appearances before winning caps against New Zealand and South Africa on the England tour of 1998.

With the arrival of the millennium, the fortunes of the club rose and Rob was a regular in the Heineken Cup campaign of 2000-01 which led to the semi-final and defeat to Leicester. However, he was in the teams that won the Zurich Championship Final against Bristol in 2002, and the 40-22 win over Northampton in the final of the Powergen Cup in 2003.

After problems negotiating a new contract, Rob was offered one with Bath and played his rugby there from 2004-07. He then played a season with Cinderford accompanied by old colleagues Pete Glanville, Andy Deacon and Mark Cornwell.



cap always eluded him.

He came off the bench in Gloucester's losing semi-final game against Leicester in the Heineken Cup in 2001, and played in the Premiership Final against Wasps in 2003. Wasps won 39-3 after Gloucester had topped the league table by a clear 15 points, and yet won nothing.

"Pasty's" career lasted from 1992 to 2006, and covered the transition to professional rugby. He made 211 appearances, including 133 league games. He went on to play a season at Birmingham/Solihull, then player/coach at Cinderford, before becoming Gloucester's Academy Manager until 2012 when he moved to Hartpury College to become forwards' coach.

MARK CORNWELL

"PASTY" Cornwell was born on 22 February 1973, and first played for Old Richians. He was a very tall 6ft 7ins, and made his first appearance for Gloucester against Cheltenham in November 1992. That was his sole appearance that season, and indeed in the next there would be just one more game.

His league debut was delayed until April 1995 against Bristol. His problem was that he was up against established players like Dave Sims, Richard West and Rob Fidler, and it was not until the 1997-98 season that he became a regular choice. By 1999 he won the first of no fewer than 11 England 'A' caps, although the major prize of a full

ADAM EUSTACE

ADAM was born on 9 January 1979 and played locally for Widden Old Boys and Coney Hill. He was naturally a second row forward but did sometimes play in the back row. He came to the notice





of Gloucester and Phillipe Saint-Andre signed him up for a professional contract.

He would appear in 249 games from 1999 to 2010. His first game for Gloucester was on 21 February 1999 against Leeds in a Cheltenham & Gloucester Cup game, and later in the season he was in the team which won the final against Bedford at Northampton.

Adam continued to make impressive progress in his games for Gloucester and there was the distinct possibility that he could be selected for the England 'A' team when he unfortunately broke his leg in early 2002 against Ebbw Vale.

However, the next season he returned to club action in April 2003 and was in the team which won the Powergen Cup, defeating Northampton. Later, in May, although Gloucester had topped the Premiership, Adam was in the team which lost to Wasps in the Premiership Final.

In 2006 he came off the bench in the European Challenge Cup Final at the Stoop, where Gloucester defeated London Irish. In 2007 he again appeared off the bench in the losing Premiership Final against Leicester.

The 2007-08 season saw him playing for The Scarlets. He then returned to Kingsholm for two more seasons before moving on to Northampton. After his retirement he now works for Gloucester's Community Department.

MARCO BORTOLAMI
MARCO was born in Padua, Italy, on 12 June 1980. He was only 18 years old when he first played for Petrarca Padova, and only 21 when he won the first of his 112 caps for Italy against Namibia in June 2001.

Not only that he became Italy's youngest ever captain at the age of 22. The game was

against New Zealand, and the All Blacks won 64-10! He was again made captain for Italy's tour of Japan in 2004. On his return he moved to France to play two seasons for Narbonne.

When Gloucester signed Marco in 2006, he was reckoned to be one of the outstanding forwards in world rugby. He was rated so highly that he captained Gloucester to start the season against Bath, and effectively shared the captaincy for that term with Pete Buxton. He was a natural leader, with great physicality and presence.



That season was a good one for Gloucester. They topped the Premiership table (again), but heartbreakingly once more lost in the final against Leicester. Although selected as captain, Marco missed the final due to injury.

In 2007-08 Gloucester yet again topped the table, and Marco was in the team which lost in the semi-final play-off again to Leicester.

In 2008-09 the Cherry and Whites did make a final and Marco came off the bench, when they played Cardiff Blues at Twickenham for the EDF Energy Cup, but Nicky Robinson and his team-mates cantered to an easy win.

Injuries and a loss of form plagued Marco in the following season, and he decided to return to Italy to play for Aironi, and when that team folded moved

on to Zebre where he remains and played at Kingsholm for them this season.

ALEX BROWN
ALEX was born in Bristol on 17 May 1979 and educated at Colston's College, Bristol. After brief stays at Bath and Pontypool he was recruited in 2000 to Bristol by Dean Ryan where, in his first campaign, he was voted the player of the season.

By 2003 Ryan, now coaching at Kingsholm, signed up Alex, when again he promptly won the Player of the Season award, and started every game. He also holds the record for the most consecutive starts in the Premiership, with 86, spread over games for Bristol and Gloucester. He formed a formidable partnership with Marco Bortolami in the second row.

Alex was in the teams which beat London Irish to win the European Challenge Cup in 2006, which lost the Premiership final to Leicester in 2007, and the ill-fated loss to Cardiff Blues in the EDF final of 2009. But he was in the winning team against Newcastle in the LV= Cup Final of 2011.

For some years Alex was on the England selector's radar, but after appearances for England Saxons in the first Churchill Cup, he was not capped until England's tour to Australia in 2006. He won two more caps on the tour to South Africa in 2007.

