

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME
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GLOUCESTER RUGBY vs NORTHAMPTON SAINTS
 AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY - ROUND 22





MITSUBISHI MOTORS
 MAIN CLUB PARTNER

SIONE KALAMAFONI

EXCLUSIVE PROGRAMME INTERVIEW ON PAGE 40

PLUS... BOB FENTON IAN RANDALL ACTION REPLAY

07.05.16
KICK-OFF 3.30^{PM}
KINGSHOLM
AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY

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CAPTAIN'S CORNER BILLY TWELVETREES

GOOD AFTERNOON, AND WELCOME TO EVERYONE FROM NORTHAMPTON SAINTS AHEAD OF TODAY'S GAME.

GOOD afternoon, and welcome to Kingsholm for the final time this season and a big welcome to everyone from Northampton Saints.

We're chuffed with how the last two outings have gone, probably beating the two in form sides in the competition although those performances perhaps add to the frustration of the weeks that preceded the last two wins.

They have been two games where, to be fair, we have been resounding underdogs with media



GOING INTO THIS WEEK, THERE IS A REAL BUZZ AMONGST THE CAMP..THE LADS KNOW THAT WE HAVE TO PUT OURSELVES IN THE BEST POSITION POSSIBLE TO FINISH THE SEASON ON A HIGH.

and TV, and that is not where this squad want to be.

But, that said, we have shown, in the wins over Exeter and Sale, how good we can be, and that is even with an injury list that is creating queues outside the treatment room door!

Laurie has spoken at length this season about the importance of our defensive structure and the pressures we can put on the opposition. In both games, we hope this has been evident. Despite some players missing, the strength of the squad has been on show, and all the lads that have stepped up have done so superbly.

A word too for the two young lads, Ollie Thorley and Elliott Creed, who have grabbed their chance with both hands and it is testament

to their attitudes and ability as players that they have been able to do so. Neil McCarthy is putting in some great work with the Academy lads, and ensuring that when called upon, they can look at home in the first team.

Going into this week, there is a real buzz amongst the camp, a few illnesses have cleared up, and although our fate is out of our hands, the lads know that we have to put ourselves in the best position possible to finish the season on a high.

That said, Northampton will come here with plenty to play for as well, and the challenge for us is to demonstrate that consistency that has arguably held back our season so far, and Jim Mallinder will have a quality squad at his disposal,

determined to come to Kingsholm and get a result.

I guess it's a shame that the season draws to a close this afternoon, and we can look back at another season where we have learnt a lot about each other as a squad, and we now have to turn the promise into results.

A few boys in the squad and coaching staff will be making their final run outs this afternoon, and we will be massively sad to lose them. We wish them all the best for the future.

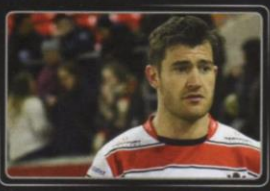
We know the Kingsholm faithful will want to see them depart on the back of a strong win and a good Gloucester performance, hopefully in the sunshine!

Enjoy the game!

Billy



GR TV



Atkinson chuffed with performance as Cherry and Whites finally win at Sale

COMING UP...

EXCLUSIVE MATCHDAY PROGRAMME INTERVIEW
SIONE KALAMAFONI

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DAVID HUMPHREYS

DIRECTOR OF RUGBY

GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME BACK TO KINGSHOLM FOR OUR FINAL GAME OF THE 2015/16 AVIVA PREMIERSHIP SEASON AGAINST NORTHAMPTON SAINTS.

IN PARTICULAR, a warm welcome to Jim Mallinder, his coaching team, players and supporters who have made the journey down to Gloucester.

Today brings to a close a season which has been unique in its nature, kicking off with Rugby World Cup 2015 before we embarked upon a gruelling and unrelenting calendar of Aviva Premiership and European action.

When I look back over the past eight months, which started with a big win at Newcastle in October, there have been the inevitable highs and lows of professional sport.

There were great victories, games we could and should have won, together with many outstanding individual performances. But, once again, our lack of consistency across the season cost us the opportunity to go head to head with Northampton today for a place in the top six.

After beating Wasps at the beginning of March we were in a really strong position to secure qualification for the Champions Cup, but a disappointing run of five defeats saw our Premiership and European ambitions hit the rocks.

We all know the Dragons performance in a European Quarter final was unacceptable, but the response from the players, and the character that they showed in beating both Exeter and Sale, highlight the consistency of performance expected, and required, from this squad to compete in the Aviva Premiership.

WE WANT TO FINISH THE SEASON WITH SOME MOMENTUM AND ALSO GIVE THE PLAYERS AND STAFF WHO ARE LEAVING US THIS SUMMER THE BEST POSSIBLE SEND-OFF.

Without making excuses, a crippling injury list since the turn of the year (including nine backs who are unavailable today) has deprived us of some of our most potent attacking weapons and limited our attacking threat. However, on a positive note, this has allowed us to give game time to some of our younger squad players and they will benefit again today from the experience of playing against one of the best backlines in the league.

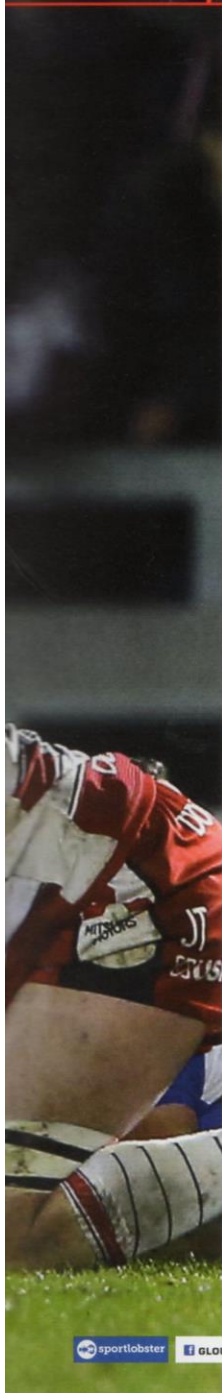
But it's very important for us to finish well today. We want to finish the season with some momentum and also give the players and staff who are leaving us this summer the best possible send-off.

We thank them all for their efforts and wish them well for the future.

And, finally, thank you for your fantastic backing and support again this season. The journey we are on was never going to be straightforward, but everyone is working hard to bring this club the success you all deserve.

Enjoy today's game, enjoy the summer break and see you for the start of 2015/16.

David





HARRY HANCOCK - ONE MAN, ONE WAR, TWO CLUBS

HARRY HANCOCK WAS A GLOUCESTER MAN. HE WAS BORN IN THE CITY. HE WORKED AT THE STATION AS A CLEANER AS A BOY AND WHEN STILL A TEENAGER. HE WAS ALSO A SOLDIER WITH THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE REGIMENT – YOU CAN SEE THAT FROM HOW HE SITS BOLT UPRIGHT AND READY FOR ACTION IN PHOTOGRAPHS.



And he was also a rugby player, which is why this Gloucester man's name appears on a war memorial almost a hundred miles away in Northampton, beside the pitch at Franklin's Gardens.

Hancock was born into a large Gloucester family in 1886 - one of eleven children, with five brothers and five sisters. After working for the Great Western Railway, in 1903 he took the 'King's Shilling' and enlisted in the 3rd Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment, serving as a regular soldier for six years.

Harry left the army in 1909 and married Mary Bower in the same year in the old St Luke's church in Gloucester. The following year the two of them set up home in

Northampton, Hancock working as a blacksmith.

The newly-weds chose to live in St James - whether by chance or by design - also the home of Franklin's Gardens (giving the club its "Saints" moniker). Back in Gloucester he had turned out several times for the 'A' team at full-back, as well as playing for a local club, Moreland's Excelsior, so it wasn't long before he found himself running out for the Saints.

