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HARLEQUINS

ISSUE 15 || AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY
SATURDAY 4 MARCH 2017 || £3



RICOH



CITIZEN



btv SPORT

BT Sport

CAPTAIN'S CORNER

GREIG LAIDLAW



GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM FOR TODAY'S AVIVA PREMIERSHIP ROUND 17 GAME WITH HARLEQUINS.

We're fast approaching the business end of the season, and every game is hugely important with every result having a significant impact upon the league table.

I spoke in my last column that we didn't throw any shots at Leicester, but I was heartened to see the squad draw a line under that and crack on to get a wonderful win over Saracens.

However, you're only as good as the last run out and we were genuinely gutted as a squad to come away from the Ricoh Arena on Sunday without any points.

We're not happy with being gallant losers in these games. We went there with real ambition to get the win, and beat these top teams, but we came up just short in the end and I genuinely believe the scoreline flattered Wasps.

We were able to show different sides to our game and, whilst we know we still have a long way to go, and a lot of things to work on, we feel that we're on the right track to getting somewhere near the level that we know we are capable of playing at.

Our attacking play was good on Sunday and we were able to open the Wasps defence up and showed good variety in attack. But, at the top level, every time you get into these positions in the

opposition 22 you have to come away with points, be it through a try or a penalty.

This is a good thing for us to work on, we're getting there by creating opportunities, we just need to get focused on crossing that line.

Last time out at Kingsholm we were fantastic, we took on Saracens who were looking to bounce back from their defeat at Sixways, and we had to take the initiative. There was no point in sitting back and waiting for something to happen, we flew at Saracens and deservedly got the result.

Last time I wrote that the Kingsholm crowd would be a huge factor under the lights, and this was clear to see - we got off to a bright start and the crowd were right behind us and the roar as Hibbs crashed over was awesome.

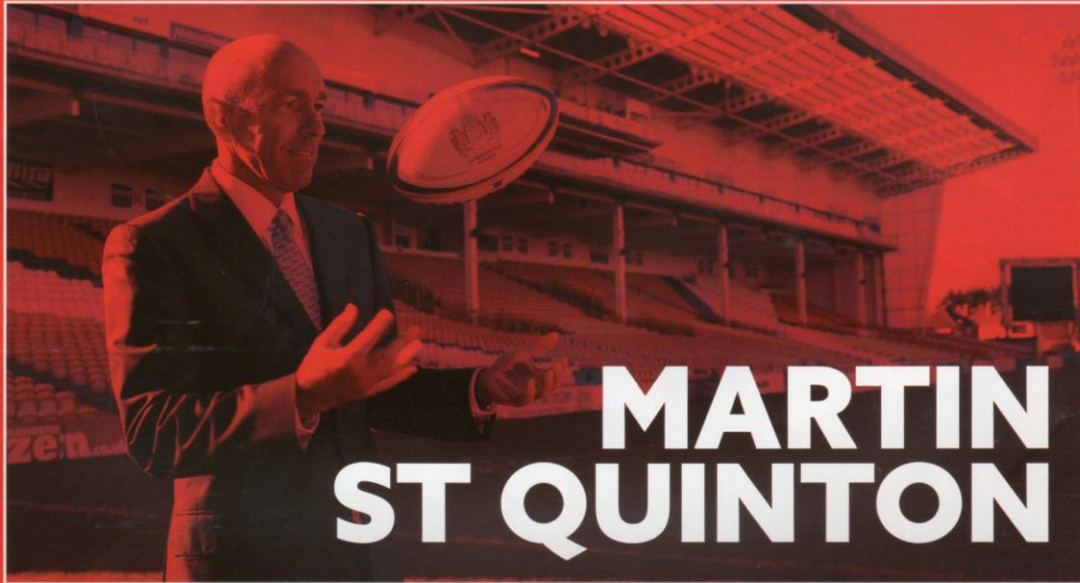
We all celebrated that one, and to get a try in that manner is always sweet, and Hibbs deserved that one for his efforts throughout the game.