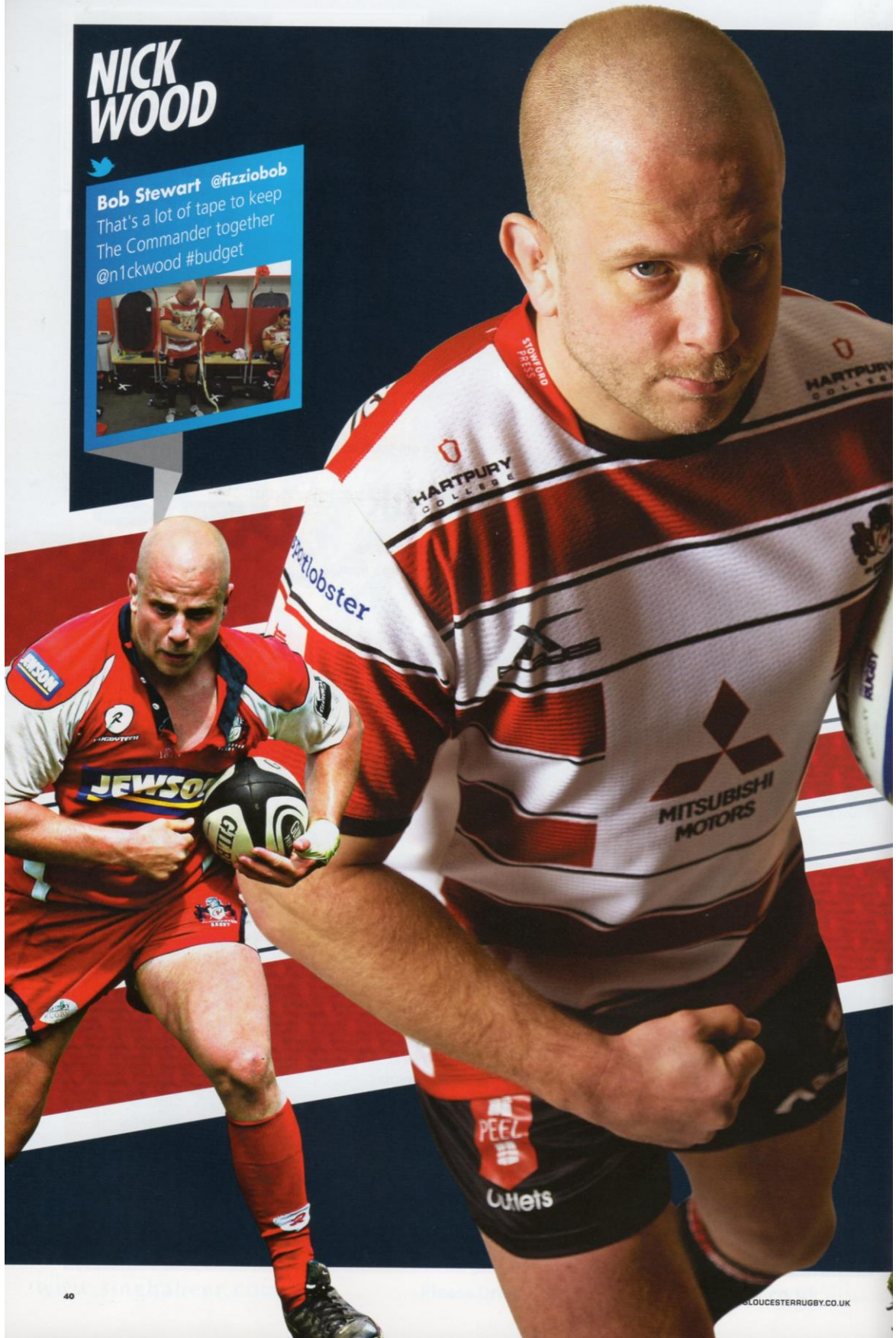
Alex Brown was an utterly dependable player, whose form never dipped. He made 233 appearances for Gloucester, including 159 in the Premiership. He seemed set to play several more seasons but a shoulder injury in the first game of the 2012-13 season ended his career.

Happily he has remained at Kingsholm and is now the club's Rugby Operations Manager.



NICK WOOD

 **Bob Stewart @fizziobob**
That's a lot of tape to keep
The Commander together
@n1ckwood #budget



LEGENDARY STATUS



APPROPRIATELY, GIVEN IT WAS CHELTENHAM RACES JUST OVER A WEEK AGO, THE MAN DUBBED 'COMMANDER' BY MANY OF THE FIRST TEAM SQUAD, CLEARED A SIGNIFICANT HURDLE RECENTLY.

THE evergreen front rower registered his 274th competitive and 200th Aviva Premiership appearance when he ran out for the Cherry and Whites at Sixways in Round 16 and eased his way to the front of a class field.

It's no mean feat. Consider that Wood is the first Gloucester Rugby player to reach the 200 Premiership appearance mark. Only the likes of Peter Buxton, Andy Hazell and James Simpson-Daniel have come close, but Wood has eclipsed them all.

He has been a constant in the Gloucester front row for much of the last decade and beyond, and is clearly full of pride at the achievement, but also thankful and realistic about it too.

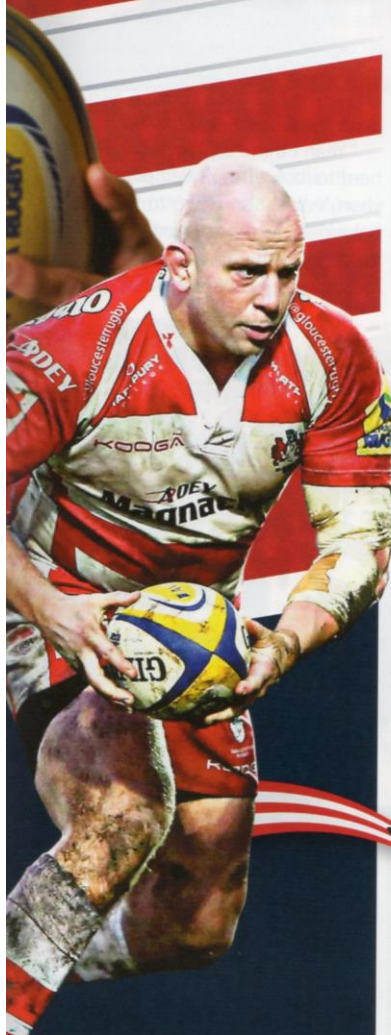
"I think I did my reflection pretty much straight after the game, with the emotion involved and it was there and then at the time.

"Now that it is sort of out of the way, it is somewhat of a relief in some respects. Once that sort of stat was pointed out to me that I was close, it is something that is hanging over your head, it's something that is in the back of your mind.

"But it's out of the way now, and I suppose that it is one less distraction now."

And with 275 first team appearances notched up, Wood is happy to be able to reflect on his time in the Cherry and White shirt, with several run outs standing out in his mind.

"There will always be a couple of games throughout your career that you remember, and aside from



I'VE COMMITTED MY BODY AND SOUL TO THIS PLACE FOR SAY FIFTEEN YEARS FROM WHEN I TURNED UP AS AN ACADEMY KID IN 2001. SO IT'S NICE TO BE SAT HERE NOW AND LOOK BACK ON THINGS.

HEADSHOT HISTORY

THIRTEEN SEASONS WORTH OF HEADSHOTS SHOW NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED, A LITTLE LESS HAIR AND A FEW DIFFERENT KITS



2003/04



2004/05



2005/06



2006/07



2007/08



2008/09



2009/10



2010/11



2011/12



2012/13



2013/14



2014/15

individual performances, certain games that stick in the mind would be the three times that we have won down at The Rec. It seems fitting to mention those on a West Country derby week and in a Bath programme feature.

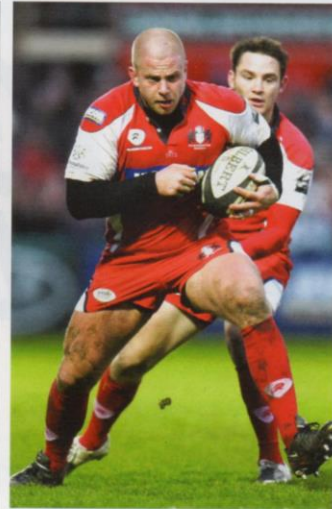
"The three times were such a hang up around the squad, and around the supporters over the years, about the fact that we couldn't win down there, even when we were at our best.