He slotted straight into the Northampton team for the 1910/11 season, led by the legendary Saints and England captain Edgar Mobbs. Over the next two seasons he made 53 appearances in the green and black (as the Saints colours were). He was, according to a newspaper report of the time, a full-back who

was 'as cool as a frozen cucumber'.

A regular in the East Midlands side, he faced the Springboks at Franklin's Gardens in 1912, lining up with Mobbs and another great rugby international who would lose his life in the war, Ronald Poulton Palmer.

Hancock was, according to the Birmingham Gazette 'a gentlemanly player... much esteemed by all with whom he came into contact on or off the field'. Another critic took a similar view: 'A feature of his play was his coolness and sureness in fielding the ball....He was a player of considerable uniformity, fearless, very reliable, with an entire absence of showiness in his play.'

Such high esteem perhaps explains the rather unseemly tussle over his services in 1911. Having moved back to the city in the summer, he ran out for Gloucester at Kingsholm in matches against Bream and Penycraig in September 1911. The following week, he was back in Northampton, playing for Saints against Bedford.

Gloucester were, in the words of the Northampton Independent, 'rather sore' and demanded an explanation from Saints. The tug-of-war came to a head the following week, with the two clubs due to meet at Kingsholm. Hancock asked to play for Saints and after 'friendly letters' were exchanged between the clubs, Gloucester backed down. 'If Hancock had been straightforward with the Gloucester Club,' the Gloucester Citizen sniffily stated, 'it would have saved a lot of bother.'

Hancock's work took him to Coventry in 1912 so he bade farewell to Saints after a couple of seasons to play at the Butts. His career with Coventry was to be a short one. War was declared on 4 August 1914 and as a former soldier (and still on the army reserve) he was called up immediately. Nine days later, he was in France with the 1st Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment.

It was a ferocious few months for Hancock on the front line. From Mons, he and his battalion took part in the 200-mile retreat, harried by the Germans almost to the gates of

Paris before the allies hit back in the Battle of the Marne. Hancock was involved in that and the other great battle of autumn 1914 on the Aisne.

By mid-October 1914 the fighting had spilled north until it had reached the small town of Ypres in Flanders. The Gloucesters rushed into the line at Langemarck to the north, Hancock helped stem the seemingly relentless tide of German infantry - the Gloucesters' marksmanship that day cut the advancing Germans down in swathes.

Langemarck was saved but the

▼▼ A FEATURE OF HIS PLAY WAS HIS COOLNESS AND SURENESS IN FIELDING THE BALL... HE WAS A PLAYER OF CONSIDERABLE UNIFORMITY, FEARLESS, VERY RELIABLE, WITH AN ENTIRE ABSENCE OF SHOWINESS IN HIS PLAY. ▼▼



Gloucesters were soon on the move again - this time to save another vital feature to the east of Ypres - the Gheluvelt ridge. The Germans launched a massive attack in the swirling mists of dawn on 29 October 1914, trying once again to smash through.

At 0700 the Gloucesters counter-attacked. Bullets and shellfire swept the area, officers and men were hit, companies ceased to exist, confusion reigned. Hancock's company reached a position 300 yards west of Kruiseecke crossroads on the Menin Road and dug in - half using the road as a barrier facing north, the rest in a ditch facing east.

In a helter-skelter battle the Gloucesters fought tooth and nail to cling on but the Germans overwhelmed them and gradually beat them back. Casualties for the twelve hours of fighting that day totalled 7 officers and 160 other ranks killed, wounded, missing or taken prisoner.

30 year-old Corporal Harry Hancock was among them. He was never seen again. Such was the confusion of battle that it took well over a year for his wife Mary to have the news confirmed to her back in Coventry - 18 tortuous months of hoping that Harry might somehow be alive in a German prisoner-of-war camp.

If that wasn't enough of an ordeal for Mary Hancock, her husband's body was never found. Instead his name is written on the War Memorial at Franklin's Gardens and on the Menin Gate in Ypres.

It is more than one hundred years since he fell and more important than ever that he is not forgotten. As a living reminder his nephew Ted Hancock is here today, a lifelong supporter of Gloucester but perhaps, just for today - for his uncle Harry - a man with divided loyalties.

Graham McKechnie
BBC Radio Northampton



GLOUCESTER RUGBY HERITAGE

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THE HEYDAY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE RUGBY (PART 2)

Gloucestershire had won consecutive Championships in 1974 and 75. The question now was could they achieve a hat-trick of titles to match the achievement of 1930 to 1932?

1975-76



• JOHN BAYLISS

For the second season running John Bayliss was captain.

Winning the South-West group proved to be no problem apart from a tight game at Redruth against Cornwall (9-6). Devon were beaten 34-6, Alan Morley scoring three tries and Somerset 15-9, Peter Butler kicking five penalties.

The quarter-final opponents were Hertfordshire at Croxley Green. Gloucestershire won easily enough 29-7, with tries from Alan Morley, Mike Burton and Barry Nelmes. Inevitably Peter Butler weighed in with 17 points, made up of five penalties and a conversion.

The semi-final opponents at Bristol were Lancashire, captained

by Tony Neary. Peter Butler again made a big contribution with three penalties and a conversion of Alan Morley's try to see Gloucestershire home 15-7.

The final at Richmond was against Middlesex, and turned out to be a bravura performance by Peter Butler. He scored all the points in the county's 24-9 win, scoring a try, conversion and six penalties. It meant that out of the county's total of 126 points scored in the competition, Butler contributed a remarkable 90. Gloucestershire had won three consecutive titles for the first time since the famous team of the thirties.

The victorious team was: Peter Butler; Bob Clewes, John Bayliss, Chris (C.J) Williams (Bristol), Alan Morley (Bristol); Chris (C.G) Williams, Peter Kingston; Barry Nelmes (Cardiff), John Pullin (Bristol), Mike Burton, Roger Powell (Llanelli), John Fidler, John Watkins, Dave Rollitt (Bristol), Mike Rafter (Bristol)

That was a formidable pack of forwards. Having captained the county to successive titles John Bayliss retired from county rugby. He had played 57 times and scored seven tries.

Was it possible that the county could win yet again in 1976-77; a fourth consecutive win would be a record. The campaign started well enough with the county moving smoothly to a quarter-final against Oxfordshire at Kingsholm which was won 37-12.

This was Gloucestershire's 22nd

consecutive win in championship games, so hopes were high as the team travelled to Vale of Lune to face Lancashire yet again in the semi-final. In a dour game the county's great run ended in a 15-19 defeat. Lancashire went on to win the title against the previous season's finalists, Middlesex.

The following seasons proved very frustrating for the county's supporters. In 1977-78 Gloucestershire moved through to another final against North Midlands. Although being hot favourites the county lost 10-7 at Moseley.

Even worse, in 1978-79, Middlesex knocked out Gloucestershire at the semi-final stage winning 21-13 at Kingsholm. This was the first time the county had lost at Castle Grim since 1971.



• PETER BUTLER

In 1979-80 progress was made to yet another final, this time against Lancashire at the Vale of Lune ground. But Lancashire came out on top 21-15, in front of





a crowd of 10,000.

The 1980-81 season followed a very similar pattern. Gloucestershire lost to Northumberland in the final at Kingsholm. Peter Butler's county career ended with this game. He played 54 times for the county, scoring three tries, 81 conversions, 122 penalties and eight drop goals for a total of 564 points. He had played in eight finals and was on the winning side in four.

There was further disappointment in 1981-82. At the semi-final stage, Gloucestershire lost to Lancashire 24-16 in yet another game at Kingsholm.