This weekend, it needs to be more of the same, Harlequins are a quality outfit that play an exciting brand of rugby and our defence will have to be on the money.

I wish I could be out there with the boys, but injuries are part and parcel of the game. As I have said before, I am targeting a return before the end of the season, as I want to contribute to the end of the season for this fantastic club and one that I hold very dear to me.

Enjoy the game

Greig



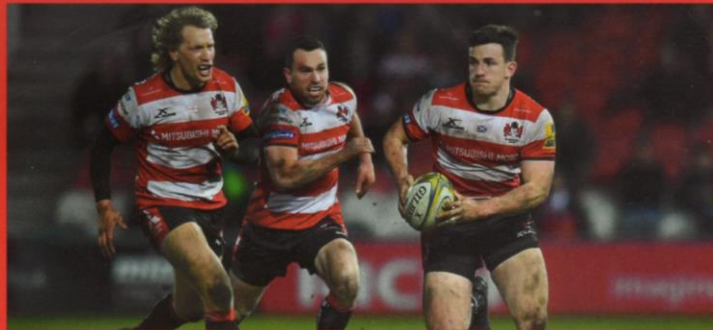
Good afternoon and welcome back to Kingsholm for our latest Aviva Premiership fixture and, it's a rare thing in these days of televised games, a 3pm kick-off on a Saturday afternoon!

Incredibly, there are just six rounds of Premiership action left and, as we approach the business end of the season, a look at the league table shows that it's shaping up to be one of the most competitive seasons yet.

It's very much looking like four from five at the top in terms of the play-off places. But who's to say that a team won't make a late surge and upset the apple cart?

We're very much in the mix in terms of a top six finish with just five points separating sixth to ninth places, and Bristol's victory over Bath last Sunday means that the fight to avoid relegation is certainly still very much alive.

It shows how competitive the Aviva Premiership is, and also how small the margins are at this level. We can look back on so many games this



season where a winning position has ultimately finished in a draw or a narrow defeat. Things could have been looking very different at this point.

However, we're still pushing hard and a win this afternoon would be very welcome although Harlequins are a quality side and are also vying for a top six spot. We'll need to be at our best to prevail.

Away from the club scene, like so many of you, I was a fascinated spectator last Sunday when England played Italy. You'll know exactly what I'm referring to - Italy's tactics around the ruck area.

Depending on your point of view, it was either a genius game plan

or an attempt to bring the game into disrepute! It certainly provoked a huge amount of debate during and after the match and no little confusion!

After the game, it became clear that it's not a new tactic, it's something that's been used before. But it also shows how much detail the analysts and coaches go into when preparing for a game. They're looking for the slightest possible thing which could make the difference and, credit to the Italian set-up, they certainly got England thinking.

Enjoy today's game!

Martin

GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME BACK TO KINGSHOLM

Two weeks ago against Saracens, we bounced back from the disappointment of Welford Road and produced a really disciplined performance against the Champions. With Saracens coming back at us in the second half, we kept our composure and made some very good decisions about when to run and when to kick which allowed us to close out the game.

It was an excellent performance against a top quality team and the atmosphere under the lights, especially in the second half, was as good as it's been all season and a big factor in us winning the game.

Last Sunday, at the Ricoh Arena, was a very different type of game. We pushed Wasps right up until the last minute and were very disappointed not to have got anything out of the game at the final whistle.

As we had done against Saracens, we controlled territory and possession in the first half but couldn't convert that pressure into points. We scored three very good tries but didn't quite deliver the type of 80 minute performance that's required to beat the top teams away from home.

Today will be another big test against Harlequins who, like us, are still targeting a top 6 spot. A couple of big calls didn't go our way in the last few minutes of the recent game at Twickenham but those type of decisions tend to even themselves out across the course of the season.



We know the threats that Harlequins can pose and, with some of their international players available for selection this weekend, we will have to perform at our best to win the game.