"Suddenly we had done two back to back, then managed to turn around a lot of bad fortune against them this season.

"Those games stick in the mind of course, as well as the finals that we have got to. Win or lose, they're such big occasions, they do stick in the mind."

Wood has obviously overhauled Peter Buxton and James Simpson-Daniel's professional appearance record at Sixways, and he revealed that the duo have both been in touch to give congratulations, both in their own unique ways.

"They were really good, both of them were straight on the phone, and it's always nice to hear from them.



And in a position as physically demanding, and as attritional as the front row, Wood is able to recognise the significance of his achievement, but also knows that an element of good fortune also plays its part.

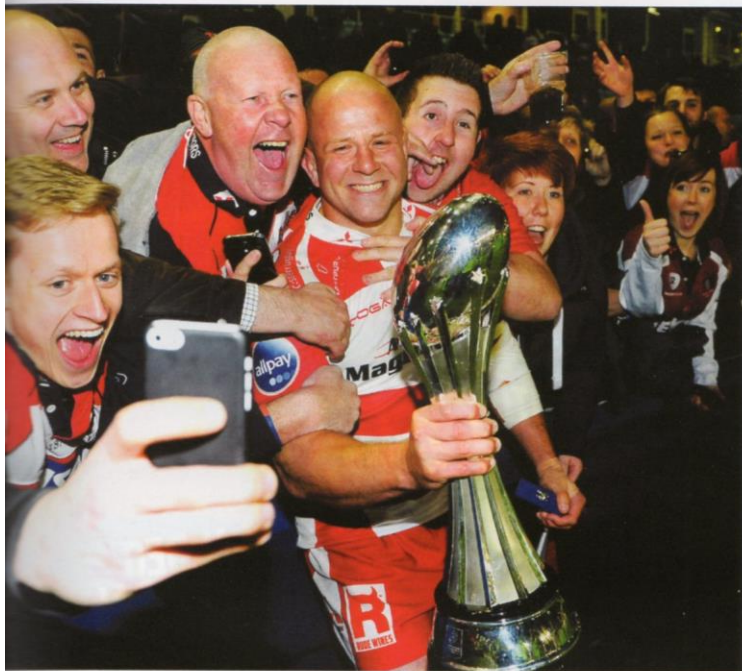
"Yeah I think so, I've worked hard to look after myself over the years, whilst also trying to find the balance between stuff on and off the field, with a massive amount of luck as well. I can't deny that.



"Sinbad's advice was pretty good and it was really nice from Pete to hand over my shirt the day before the game, and that was fitting.

"Sinbad just said, '...it's was just a number and another game, so go out and do what you do...'

"At any point you can get one bad injury and it is all over. There's obviously some really good fortune in that. I've committed my body and soul to this place for say fifteen years from when I turned up as an Academy kid in 2001. So it's nice to



be sat here now and look back on things."

And after 13 seasons within the Cherry and White first team, Wood knows the importance of the West Country derby, and the added spice it puts on the week and around

"I did enjoy that game, and this week we can probably expect more of the same. Bath back themselves up front, and they will probably have a few guys returning from injury and international duty and so it will be a huge challenge.

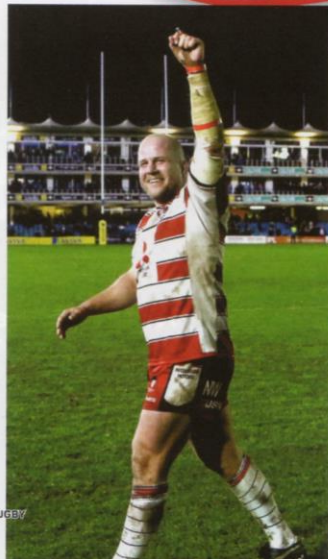
THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A COUPLE OF GAMES THROUGHOUT YOUR CAREER THAT YOU REMEMBER. AND ASIDE FROM INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCES, CERTAIN GAMES THAT STICK IN THE MIND WOULD BE THE THREE TIMES THAT WE HAVE WON DOWN AT THE REC.

the city.

"It does have the same edge. The crowd gets such a buzz, the players get that same buzz. The whole week leading up to the game is the same.

"The score could be 6-5 or 10-9, it wouldn't be a fair reflection. The game is always going to be so tense with so much riding on it for both sets of supporters and players as well. They just make for great occasions."

And Wood is quick to look back to the reverse fixture in February, as the Cherry and Whites secured a rare win at The Rec, with the front row leading the charge.



"Down there was a huge achievement, especially when you see how tight the game was, especially up front, so we know the type of game that is going to be coming."

And with the Kingsholm crowd set to be in full West Country derby buzz, Wood knows that this is a huge help for the home side, especially in a game with such fine margins between two of English rugby's finest establishments.

"It will come down simply to who wants it more, and everyone



does their homework for each game. Can we reproduce the kind of performance we did against Wasps? That will be the challenge for us.

"To do that, you have to be at such an emotional high, at such a physical level to reproduce that. If you are off even 5% then things may not go your way.

"This league is so tight, and everyone is so up for each and every game."

Commander, on behalf of all Gloucester Rugby supporters, we salute you.

KINGSHOLM NEWS WITH BOB

FENTON



"LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING MY FRIEND. HOPE IS A DANGEROUS THING. HOPE CAN DRIVE A MAN INSANE..."

WISE words from Ellis Boy 'Red' Redding in the magnificent film, 'The Shawshank Redemption'. I reckon Red must have been a season ticket holder at Gloucester Rugby...

The last few weeks have absolutely epitomised the painful experience that it is to follow our team. Go back to the last time we assembled here at Kingsholm for the arrival of Wasps. Our nomadic friends were in fine form and were, if the experts were to be believed, expected to romp all over us.

But we had hope. We knew that if we performed we could come out on the right end of the result. And so it transpired, and Kingsholm was transformed into the cauldron of years ago as a wall of noise burst from under the roof of the Shed, rolled down the packed stands and



enveloped and inspired the men in Cherry and White.

Even though the medical teams were on the pitch so often that it looked like an episode of Casualty was being filmed in front of us, as far too many players left the field on stretchers or on helping shoulders, the remaining boys stood tall and defended heroically. It was a game to be remembered for a long time, a game to give us hope.

And then the following weekend - up the road to Sixways, Worcester off the back of a win at Newcastle had lifted the pressure on themselves. But still, we were flying, buzzing from the previous week's result and Worcester, well they're still scrapping at the bottom.

But we had hope... misplaced as it happened. 28 - 20... not even a losing bonus point... Tricky things those local derbies....

Last week, then. It'll be OK at the Madjeski... Tom Marshall was making his debut, it was going to

be like having a whole new player on the field. We had hope, the points were ours. Or not. Five points in front with not long to go, a defensive effort a la Wasps would see us home.