1982-83

The county championship was restructured for this season. Out went the former regional group stage, and a league system was set up. Gloucestershire, with Bristol's Mike Rafter as captain, were placed in Division 1 which consisted of two groups.

All the matches were won. Yorkshire were beaten 9-6, North Midlands 37-6 with John Gadd and Nick Price scoring tries, and Lancashire 15-13. The county proceeded to a semi-final against Surrey played at Bristol in thick fog. Gloucestershire took an early 11-0 lead, and although Surrey fought back, the result was never seriously in doubt.

Bristol was again the venue for the final against Yorkshire, already beaten in the group stage. The powerful home forwards set a sound platform for the backs to run at the opposition. Tries were scored by Alan Morley, Phil Cue, Richard Harding and Steve Boyle. David Sorrell kicked a penalty and Gloucestershire won 19-7. In scoring his try Steve Boyle injured his knee, and there was concern that he might not be able to make his international debut against

Wales the following week. In the end he made it.

The Gloucestershire team was: Phil Cue (Bristol); Alan Morley (Bristol), Ralph Knibbs (Bristol), Simon Hogg (Bristol), John Carr (Bristol); Austin Sheppard (Bristol), Kevin Bogira (Bristol), Malcolm Preedy (Gloucester), John Fidler (Gloucester), Steve Boyle (Gloucester), Mike Rafter (Bristol), John Gadd (Gloucester), Bob Hesford (Bristol)

1983-84

Gloucestershire again with Mike Rafter as captain won all their Division 1 group games. They beat Surrey 22-3, despite John Orwin being sent off, Northumberland 19-16 and Yorkshire 25-6 at Kingsholm.

Castle Grim was also host to the semi-final against Middlesex. This was a close affair. Middlesex were at one point leading 12-0. But the redoubtable county forwards finally gained the ascendancy and Gloucestershire sneaked home 13-12. Alan Morley (again) was the try scorer and Stuart Barnes kicked three penalties.

There was now a four month wait before the final, which for the first time was played at Twickenham. Somerset were the other finalists. Fourteen of the Somerset team played for Bath, who at the time were easily the most successful club side in the country. Thus the final was viewed as a test match between the combined strengths of Gloucester and Bristol against Bath.

It was an exciting game watched by 26,000 spectators. Early on Somerset attacked strongly but could only score three penalties. Gloucestershire came back with a try from Ralph Knibbs and two penalties by Barnes. Then in the second half the county ran riot with tries from Alan

Morley (2), Stuart Barnes, Richard Harding and Simon Hogg. The game was won 36-18.

Gloucestershire had appeared in 12 finals in 15 seasons, which was a fine achievement. They had now won the title 15 times.

The team was: Phil Cue (Bristol); Alan Morley (Bristol), Richard Mogg (Gloucester), Ralph Knibbs (Bristol), Nick Price (Gloucester); Stuart Barnes (Bristol), Richard Harding (Bristol); Malcolm Preedy (Gloucester), Steve Mills (Gloucester), Phil Blakeway (Gloucester), John Fidler (Gloucester), John Orwin (Gloucester), John Gadd (Gloucester), Mike Rafter (Bristol), Bob Hesford (Bristol)

The final was John Fidler's last game for the county. From 1971 to 1984 he had made 42 appearances, played in nine finals, and was on the winning side in five.



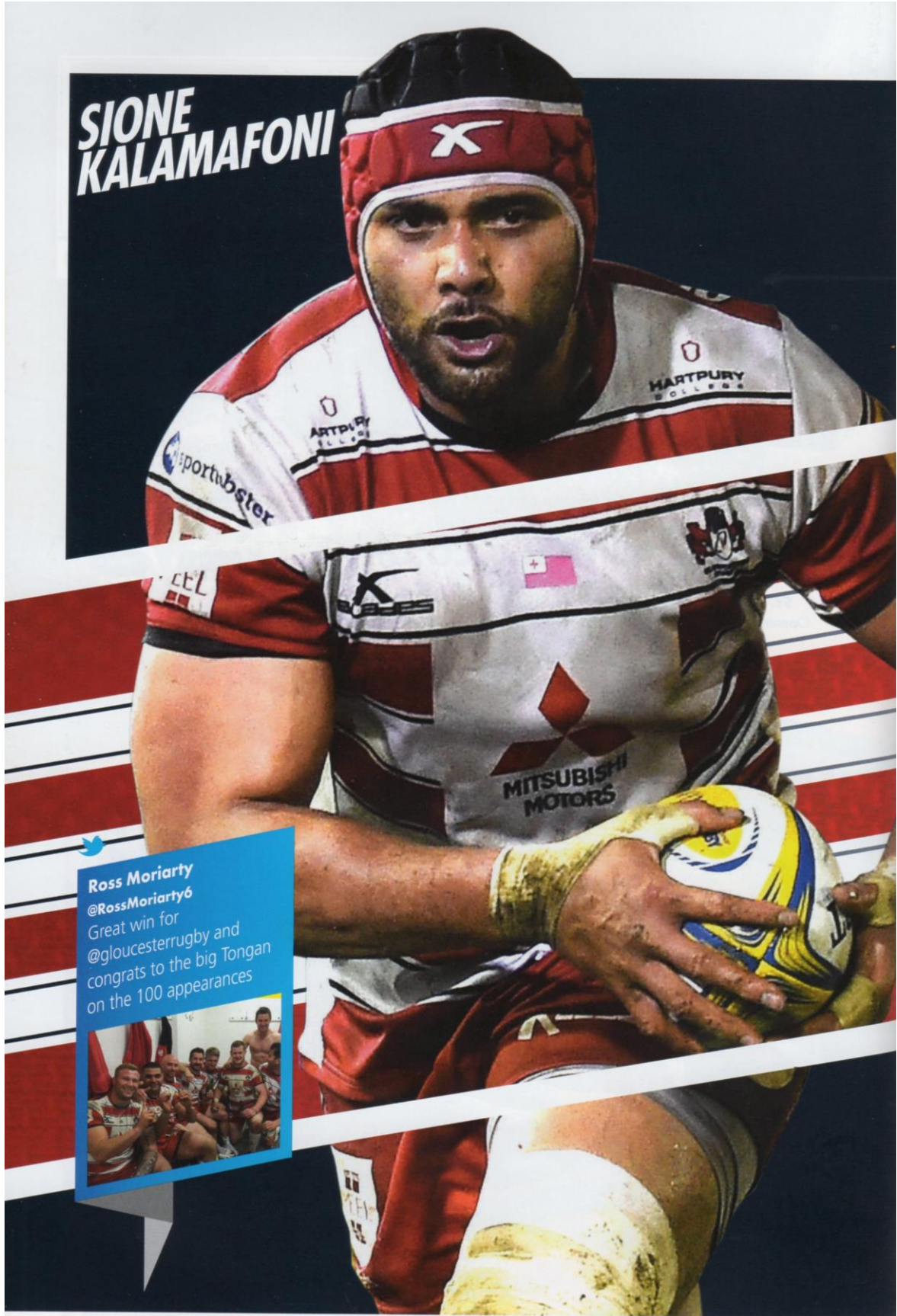
• JOHN FIDLER

The following season the county again proceeded through the Division 1 games without mishap apart from a 6-6 draw with Somerset, but lost surprisingly to Notts, Lincs and Derby in the semi-final at Bristol, 14-9.

But the 1984-85 season proved to be the last where the major clubs supplied their best players to the County Championship. The competition was downgraded so that counties selected their players from lower leagues.



SIONE KALAMAFONI



 **Ross Moriarty**
@RossMoriarty6
Great win for
@gloucesterrugby and
congrats to the big Tongan
on the 100 appearances



CENTURION SIONE

FRIDAY NIGHT'S GAME AT SALE SHARKS SAW ONE UNWELCOME STATISTIC WIPED OUT BY THE CHERRY AND WHITES AS THEY WON IN THE NORTH-WEST FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 2001.