Talking of internationals, I thought last weekend was another high quality round of Six Nations matches. Scotland backed up their strong start to the Championship with an impressive win against Wales, Ireland used their superior fitness and game management to beat France but the main talking point was the Italian defensive tactics in their defeat to England.

Lots of teams have tried it over the past couple of seasons but I thought it was very interesting that all the Super Rugby coaches and referees met before the start of this year's competition and agreed that they wouldn't use the tactic. It's tough to play against, even tougher to referee and I think that World Rugby will have to review that particular law.

Enjoy today's game and please give all the players, staff and supporters of Harlequins a very warm welcome.

David



The Women in Cherry and White march onwards



Formed ahead of the 2014/15 season, as a desire to promote and encourage women to take up rugby, a combination of Gloucester Rugby and Hartpury College started a team that would see the Cherry and White hoops become as synonymous in the Women's game as it is in the Men's.

The team had an inauspicious start as, at the first training session, they did not have enough players to field a Sevens squad. However, it managed to attract new players into the sport including some local girls with previous rugby experience. Thankfully Hartpur College's fantastic Women's rugby team had a few players they could loan.

Working tirelessly to create a core group of players that worked, the women in Cherry and White were able to do a lap of honour around Kingsholm with the National Junior Cup at the end of their first season.

The 15/16 season opened with a refreshed team. There were new faces both on and off the pitch. There were many that joined from the college with varying degrees of rugby knowledge. There were also others that had joined the squad from Wales, this includes current Welsh international Rebecca De Filippo and Scotland U20 cap Kristin Jones.



The season was a mixed bag as it soon turned to be a three way battle for bonus points between Gloucester-Hartpur Women, Lichfield II and Worcester Ladies II. The matches were tight and often frustrating as little mistakes pushed Gloucester-Hartpur into second place. In the Intermediate Cup the ladies in Cherry and White lost out on another final as a last minute score gave them a taste of defeat by local rivals Cheltenham Tigers.

However, the Gloucester-Hartpur Women have been undefeated in all competitions so far this season and have notched up an impressive +637 points difference in the league and in winning the quarter-final round in the 16/17 Intermediate Cup.

On Tuesday 28th February Gloucester-Hartpur found out the amazing news that they will be one of ten teams to enter the

newly formed RFU Women's Super Rugby competition which kicks off in September. The aim is to drive the standards of the game, both domestically and at the elite level, and encourage more women and girls to play the sport, a true testament to strength and determination.

Although so far it has been a great season for Gloucester-Hartpur Women, they are under no illusion that second placed Worcester Ladies II are going to give them an easy match today, especially as their Head Coach has already given them warning of the revenge that will be sought after the huge 55-3 loss to the women in Cherry and White during the reverse fixture back in December.

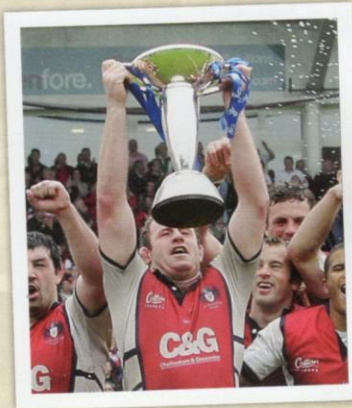
So stay and watch what will be a cracker of a game!

James Hoddy

General Secretary Gloucester-Hartpur Women

GLOUCESTER RUGBY
HERITAGE

www.gloucesterrugbyheritage.org.uk



PETER BUXTON

Pete Buxton was a hugely popular back rower, usually to be found on the blind-side, although he could and often did serve time in the second-row.

He had a long career with Gloucester stretching from 2002 to 2013. In that time he made 270 appearances, of which 176 were in the Premiership. He has made the most appearances (42) of any Gloucester player in the Heineken Cup.

"Bucko" was born in Cheltenham on 21 August 1978, and attended Cleeve School. He represented Cheltenham before playing one season in Australia for Brothers RFC in Queensland, then returning to this country to play for Moseley in August 1997. Unfortunately in his first training session he broke his leg.