Ten minutes later, and about as many penalties conceded, we had two in the sin bin and were trailing by five. Hopes dashed. Hope can kill a man.

I'm not going to join any clamour for change in our set up. For what it's worth I have huge confidence in the team at the helm of Gloucester Rugby I really do. I'm not just saying that to keep on their good side. Talk with them and you'll find a bunch of people who are 100 per cent committed to the team. They understand, though, that it is a results orientated business and people will be quick to - rightly - voice their frustrations.

But we do need to crack this consistency thing, but Messrs Humphreys, Fisher, Woodman et al don't need me to tell them that.



I'LL ADMIT IT. I'M AN ETERNAL OPTIMIST WHEN IT COMES TO GLOUCESTER RUGBY. IT'S ALL THERE - WE'RE NOT OUT OF ANYTHING YET. WE HAVE TO HAVE FAITH. WE HAVE TO BANISH THE DOUBTS TODAY. WE HAVE TO CREATE THE SAME INTENSE ATMOSPHERE THAT WE HAD HERE AT THE WASPS GAME. BUILD THAT WALL OF NOISE. WE HAVE TO HAVE HOPE.

I guess it's down to hoping they sort it out quickly. Yep, there's that word again.

If I knew the answer as to why results like the last two happened I would be writing the coaches welcome right up front in the programme. I don't, so I am stuck away somewhere near the back. I don't know the pressures they are under, I can only imagine. I do know what it is like to have the hope slowly sucked out of you though.

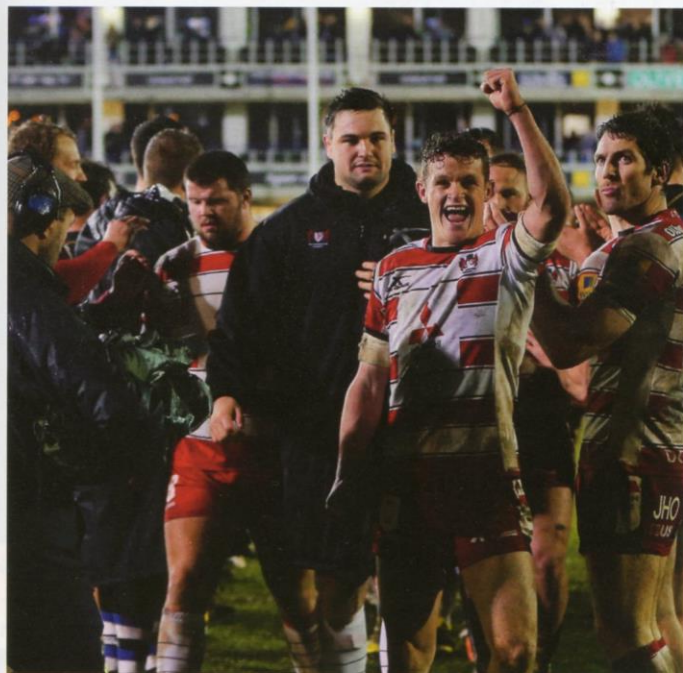
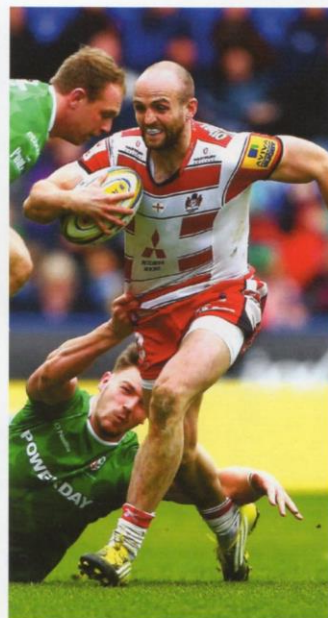
So let's draw a veil over the last few weeks, we have the perfect opportunity to get redemption today. If there was ever a game to bounce back in it's this one. The days of old when our team was made up by men of Gloucester may have long gone, but the current crop of players will be well aware of the absolute necessity to beat Bath

on our own patch. Bragging rights doesn't come close - this is tribal!

Back in February we snatched the narrowest of wins down at their place so they will be burning with determination to get revenge. They'll also welcome back a few players from England duty, and we'll be hampered by having more than a couple of key guys hobbling around on crutches in the executive boxes instead of strutting their stuff on the turf.

But cometh the hour and all of that. This is Kingsholm and we have more than hope - we demand the win today. There can be no backward steps, a big game for big players. Come on boys, you owe us one after the last few weeks.

Despite those two losses the table is still impossibly congested. We are seven points off fifth place



- a couple of wins and a few other results going our way will see us in contention for the big boys cup next season.

I'll admit it, I'm an eternal optimist when it comes to Gloucester Rugby, it's all there - we're not out of anything yet. We have to have faith, we have to banish the doubts today, we have to create the same intense atmosphere that we had here at the Wasps game, build that wall of noise. We have to have hope.

To end, I'll leave you with another quote from the film, 'The Shawshank Redemption'. Towards the end of the film, in his letter to 'Red' Andy Dufresne writes '... Remember, hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies.'

A bit like our constant, through thick and thin, support for Gloucester.



RANDALL ON RUGBY

DIRECTORS OF RUGBY ACROSS MOST OF THE PREMIERSHIP - WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF DEAN RYAN AT WORCESTER - WILL BE HUGELY RELIEVED THE SIX NATIONS IS NOW OVER.



WHILE the Warriors have gained significant ground, partly because of being largely untroubled by international calls, others have either shown inconsistency or, as in Harlequins case, faded through the unavailability of their major players.

Normal service resumes now, but it remains to be seen if the cream again rises to the top after such a draining sequence.

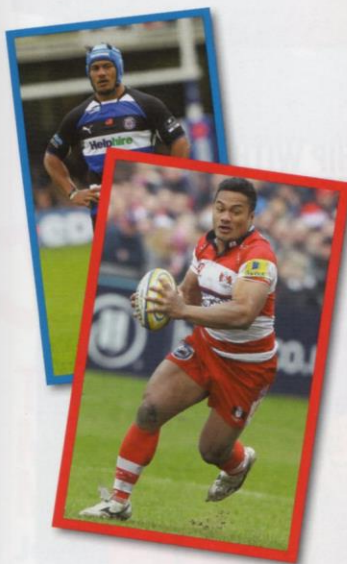
As Ross Moriarty reports back to Gloucester after his two try impact as a replacement for Wales against Italy, contrast his emotion with that of Matt Kvesic.

I said to a friend of mine after he was omitted from the squad against Scotland on the opening weekend that I couldn't see Kvesic getting a cap until the summer at the earliest.