BUT, a stalwart of the pack, Sione Kalamafoni was busy notching up his century of appearances as the Tongan became the club's latest Centurion.

After making his debut in the 2012-13 season, Kalamafoni has shown his durability in either the number six or eight shirt, with the occasional shift at lock. The Matahau-born powerhouse has recorded well over 1000 match minutes this season including a bruising fifty minutes in Salford last weekend.

Now coming to the end of his fourth season at the club, the softly-spoken Tongan is quick to put the team effort first, and took a few moments to reflect on his achievement of 100 games at the club he is delighted to call home.

"I think everyone would be very proud to mark their 100th game for any club, but for me, of course I'm very proud to be involved in this great club.



PLAYING RUGBY IS MY LIFE, AND THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT I'VE MARKED 100 GAMES AT A CLUB.

"This is my fourth season at the club now, and to have been able to mark my 100th game is something I have lived for. Playing rugby is my life, and this is the first time that I've marked 100 games at a club.

"Not just for myself, but the opportunity that Gloucester has given me, and being able to play for this great club. I must thank all of the coaches that have given me the chance to play and so I'm very proud of this achievement."

Signed by the Cherry and Whites from RFU Championship side Nottingham four seasons ago, Kalamafoni looks back on his time in the East Midlands fondly.

"Of course I can look back to my time at Nottingham. You never forget where you came from, and where you started, and I can always reflect on where have I been and my time at Nottingham as well.

"I was there for a couple of years, and that built up my foundations in the English game. Glenn Delaney pretty much put me under his wing, and taught me a few things. So I've learnt a lot from him, and I think that built the foundation of me coming to Gloucester, and playing for such a great club."

Kalamafoni is quick to note the bond he has created with the Gloucester faithful, and he is thankful for the support they have given him in his time, so far, in Cherry and White, with plenty still to come!

"I hope the supporters continue to stick with me, over the coming seasons as well, and I hope that I will be able to show them that I am worthy of playing in the Gloucester shirt, and representing this great club. I loved winning the Player of





I HOPE THE SUPPORTERS CONTINUE TO STICK WITH ME, OVER THE COMING SEASONS AS WELL, AND I HOPE THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO SHOW THEM THAT I AM WORTHY OF PLAYING IN THE GLOUCESTER SHIRT ▾

"It's always good to have someone from back home around with you, but ultimately the club here have been great to me, and it's a good bunch of lads.

"You can pretty much talk to anyone around the club, and around the boys, and it's of course good to have boys from back home, to talk Tongan to, but to be fair all of the boys I've played with have been really phenomenal."

the Season award, 2 years ago too!

"We have a really big fan base, and it is always great to play at Kingsholm. Going away to play my 100th game is one where we had to stick our hands up and play well."

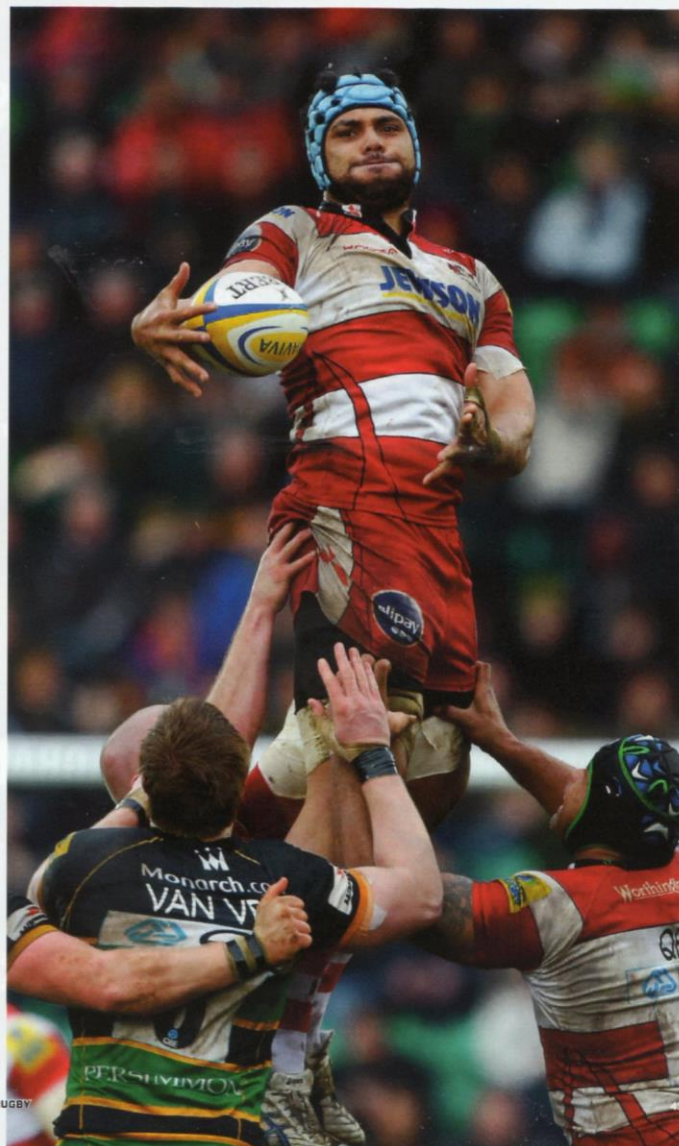
Tonga, of course, experienced a mixed bag in Rugby World Cup 2015, but a highlight for Kalamafoni was running out in the opening game against Georgia, in front of a packed and buzzing Kingsholm.

"As soon as I knew that we were going to play our first game against Kingsholm during the tournament, I was very excited as I knew that a lot of the fans would be behind us.

"I was obviously with Sila, 'Aleki and of course David too, and we knew how great it was going to be. A lot of the fans spoke to me before the game and told me that they would be supporting Tonga, and that was very special to me.

"Of course, the result didn't come our way, but we were proud to be playing for our country, and also playing at 'Holm, in front of The Shed!"

Over Kalamafoni's time at the club so far, he has been joined by a number of Tongan internationals and even though he has set up his life in Gloucestershire now, he is able to fondly note that having his fellow countrymen by his side in Cherry and White has made him feel more at home.



KINGSHOLM NEWS WITH BOB FENTON



SO WE'VE FINALLY ARRIVED AT THE LAST GAME OF THE SEASON... A SEASON THAT SEEMS TO HAVE BOTH LASTED FOR AGES AND BEEN SUPER QUICK TOO. AND WHAT A SEASON IT HAS BEEN TOO.

The Rugby World Cup feels like it happened years ago, but go back 12 months and our City was decked out in flags and pennants advertising the forthcoming tournament. What an honour it was for our club and our ground to host six international teams during the tournament.

I was fortunate enough to visit a few grounds during the course of the tournament including the semi-finals, and only the atmosphere at Wembley Stadium for the All Blacks vs Argentina game came close to that generated at Kingsholm.

It was spectacular here, yes I'll admit to being biased but there are not many who would disagree.

The local population turned up in the usual hoards to support the competition, the Japan v Scotland game being my particular favourite. Japan had a head start by playing in Cherry and White, but Scotland had Greig - torn loyalties!

But that was ages ago, it must be well over eight months! Time flies.

And then on to the most compressed Premiership season in history. We lost the LV= Cup because there was no room for it, so no opportunity to let some of the younger guys get a run out. Except the attritional nature of the Premiership season made sure that they did as we suffered more casualties that you would find in



a Sergio Leone western, ok for younger readers in a film made by Quentin Tarantino!