After this setback, between 1997 and 2000, he made 67 appearances for Moseley, before being snapped up by Newport. It was whilst with the Welsh club that Pete was added

GREAT PLAYERS FROM THE GLOUCESTER BACK ROW: NOUGHTIES AND TEENS

to the England 'A' squad, but his international career did not go further than that.

Buxton came to Kingsholm for the start of the 2002-03 season, his first appearance being off the bench against Newcastle on 15 September. He quickly established himself, and played as a replacement in the ill-fated Premiership final against Wasps that season.

In May 2004 he came off the England bench in a non-cap game against the Barbarians. The England starting line-up included Marcel Garvey, Mark Cornwell, Alex Brown and Andy Hazell, with Chris Fortey also on the bench.

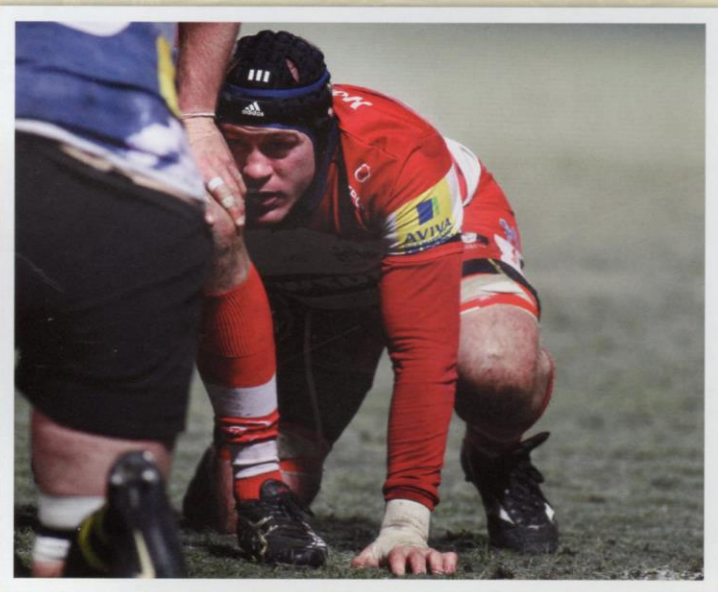
He captained the team to victory in the thrilling European Challenge Cup final against London Irish

in 2006. Gloucester made the Premiership final in 2007, but were well beaten by Leicester. To add insult to injury, Pete broke his hand early in the game. This was tragic, as he had been named in the England squad to tour South Africa that summer.

He was club captain for the 2007-08 season, when Gloucester yet again had the distinction of topping the Premiership but were pipped by Leicester, 26-25 in the play-off semi-final.

Pete was in another oh-so-near campaign in 2010, when a member of the team that lost the LV= Cup Final to Northampton 24-30 at Worcester.

Bucko was awarded a testimonial season in 2011-12. At the end of the 2012-13 season he signed for





Bristol, but soon changed his mind to stay at Kingsholm as Academy Manager, a post he retained until 2015.

It was nice to see him playing for the Gloucester Rugby Heroes team against South Africa Legends a few weeks ago, and getting around the field just like the old days.



AKAPUSI QERA

Akapusi Qera was a devastating open-side flanker or sometimes number 8. He was a deadly tackler and penetrative attacker in the traditional Fijian style. His all action displays made him a firm Shed favourite. In all he made 138 appearances for the Cherry and Whites, scoring 33 tries. He was a

longstanding captain of Fiji, and up until 2016 had won 52 caps.

'Q' was born on 24 April 1984 in Suva, Fiji. His father had played international cricket for Fiji. His early rugby was played at home for Coastal Stallions, where his promise was rewarded by appearances for Fiji Under 21's.