Sadly that has been proved right, although it was curious that Kvesic was put up for media duty

WHILE GLOUCESTER HAVE THE CHALLENGE CUP AS A SECOND OPTION TO QUALIFICATION VIA THEIR LEAGUE POSITION, THE PREMIERSHIP IS BATH'S ONLY AVAILABLE ROUTE. A FIERCE, FEISTY AND PROBABLY FRENETIC 80 MINUTES LIE AHEAD.

on the Monday before the Wales game only to be released again 24 hours later. He's been gracious about the whole process, and you feel maintaining his club form will surely enable him to force his way in eventually.



Bath, as Mike Ford alluded to after their win over Newcastle last weekend, will be grateful to see their international artillery return. Confidence looks to have been brittle for what seems an age, even back as far as that filthy night at the Rec where Gloucester trailed early on but stayed close enough on the scoreboard to claw back the lead once they had the elements in their favour.

The head to head Premiership record is 24-19 in Bath's favour with two draws, so given the proximity of the two teams, I tried to think of players who had been at both clubs and what struck me was how few had moved from Gloucester to Bath rather than the other way round.

Here then, is a XV that has represented both cities. A rather



15. IAIN BALSHAW
(Glos Prem apps 39)

14. AUDLEY LUMSDEN (26)

13. MIKE TINDALL (121)

12. ELIOTA FUIMAONO SAPOLU (44)

11. TOM VOYCE (38)

10. OLLY BARKLEY (19)

9. GARETH COOPER (23)

1. TREVOR WOODMAN (90)

2. NEIL MCCARTHY (42)

3. TERRY SIGLEY (29)

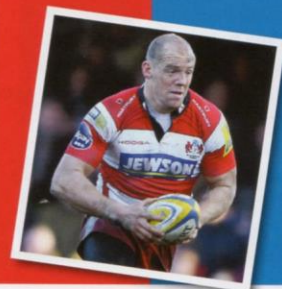
4. DAVE ATTWOOD (32)

5. ROB FIDLER (117)

6. STEVE OJOMOH (76)

7. ED PEARCE (69)

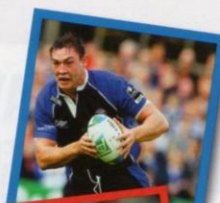
8. GARETH DELVE (35)



restricted bench would be made up of James Hudson, Andy Gomarsall, Joe Ewens and Rob Thirlby.

What we do know is that the form of both clubs is unlikely to lead any niceties this evening!

It was clear from the tone of



David Humphreys' interview after the game last Sunday at London Irish what he thought of it, and on one level many Gloucester will have been glad to hear that feeling in his voice.

Not having a solid scrum and line out, and not keeping fifteen players on the field is like playing with one hand tied behind your back and, despite the six day turnaround, I'm sure the players will have been left in no doubt what is expected in a fixture with so much history to it over the past three decades or so.

Both clubs want Champions Cup rugby next season. While Gloucester have the Challenge Cup as a second option to qualification via their league position, the Premiership is Bath's only available route. A fierce, feisty and probably frenetic 80 minutes lie ahead.



Back To School

by Charlie Sharples, age 27

PRIMARY SCHOOL



I WENT TO Foxmoor

MY BEST FRIEND WAS Can't remember

Charlie's best friends

1. Don't know
2. Duncan
3. Tom
4. David

MY FAVOURITE SUBJECT WAS English

MY FAVOURITE TEACHER WAS Mrs Wills

MY FAVOURITE SCHOOL DINNER WAS my packed lunch from my Mum

IN MY SNACK BOX I HAD sandwiches

MY FIRST SCHOOL PLAY WAS Oliver Twist

IN THE PLAYGROUND, I was the quickest!

Dear Mr and Mrs Sharples

We regret to inform you that we will only allow Charlie to hop in sports day events so that the others have a chance of winning

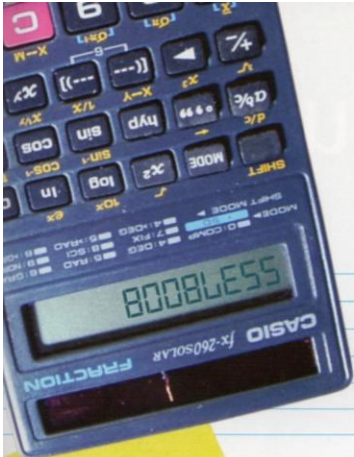
MY PRIMARY SCHOOL LOVE WAS playing with my mates after school

MY EARLIEST RUGBY MEMORY going to Minis with my Dad and brother

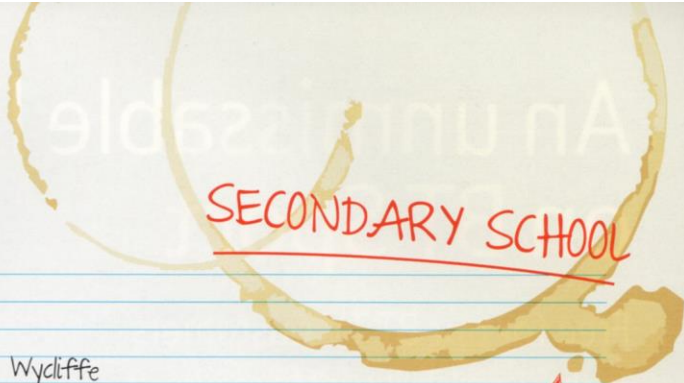
WHEN WE PLAYED RUGBY I PRETENDED TO BE Sonny Wilkinson

AT SPORTS DAY, I won a lot!




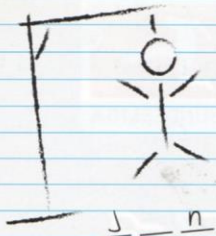
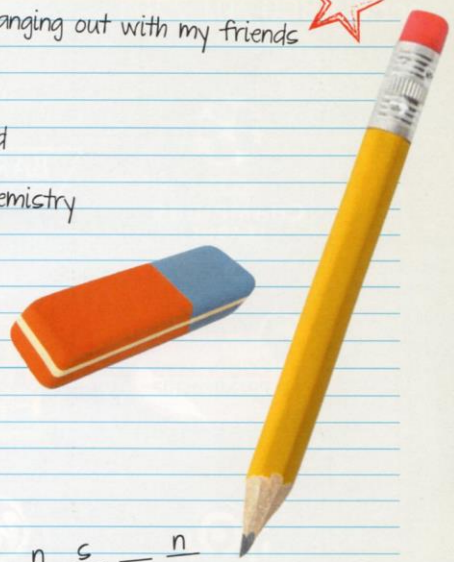