And what do we make of the season just gone? For me a pretty typical gloriously consistent/inconsistent fun mix of hope, despair, elation and depression in equal measures. One minute we're up, next minute we're down. Remember that yoyo thing I wrote about a few programmes ago? That's us, that is.

Our league season got off to a bit of a stuttering start, an away win in our first game got heartbeats racing. It was only Newcastle but those of us who have been around Kingsholm for a while will recognise the fact that, regardless of who we are playing, away wins are as rare as a rare thing.

Then we came back home on



WE KNOW THAT WE WILL BE SAYING GOODBYE TO A NUMBER OF PLAYERS AND COACHES DURING THE SUMMER. AS EVER WE WISH THEM WELL AND THANK THEM FOR EVERYTHING THEY HAVE GIVEN FOR THE CHERRY AND WHITE CAUSE.

a balmy Friday evening and lost to Saracens. I still think we should have won that game, small things cost us that one.

I can't remember the number of times I have said that we lost a match by 'small things' this season. Not a slur against our back division - even the small things in the backs are big things these days. Just little mistakes, the odd bad call. Painful. Very painful.

In Europe, defending our Challenge Cup win (I just had to go back and correct that - I wrote 'Champions Cup', I can dream) started off well enough with victories in all the pool games giving us a home quarter-final. The least said about that game the better.

We had some highlights - beating Bath at the Rec was one, losing to them at home as was definitely not. But we will finish above them in the table so that's OK. Hosting an absolutely star-studded Barbarians outfit in November was special. Forget the score (I lost count and don't think our scoreboard could have coped with many more points), the average age of our squad was about 18 - fantastic experience!

We tried some fancy new combinations as we struggled to get a team out on the pitch at times - three full backs in one line-up was a first, but then to go and win at Sale with a team largely made up of scrum halves, centres and No 8's showed the power of Coach Laurie's lateral thinking.

The last few weeks have had numerous people working out all sorts of numerical possibilities that could have got us a place in the big boys Champions Cup next season - weirdly at the time of writing it is still possible, providing Quins with



the Challenge Cup and we finish 7th.

All of that is in other people's hands, and I find that number crunching way, way above my pay grade. I'm a simple person with a simple view - namely if you win enough games you will qualify for all the right tournaments. Our club should not be sitting around hoping for some crazy equation that looks something like something I would have had a total brain failure over in my school maths days to work out the right way.

But now, the end is near, and we face the final curtain for this season. We know that we will be saying goodbye to a number of players and coaches during the summer. As

ever we wish them well and thank them for everything they have given for the Cherry and White cause.

After today we head off on our summer holidays, mine is booked - I'm spending three months at a theme park riding roller coasters to prepare me for the sudden highs and sudden lows of next season. Gloriously consistent inconsistency... I'm not sure that I could cope with a season where we win things all the time, but I am prepared to give it a go if it can be arranged!

Have a great summer, everyone. Thanks for reading my stuff and I'll see you all back here in a few months time.



RANDALL ON RUGBY

HERE WE ARE AT THE END OF A UNIQUE, CONGESTED SEASON. ONE WHICH BEGAN WITH THE EXCITEMENT OF THE WORLD CUP, WITH KINGSHOLM PLAYING A FULL PART IN THE GROUP STAGES, AND WHICH ENDS WITH NORTHAMPTON COMING HERE UNSURE OF THEIR CHAMPIONS CUP PLACE IN THE AUTUMN.



That scenario will keep them on their toes today, and even though Gloucester cannot now make the top six themselves, the final home game is always something of an occasion, so we should get a rousing atmosphere and hopefully a decent game.

Gloucester finish the season with a long list of unavailable players who will need the summer to regain fitness. One of them, prop Dan Murphy, had the plaster off his right ankle on Tuesday and hopes to be only marginally behind the currently fit members of the squad when they report back.

"I got injured in February and although I could get as far as straight line running, when I came to weights and off line running it didn't feel right" Murphy said.

"I'll be on crutches for a little while but with a boot the ankle will be weight bearing. I injured the same ankle in the first pre season game last year having had no historic trouble with it and didn't get in the team until I was fully fit in November.

"There are four good loose head props here and I was at the bottom of the pile. I had a run after starting at Twickenham against Harlequins and then got injured again at

Saracens. It's been a frustrating year."

Murphy has been at the club since 2010, having been signed from London Irish by Bryan Redpath. With the changes of regime since, he compares it to having moved several times over that period, and with more back room changes coming this summer, he knows there will again be new faces to try and impress.

"Ever since I've been here it feels like we've been trying to ride a wave, but we've never been on the crest for long enough" Murphy added.



EVEN BEFORE I JOINED GLOUCESTER, KINGSHOLM WAS MY FAVOURITE PLACE TO PLAY. I KNEW GLOUCESTER WAS A PROPER CLUB. THE SUMMER I SIGNED, WHEN WE MET UP IN PRE-SEASON EVERYONE WAS TALKING ABOUT BEING UNBEATEN AT HOME THE SEASON BEFORE, AND IT HASN'T HAPPENED SINCE.

"It's hard to pinpoint what the problem is, because if it had been a re-occurring one it would have been easy to fix and we'd have sorted it. We don't turn up to play badly, and you know when you do.

"If we lose on a Saturday I spend the next 24-36 hours in a bit of a daze, thinking about what went wrong, trying to analyse what I did, and whether I could have done it any better, and I know the other boys are the same."

add value. Put them in with a slightly different staff and next year will be a big year."

Like many of the squad Murphy has been affiliated to a local club this season, in his case Norton RFC who play in Gloucestershire Division 3, and his community involvement didn't stop there. He's helped with some sessions at a youth club run under the umbrella of Gloucestershire Young Carers, and while it's an element of being



"We've been together for two years now as a group and collectively there is a lot of will and pride in it. You don't want to finish your career and then wonder what you actually did. You are judged on your achievements, which successes you were a part of, and the recognition you got for it.

"The three new signings coming in (prop Josh Hohneck, hooker Motu Matu'u and centre Matt Scott) are guys who have gone under the radar a bit and will all

of being a professional player that he enjoys, the 30-year-old really wants to play a more active part on the pitch after a season which has contained only eight first team appearances.

"Even before I joined Gloucester, Kingsholm was my favourite place to play. I knew Gloucester was a proper club. The summer I signed, when we met up in pre-season everyone was talking about being unbeaten at home the season before, and it hasn't happened



since. We've had some slip-ups. People talk about the backing the crowd give us, and for me it's a two-way street. If we play well, they get louder, and we get stronger, but it has to come from us. They need something to cheer about."

And Northampton?

"Saints being where they are shows how strong the top six is" Murphy said.

"I look at them and they are not dissimilar to us. They have a good set piece, a fly half who can run things and game breakers in the back division. The match certainly isn't a dead rubber for them, and it won't be for us either."



Back To School

by Paddy McAllister, age 27

PRIMARY SCHOOL

I WENT TO Braeburn Primary School

MY BEST FRIENDS WERE Julian, Brian, Sheel, Ravi, Thulani and Kevin!

Paddy's
best friends

1. Julian
2. Brian
3. Sheel
4. Ravi
5. Thulani
6. Kevin



MY FAVOURITE SUBJECT WAS Games

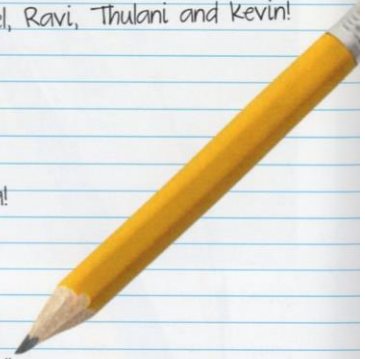
MY FAVOURITE TEACHER WAS Mr Magnus

MY FAVOURITE SCHOOL DINNER was Zebra!