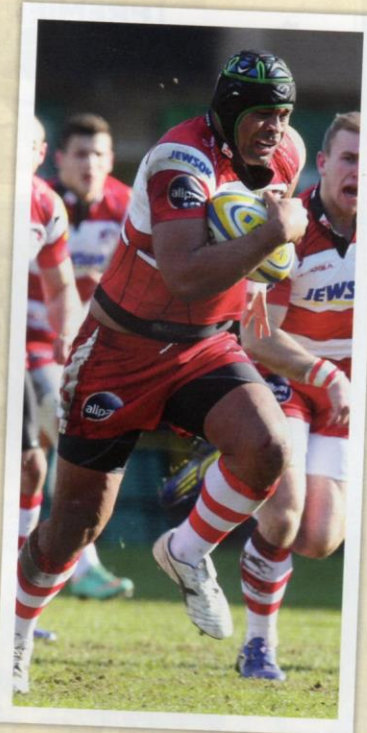
In season 2006-07, he played for Pertemps Bees (now known as Birmingham/Solihull) in National Division 1, scoring 16 tries, the most by a forward at that level. He attracted the attention of Gloucester and he signed a contract to start the following season at Kingsholm.

His first appearance was off the bench on 13 October 2007 against Sale, and he made his first start in the following game against London Irish. He had a very successful season, scoring a hat-trick of tries against Leeds, and was a regular member of the team which topped the Premiership, only to lose at home to Leicester in the play-off semi-final. So outstanding was he that he was a nominated player for the Premiership Player of the Year Award. He finished third to Ollie Barkley and James Simpson-Daniel.

Before the start of the following season Qera had to have surgery on his anterior cruciate ligament, and did not play until March, when in his first game he scored a try against Bath. He also played in the losing EDF Energy Cup Final against Cardiff.

Fully restored for the 2009-10 season, Akapusi scored another hat-trick against Newport Gwent Dragons in the Heineken Cup. That season Gloucester made it to the final of the LV= Cup, and he was in the team, along with Peter Buxton that lost to Northampton. In acknowledgement of his fine form that season, he was elected Player of the Season, by the Gloucester supporters.

In March 2011 he was an important member of the side which finally took that extra step to win some