Charlie's timetable
Hanging about
Lunch
Rugby
Running
Chemistry revision

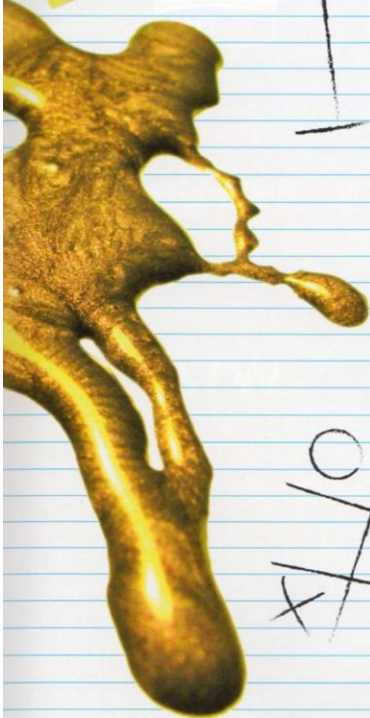


SECONDARY SCHOOL

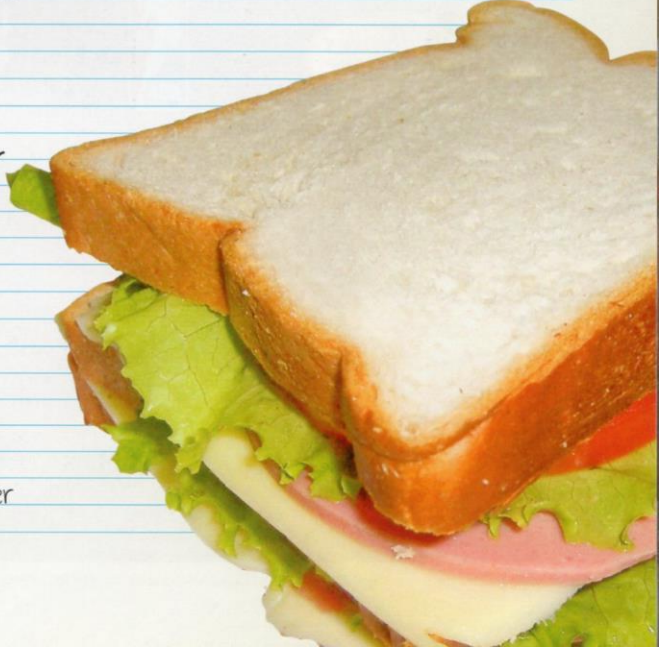
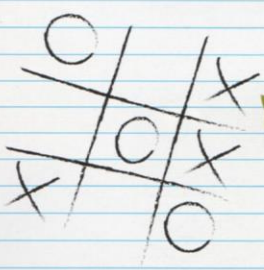
I WENT TO Wydliffe
MY FAVOURITE MEMORY IS hanging out with my friends 
I ENJOYED playing sport
MY GRADES WERE pretty good
MY HARDEST SUBJECT WAS Chemistry



J _ n n y
W _ l k _ n s _ n



MY UNIFORM WAS grey trousers, shirt, tie, blazer
GOT IN TROUBLE FOR talking in lessons



MY FAVOURITE SCHOOL TRIP WAS skiing
AT SCHOOL I WANTED TO BE a rugby player



GLOUCESTER RUGBY 13

WASPS 10

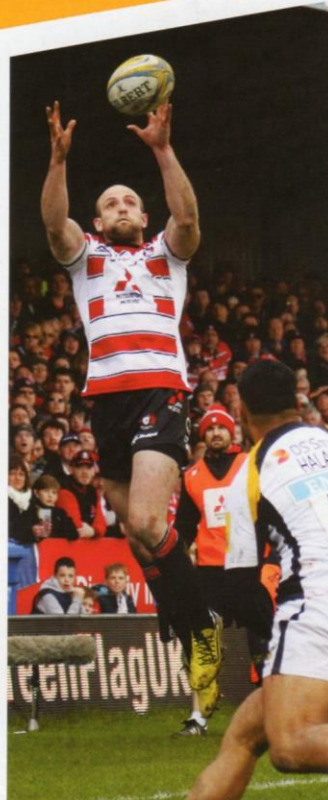


HALF TIME 10-3
ATTENDANCE 13,766
REFEREE Luke Pearce

GLOUCESTER maintained their impressive recent run of form with a hard-fought victory last time out at Kingsholm over an in-form Wasps side.

A final scoreline of 13 points to 10 doesn't hint at a thriller of a game, but this one went right down to the wire with no-one leaving their seats until referee Luke Pearce blew his whistle to end the game.

Notwithstanding the fact that Wasps had scored 130 points in their previous three outings combined, it was a superb result when you consider that Gloucester lost four players to injury during the game.



Richard Hibbard, named Man of the Match, praised his team mates for fronting up in defence against Wasps

The back line was particularly badly hit. For the final 15 minutes, James Hook was at full-back, Greig Laidlaw at fly-half and Henry Trinder on the left wing as the Cherry and Whites had to shuffle their resources.

So, for the team to take the game to Wasps in the way that they did, shutting down the dangerous visiting strike runners, was massive and every single player deserves credit.

Gloucester put down a marker from the start, imposing themselves

physically on a Wasps team that boasted some talent and some size and strength. The ball carriers thundered into contact and the defence was up quickly to make their tackles.

An early Greig Laidlaw penalty gave Gloucester a 3-0 lead and this was followed, after concerted pressure, by a close range Richard Hibbard try. Laidlaw converted for a well-earned 10-0 lead.

It could have been even better. Gloucester spent long periods camped in the Wasps 22 but, to their credit, the visitors' defence was magnificent as they kept wave after wave of attack at bay.

METRES RUN WITH THE BALL
GLOUCESTER 416M
WASPS 313M

I AM INCREDIBLY PROUD OF THE EFFORT BY THE WHOLE SQUAD. WE KNOW HOW GOOD WASPS ARE. AND I THOUGHT IT WAS A GREAT GAME TO WATCH.

DAVID HUMPHREYS

And Dai Young's side made the most of one of their rare forays into Gloucester territory as the reliable boot of Jimmy Gopperth slotted a penalty which made the half time score 10-3.

It had been an excellent first 40 minutes, but had Gloucester scored enough points? The answer was no. Within minutes of the resumption, Christian Wade cut inside one tackler and shrugged off another on his way to a memorable score. Gopperth converted and it was even Stevens.

The next half hour produced few points but incredible action as the two sides slugged it out. Gloucester looked marginally the more threatening and retook the lead with a Laidlaw penalty, but were hanging on to the lead as the

MATCHDAY SQUADS



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

- 15 Rob Cook
- 14 Charlie Sharples
- 13 Bill Meakes
- 12 Billy Twelvetrees
- 11 Henry Purdy
- 10 James Hook
- 9 Greig Laidlaw 1C 2P
- 1 Paddy McAllister
- 2 Richard Hibbard 1T
- 3 John Afoa
- 4 Tom Savage
- 5 Jeremy Thrush
- 6 Sione Kalamafoni
- 7 Matt Kvesic
- 8 Ross Moriarty

- 16 Darren Dawidiuk
- 17 Yann Thomas
- 18 Paul Doran-Jones
- 19 Mariano Galarza
- 20 Lewis Ludlow
- 21 Callum Braley
- 22 Billy Burns
- 23 Henry Trinder



WASPS

- 15 Rob Miller
- 14 Christian Wade 1T
- 13 Charles Piutau
- 12 Siale Piutau
- 11 Frank Halai
- 10 Jimmy Gopperth 1C 1P
- 9 Dan Robson
- 1 Matt Mullan
- 2 Ed Shervington
- 3 Jake Cooper-Woolley
- 4 James Cannon
- 5 Kearnan Myall
- 6 Sam Jones
- 7 George Smith
- 8 Nathan Hughes

- 16 Ashley Johnson
- 17 Simon McIntyre
- 18 Lorenzo Cittadini
- 19 Bradley Davies
- 20 Alex Rieder
- 21 Jamie Stevenson
- 22 Ruaridh Jackson
- 23 Brendan Macken



PENALTIES CONCEDED
GLOUCESTER 6
WASPS 8

final minutes approached.