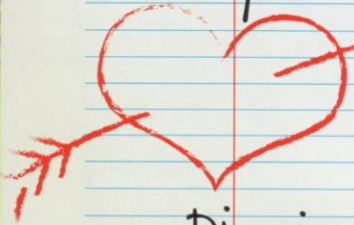
IN MY SNACK BOX I HAD Biltong

MY FIRST SCHOOL PLAY WAS Peter Pan

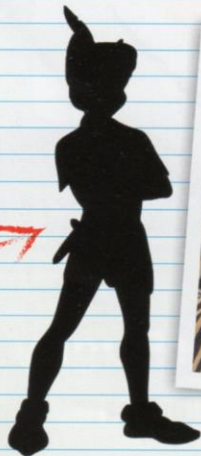
IN THE PLAYGROUND, I WAS PLAYING football



Paddy



Diani



MY PRIMARY SCHOOL LOVE WAS Diani

MY EARLIEST RUGBY MEMORY WAS watching my brothers play

WHEN WE PLAYED RUGBY I PRETENDED TO BE a football player


AT SPORTS DAY I won the 100m!



Paddy's timetable
 Messing around
 with mates
 Lunch
 PE
 Running
 Maths revision

SECONDARY SCHOOL

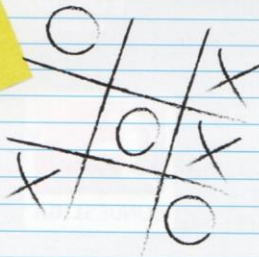
I WENT TO The Royal School, Armagh

MY FAVOURITE MEMORY IS messing around with my friends 

I ENJOYED playing pranks

MY GRADES WERE just enough!

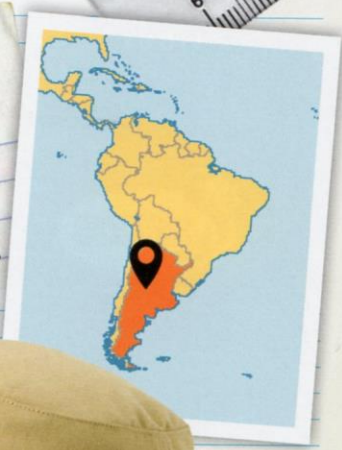
MY HARDEST SUBJECT WAS Maths



MY UNIFORM WAS black trousers, white shirt & a dark blue blazer

MY FAVOURITE SCHOOL TRIP WAS rugby tour to Argentina

Dear Mr and Mrs McAllister
 We regret to inform you that
 Paddy has been in trouble again
 for beating up the older children....



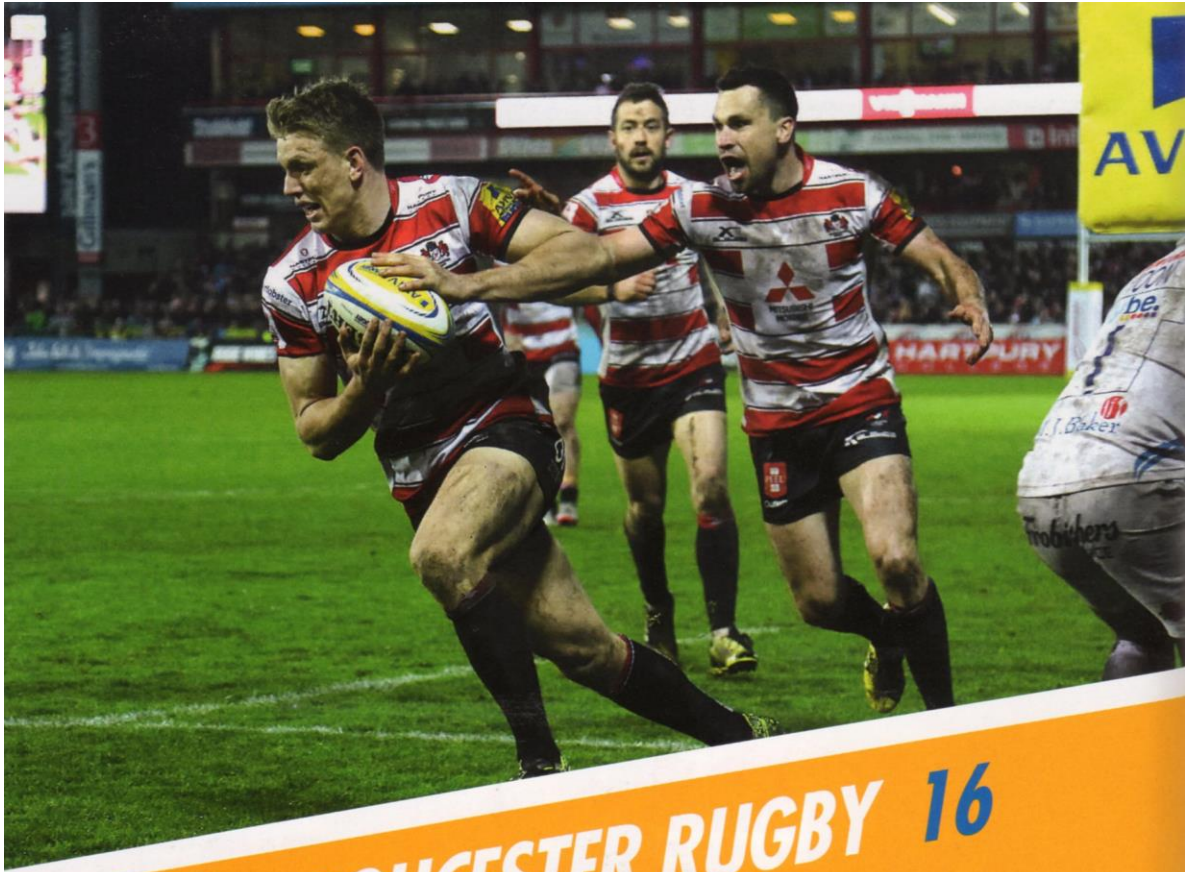
IN PE I used to dominate!

AT SCHOOL I WANTED TO BE A zoo keeper

I GOT IN TROUBLE FOR beating up the older kids!!!

ON WORK EXPERIENCE I WENT TO nowhere! It's illegal in Northern Ireland to send kids to work!





GLOUCESTER RUGBY 16

EXETER CHIEFS 9

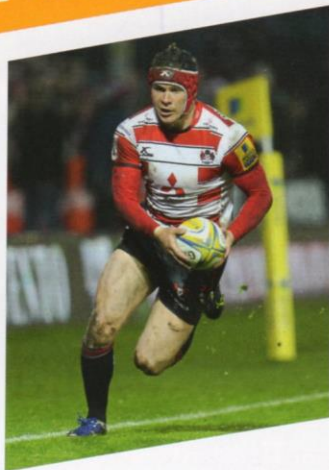


HALF TIME 0-0
ATTENDANCE 13,390
REFEREE Craig Maxwell-Keys

After several weeks of disappointing outcomes, where the final scores hadn't always reflected the effort put in by the team, Gloucester got back to winning ways in some style with a hard-fought 16-9 victory over the Exeter Chiefs.

Battered physically by the number of injuries across the squad, wounded verbally by the critics who had written them off before the game had even started, the Cherry and Whites duly produced one of their most dogged performances of the season.

Exeter came to town, sitting in second place in the Aviva



Premiership season and pushing hard for a home semi-final in the play-offs. Rob Baxter's side had everything to play for.

With Gloucester having lost their previous five, bowing out of Europe the week before, missing so many starters and naming two debutants in the matchday squad, they were



"...that was a passionate side who showed their class..." David Humphreys cut a delighted figure after the game.

there for the taking surely?

But, no, not at all. In front of yet another fantastic home crowd, Gloucester dug deep and threw themselves headlong into battle from the first minute to the last. The Chiefs have grown accustomed this season to rolling over most teams. On this occasion they were rocked.

Gloucester's performance was based primarily on simply refusing to allow Exeter to gain any front foot momentum whatsoever. Time and again, big runners like Thomas Waldrom were hammered behind the gain line, chopped down before they had the chance to get going.

The battered and bruised bodies of the likes of Hibbard, Morgan, Moriarty and Savage should take a bow – their commitment in defence shone like a beacon in the Kingsholm gloom.

The visiting playmakers, Steenson and Slade, had precious little to work with while, on the other hand, Greig Laidlaw and James Hook ran the game with a precision that had to be admired.

Laidlaw's contribution was key. Named Man of the Match by BT Sport, the scrum-half did everything on the night – passed, kicked, ran, tackled and also kicked three penalties and a conversion. It was a captain's performance.



On the night, though, it all happened in the second half. The first half saw plenty of action, full-on wholehearted commitment from both sides, but no points – the first time since 2004 at Kingsholm.

Gareth Steenson quickly rectified that as he kicked an early second half penalty to open the scoring and, he wouldn't have realised it at the time, but he'd just lit the blue touch paper.

Gloucester hit back immediately, a rampaging run from Ben Morgan taking play into the Chiefs 22, before Marshall and Savage, the latter with a sublime inside offload, combined to send Ollie Thorley over for a debut try.

Laidlaw and Steenson then embarked upon a kicking duel. One penalty for the former and two for the latter saw the game poised on a knife edge until Jack Nowell was yellow carded for a tip tackle on Thorley.

Kingsholm screamed for a red, the BT Sport commentary team sided with the England winger. Referee Maxwell-Keys and the TMO took the middle ground and opted for the yellow.

MATCHDAY SQUADS



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

- 15 Tom Marshall
- 14 Rob Cook
- 13 Henry Trinder
- 12 Billy Twelvetrees
- 11 Ollie Thorley 1T
- 10 James Hook
- 9 Greig Laidlaw 1C, 3P
- 1 Yann Thomas
- 2 Richard Hibbard
- 3 John Afoa
- 4 Tom Savage
- 5 Jeremy Thrush
- 6 Ross Moriarty
- 7 Matt Kvesic
- 8 Ben Morgan

- 16 Darren Dawidiuk
- 17 Nick Wood
- 18 Paul Doran-Jones
- 19 Elliott Stooke
- 20 Jacob Rowan
- 21 Callum Braley
- 22 Elliott Creed
- 23 Willi Heinz



EXETER CHIEFS

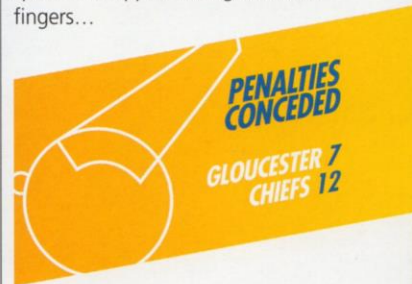
- 15 Lachlan Turner
- 14 Jack Nowell ■
- 13 Henry Slade
- 12 Ian Whitten
- 11 Olly Woodburn
- 10 Gareth Steenson 3P
- 9 Will Chudley
- 1 Ben Moon
- 2 Luke Cowan-Dickie
- 3 Harry Williams
- 4 Mitch Lees
- 5 Geoff Parling
- 6 Don Armand
- 7 Julian Salvi
- 8 Thomas Waldrom

- 16 Jack Yeandle
- 17 Alec Hepburn
- 18 Carl Rimmer
- 19 Damian Welch
- 20 Dave Ewers
- 21 Dave Lewis
- 22 Michele Campagnaro
- 23 James Short

Laidlaw slotted the resultant penalty and then added another to extend the lead to 16-9 going into the final few minutes. There was still time for a scare.

With Nowell pedaling forlornly on the exercise bike on the touchline, the other Exeter winger, James Short, burst clear as he fielded a kick downfield. However, as he accelerated into space, he simply lost his grip on the ball and knocked on.

And, just like that, a share of the spoils had slipped through Exeter's fingers...



Director of Rugby, David Humphreys:

"There was just an overwhelming sense of relief at the final whistle, it was an incredible atmosphere - the best atmosphere that there's been all season - and for me it just sums up the passionate nature.

"From the depths of despair of the final whistle last week, one week later they're back, so I'm delighted for the supporters."



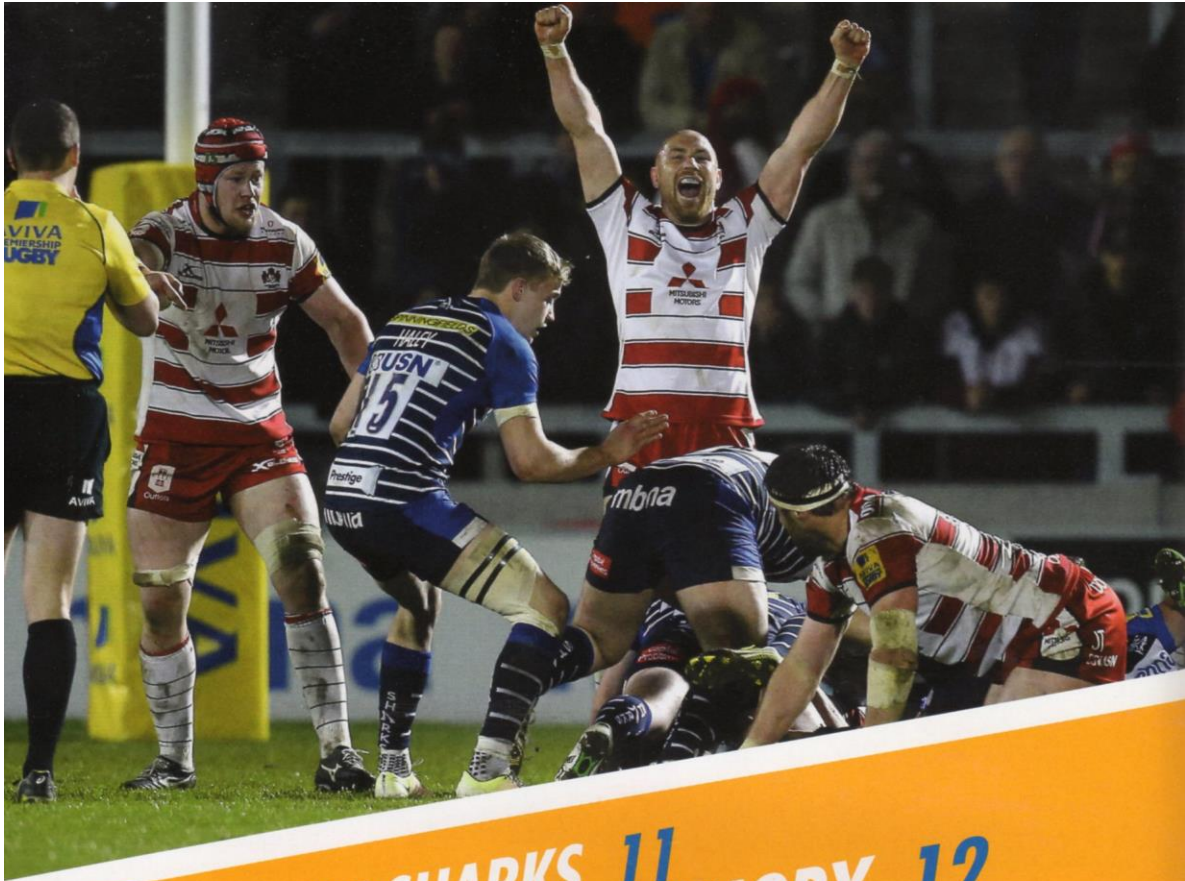
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The BT Sport commentary team described the yellow card for Exeter's Jack Nowell for a tip tackle on Ollie Thorley as the turning point of the game.