A huge defensive effort was required, and Gloucester duly delivered as they refused to let Wasps into their 22 whilst showing good discipline to avoid giving the deadly Gopperth a kick at goal.

With no time left on the clock, Gloucester managed to serve up a final piece of drama, turning over possession from a scrum. Wasps engineered a tough drop goal opportunity for Gopperth, but his effort flew wide and Kingsholm celebrated loud and long.

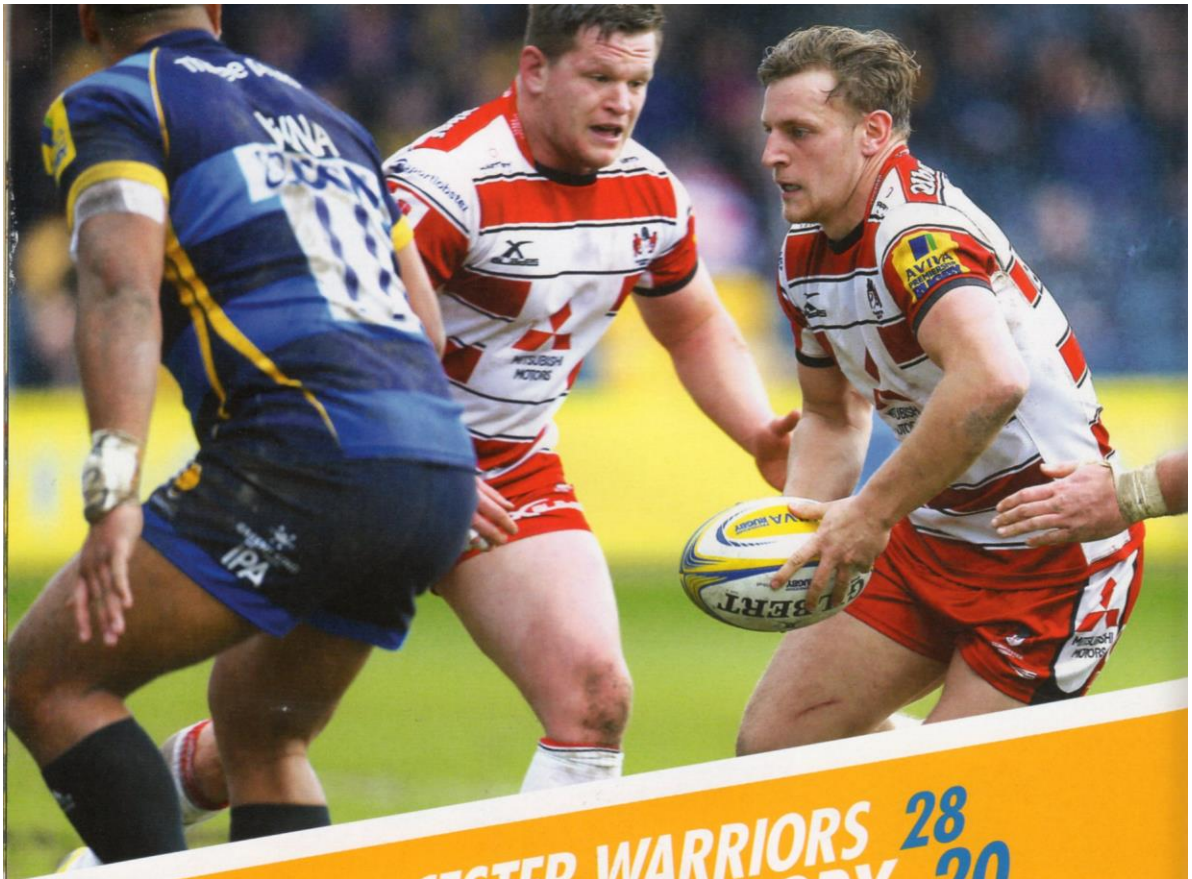


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Overall, referee Luke Pearce had a fairly quiet day at the office, only having to issue a couple of minor lectures when things threatened to spill over.

The penalty count was also low – Gloucester conceding six penalties and Wasps eight.



WORCESTER WARRIORS 28 GLOUCESTER RUGBY 20



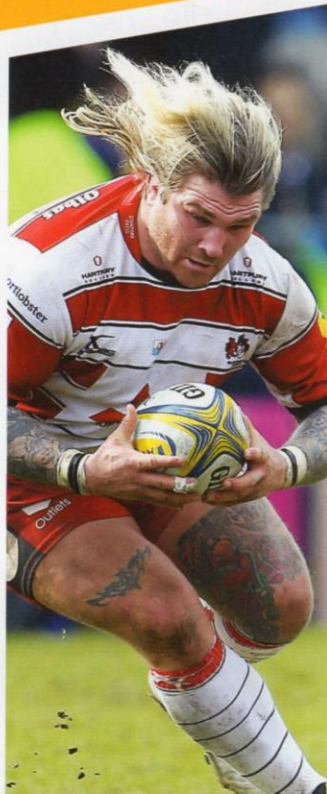
HALF TIME 15-10
ATTENDANCE 10,124
REFEREE Ian Tempest

A week after taking the scalp of high-flying Wasps, Gloucester slipped to a frustrating defeat away at local rivals Worcester.

The performance at Sixways was all the more disappointing given the quality of the display against Wasps only seven days previously and dealt a blow to the top six ambitions of the Cherry and Whites.

Requiring a good start against an opponent who had found some form in recent weeks, Gloucester conceded an early try and found themselves struggling to get back on even terms.

On a day when little went right



Skipper **Billy Twelvetrees** admitted that Gloucester had struggled to overcome a slow start against the home side.

for Laurie Fisher's side, whenever Gloucester got back within striking distance, an error would lead to another Worcester score and give the Warriors some breathing space.

Gloucester were never quite out of it but, as hard as they battled, they wouldn't quite get back on terms and the Cherry and Whites were left to reflect on one that got away.

On the back of the Wasps win, and having already defeated the same opponent three times so far this season, Gloucester entered

the game in good spirits but quickly found themselves chasing the game.