The decision certainly divided opinion. Gloucester followers thought the yellow card should have been a red. The commentary team weren't even sure it was a yellow.

Who'd be a ref, eh?



SALE SHARKS 11 GLOUCESTER RUGBY 12



HALF TIME 6-6
ATTENDANCE 7,352
REFEREE Tom Foley

It's been a long time since Gloucester Rugby supporters could celebrate an away win at Sale – since 2001 in fact – but that particular hoodoo was laid to rest following last week's 12-11 at the AJ Bell Stadium.

The Cherry and Whites were well and truly written off by most of the pundits before the game, and their opinions were only strengthened when Paul Doran-Jones and Tom Marshall withdrew before the game.

And it was fair from being a dead rubber for the home team. Steve Diamond's side were still in



'Everyone stepped up' says Matt Kvesic speaking to GRTV after win at Sale Sharks.

the hunt for a top four finish, and a number of their squad, including Danny Cipriani, were looking to sign off in style as they depart this summer.

Consider also that Sale were looking to finish the Aviva Premiership season unbeaten at home, and the size of the task in hand becomes more apparent.

Yet Gloucester produced one of their more dogged and resilient performances of the season to hang in there when the going got tough, before pouncing to snatch

the win thanks to Greig Laidlaw's 77th minute penalty.

It could easily have slipped away. When Sale went 11-6 in front after 54 minutes, arguably against the run of play, heads could easily have dropped in the Gloucester ranks. They'd taken the game to the Sharks yet not been able to convert their pressure into points.

But cool heads prevailed. Gloucester worked their way into positions where they could take the points when Sale transgressed, and Greig Laidlaw's boot did the rest.

In terms of match action, despite the best efforts of both sides, scoring chances were few



FROM A PSYCHOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW, TO WIN AT SALE IS A HUGE STEP FORWARD.
DAVID HUMPHREYS

and far between. Gloucester were deprived of the services of many key players but were able to field a strong pack, and the forwards did a sterling job up front.

The backs were already featuring several individuals playing out of position, even before the loss of Rob Cook to injury, but made light of the situation as every single man rose to the occasion.

Danny Cipriani and Greig Laidlaw kicked two penalties apiece in the first half, as neither team could really take a grip of the game, despite both creating some decent scoring opportunities.

Gloucester began the second half the better, but couldn't get the crucial score that would have seen them edge ahead. Frustratingly, that score went the way of the Sharks as Johnny Leota fought his way over from close range.

MATCHDAY SQUADS

SALE SHARKS

- 15 Mike Haley
- 14 Will Addison
- 13 Sam James
- 12 Johnny Leota 1T
- 11 Neville Edwards
- 10 Danny Cipriani 2P
- 9 Peter Stringer
- 1 Ross Harrison
- 2 Tommy Taylor
- 3 Vadim Cobilas
- 4 Bryn Evans
- 5 Andrei Ostrikov
- 6 Cameron Neild
- 7 David Seymour
- 8 TJ Ioane

- 16 Neil Briggs
- 17 Eifion Lewis-Roberts
- 18 Brian Mujati
- 19 Jonathan Mills
- 20 Mark Easter
- 21 James Mitchell
- 22 Joe Ford
- 23 Mark Jennings

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

- 15 Mark Atkinson
- 14 Rob Cook
- 13 Henry Trinder
- 12 Billy Twelvetrees
- 11 Ollie Thorley
- 10 Greig Laidlaw 4P
- 9 Willi Heinz
- 1 Yann Thomas
- 2 Richard Hibbard
- 3 John Afoa
- 4 Tom Savage
- 5 Jeremy Thrush
- 6 Ross Moriarty
- 7 Matt Kvesic
- 8 Sione Kalamafoni

- 16 Luke Cole
- 17 Nick Wood
- 18 Josh McNulty
- 19 Ben Morgan
- 20 Gareth Evans
- 21 Callum Braley
- 22 Elliott Creed
- 23 Lewis Ludlow

However, Gloucester weren't disheartened. They continued to ask questions of the Sale defence and eventually forced the home team into two vital indiscretions. That was all Greig Laidlaw needed and his accuracy off the kicking tee ensured Gloucester would head home with the points.

Director of Rugby, David Humphreys:

"From a psychological point of view, to win at Sale is a huge step forward."



"I don't think anybody can question the heart and character that's in this squad. There's huge fight, we have a competitive edge but what we lack in big games is a little bit of detail, a little bit of accuracy. That's the step forward we can make as a team."

Sherbornes
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Referee Tom Foley had a good night at the office. It's often said that a referee has had a good one if you don't notice him that much, and that was the case at the AJ Bell Stadium.

He only had to refer one decision upstairs, let the game flow and was consistent in his decision making. That's all you can ask for!

2-0
3-5
6-5
6-8
13-8
20-8
20-15
20-22
20-25
20-28



TODAY'S TEAMSHEET

GLOUCESTER RUGBY vs NORTHAMPTON SAINTS
Aviva Premiership Rugby - Round 22
 Saturday 7th May 2016, KO 15:30, Kingsholm



Teams correct at time of print

TOM MARSHALL	FULLBACK	15	FULLBACK	HARRY MALLINDER
OLLIE THORLEY	RIGHT WING	14	RIGHT WING	KEN PISI
BILLY TWELVETREES	OUTSIDE CENTRE	13	OUTSIDE CENTRE	GEORGE PISI
MARK ATKINSON	INSIDE CENTRE	12	INSIDE CENTRE	LUTHER BURRELL
ELLIOTT CREED	LEFT WING	11	LEFT WING	GEORGE NORTH
GREIG LAIDLAW (CAPT)	FLY-HALF	10	FLY-HALF	STEPHEN MYLER
WILLI HEINZ	SCrum-HALF	9	SCrum-HALF	LEE DICKSON (CAPT)
YANN THOMAS	LOOSEHEAD PROP	1	LOOSEHEAD PROP	ALEX WALLER
RICHARD HIBBARD	HOKKER	2	HOKKER	MIKE HAYWOOD
JOHN AFOA	TIGHTHEAD PROP	3	TIGHTHEAD PROP	KIERAN BROOKES
TOM SAVAGE	LOCK	4	LOCK	COURTNEY LAWES
JEREMY THRUSH	LOCK	5	LOCK	CHRISTIAN DAY
ROSS MORIARTY	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	6	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	JAMIE GIBSON
MATT KVESIC	OPENSIDE FLANKER	7	OPENSIDE FLANKER	TOM WOOD
BEN MORGAN	NUMBER 8	8	NUMBER 8	TEIMANA HARRISON

DARREN DAWIDIUK	REPLACEMENT	16	REPLACEMENT	REECE MARSHALL
NICK WOOD	REPLACEMENT	17	REPLACEMENT	CAMPESE MA'AFU
PAUL DORAN-JONES	REPLACEMENT	18	REPLACEMENT	PAUL HILL
GARETH EVANS	REPLACEMENT	19	REPLACEMENT	VICTOR MATFIELD
LEWIS LUDLOW	REPLACEMENT	20	REPLACEMENT	BEN NUTLEY
CALLUM BRALEY	REPLACEMENT	21	REPLACEMENT	KAHN FOTUALI'I
LLOYD EVANS	REPLACEMENT	22	REPLACEMENT	JJ HARRAHAN
JACOB ROWAN	REPLACEMENT	23	REPLACEMENT	JAMES WILSON

Officials

Referee JP Doyle **Assistant Referees** Andrew Small & Andrew Pearce