It was a kick from former Gloucester centre Ryan Mills that got the Warriors off and running. The ball bounced up nicely for Bryce Heem who broke two tackles on his way to the line and the game's opening score.

This blow was quickly followed by the loss of influential scrum-half Willi Heinz who limped out of the action having aggravated a calf injury.

However, Gloucester did hit back as Callum Braley slid a well-weighted grubber behind the



WE KNOW IN THIS LEAGUE WHOEVER YOU PLAY IT'LL BE A TOUGH AFTERNOON BUT CREDIT TO WORCESTER.

DAVID HUMPHREYS

Worcester defensive line and Bill Meakes ran through to gather and score.

Tom Heathcote and James Hook swapped penalties to leave the score at 10 points apiece, but the game swung decisively the way of Worcester as half time approached.

A sustained attack in the Gloucester 22 saw Ross Moriarty yellow carded for pulling down a maul before the Warriors created an overlap on the right and Heem went over for his second.

Gloucester needed to start the second half well, and held out until Moriarty's return, but Worcester hooker Niall Annett forced his way over from close range shortly afterwards and Heathcote converted for a 22-10 lead.

Hook narrowed the gap

MATCHDAY SQUADS

WORCESTER WARRIORS

- 15 Chris Pennell
- 14 Bryce Heem 2T
- 13 Wynand Olivier
- 12 Ryan Mills
- 11 Cooper Vuna
- 10 Tom Heathcote 2C 3P
- 9 Francois Hougaard
- 1 Val Rapava Ruskin
- 2 Niall Annett 1T
- 3 Nic Schonert
- 4 Donncha O'Callaghan
- 5 Darren Barry
- 6 Phil Dowson
- 7 Carl Kirwan
- 8 Gerrit-Jan van Velze

- 16 Ben Sowrey
- 17 Naama Leleimalefaga
- 18 James Johnston
- 19 Dan Sanderson
- 20 Sam Betty
- 21 Luke Baldwin
- 22 Ryan Lamb
- 23 Andy Symons

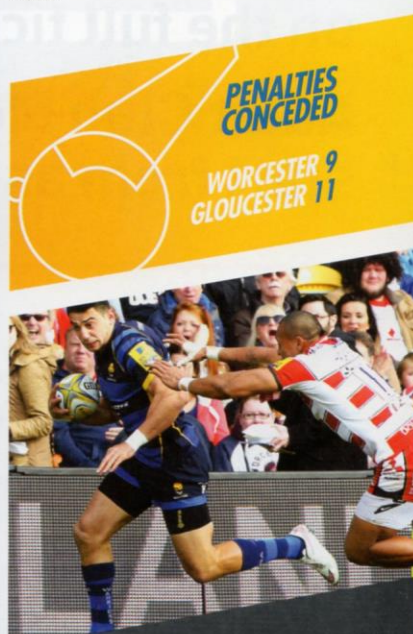
GLOUCESTER RUGBY

- 15 Rob Cook
- 14 Charlie Sharples
- 13 Bill Meakes 1T
- 12 Billy Twelvetrees
- 11 David Halaifonua
- 10 James Hook 1T 2C 2P
- 9 Willi Heinz
- 1 Nick Wood
- 2 Richard Hibbard
- 3 John Afoa
- 4 Tom Savage
- 5 Jeremy Thrush
- 6 Sione Kalamafoni
- 7 Matt Kvesic
- 8 Ross Moriarty ■

- 16 Darren Dawidiuk
- 17 Yann Thomas
- 18 Paul Doran-Jones
- 19 Mariano Galarza
- 20 Lewis Ludlow
- 21 Callum Braley
- 22 Henry Trinder
- 23 Steve McColl

with a 55th minute penalty, but Heathcote matched this six minutes later. The Welsh fly-half then gave Gloucester a glimmer of hope as he jinked his way over and converted his own try.

The Cherry and Whites trailed by just five points going into the final 14 minutes, but another Heathcote penalty denied Gloucester even a losing bonus point and left them thinking about what might have been.



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APPLYING THE LAW

Referee Ian Tempest was involved in one key moment as the game approached half time.

The Cherry and Whites had just drawn level at 10 points apiece when a key scrum call went Worcester's way. It gave the Warriors a chance to apply pressure, Ross Moriarty was yellow carded, Bryce Heem scored his second try and the home team had an advantage they were not to relinquish.



TODAY'S TEAMSHEET

GLOUCESTER RUGBY vs BATH RUGBY



Aviva Premiership Rugby - Round 18
Saturday 26th March 2016, KO 17:30, Kingsholm

Teams correct at time of print

TOM MARSHALL	FULLBACK	15	FULLBACK	TOM HOMER
DAVID HALAIFONUA	RIGHT WING	14	RIGHT WING	SEMESA ROKODUGUNI
BILL MEAKES	OUTSIDE CENTRE	13	OUTSIDE CENTRE	MATT BANAHAN
BILLY TWELVETREES	INSIDE CENTRE	12	INSIDE CENTRE	KYLE EASTMOND
STEVE McCOLL	LEFT WING	11	LEFT WING	JEFF WILLIAMS
JAMES HOOK	FLY HALF	10	FLY HALF	OLLIE DEVOTO
GREIG LAIDLAW (C)	SCrum HALF	9	SCrum HALF	CHRIS COOK
PADDY McALLISTER	LOOSEHEAD PROP	1	LOOSEHEAD PROP	MAX LAHIFF
DARREN DAWIDIUK	HOOVER	2	HOOVER	ROB WEBBER
JOHN AFOA	TIGHTHEAD PROP	3	TIGHTHEAD PROP	DAVID WILSON
TOM SAVAGE	LOCK	4	LOCK	STUART HOOPER (C)
JEREMY THRUSH	LOCK	5	LOCK	DOMINIC DAY
SIONE KALAMAFONI	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	6	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	MATT GARVEY
MATT KVESIC	OPENSIDE FLANKER	7	OPENSIDE FLANKER	FRANCOIS LOUW
ROSS MORIARTY	NUMBER 8	8	NUMBER 8	LEROY HOUSTON

RICHARD HIBBARD	REPLACEMENT	16	REPLACEMENT	TOM DUNN
YANN THOMAS	REPLACEMENT	17	REPLACEMENT	NATHAN CATT
PAUL DORAN-JONES	REPLACEMENT	18	REPLACEMENT	HENRY THOMAS
MARIANO GALARZA	REPLACEMENT	19	REPLACEMENT	CHARLIE EWELS
GARETH EVANS	REPLACEMENT	20	REPLACEMENT	GUY MERCER
CALLUM BRALEY	REPLACEMENT	21	REPLACEMENT	JONATHAN EVANS
MARK ATKINSON	REPLACEMENT	22	REPLACEMENT	MAX CLARK
HENRY TRINDER	REPLACEMENT	23	REPLACEMENT	HORACIO AGULLA

Officials

Referee Wayne Barnes **Assistant Referees** Gareth Copsey & Andrew Pearce