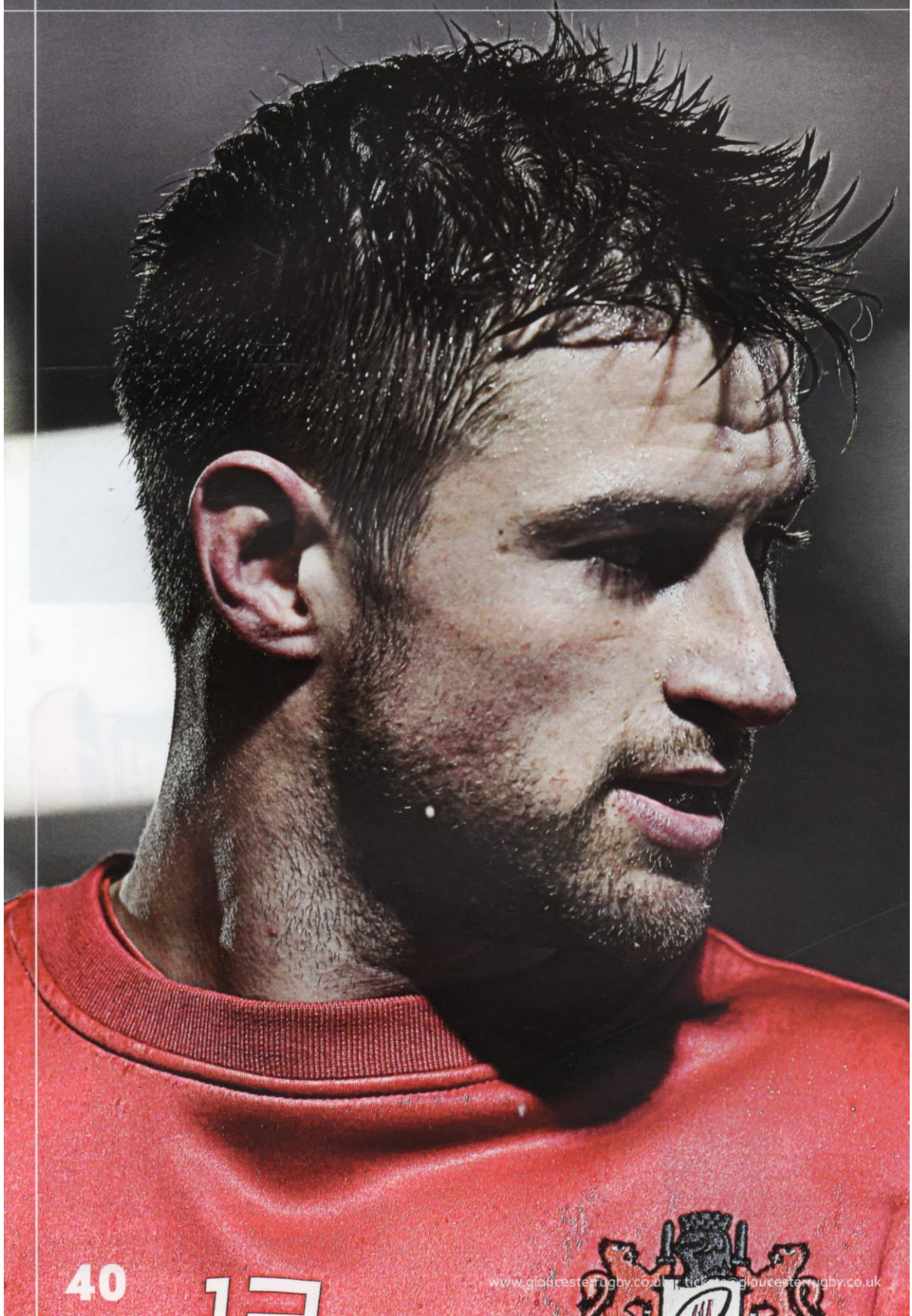


silverware, when Gloucester defeated Newcastle 34-7 in the final of the LV= Cup, with Akapusi contributing a try.

At the start of the 2013-14 season Qera found it difficult to gain much game time, and in mid-season, with the agreement of the club he signed for Toulouse. By the start of the 2014-15 season he had moved on to Perpignan, where he signed a new two year deal in October 2015.

For Fiji, Akapusi has had a long outstanding career. His first cap was against Samoa in 2005. Further caps followed and in 2007 he was voted Fiji's Player of the Season. He made four appearances in the 2007 World Cup, and scored the opening try in a famous 38-34 win over Wales. Fiji made it through the from the group stage, but lost to South Africa in the quarter-final.

He played in all four of Fiji's games in the 2011 World Cup, and in the 2015 competition he was captain. In fact, he is still the leader of his country, the last game being against England in November 2016.



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HIGHS & LOWS

For all the high and lows, rugby can be a cruel sport at times. One member of the Gloucester Rugby squad, Henry Trinder, knows full well the ups and downs that the game can throw up.

The hugely talented centre is back in action after a lengthy lay-off and, although he is taking every week as it comes, he admits he is a far wiser individual following what has been a very difficult time in his career.

After hour upon hour, day upon day, of gruelling rehab behind the scenes at Hartpury, Trinder is delighted to be simply back on the park with his friends.

"It's fantastic to be back and involved and, obviously, I'm in a different mix when I'm playing in games. You're watching your clips and looking at your performances rather than just helping the guys out.



"It's definitely a different task getting up and ready for the game and looking at your roles, your preparation and the recovery. But it's a good feeling to be back involved, getting out there and being able to help the boys out each weekend."

Trinder's attitude and mental positivity has been admirable for all of those that have been in his company over the recent seasons, but he admits that the experience has been a very tough one, but he is wiser for it.

"The last few years have been very tough. It's a privilege to be in the environment as a professional player, but if you're not playing, it's not what you want to do.

"You feel like a spare part most of the time, especially with the injuries that I've suffered, where you're out for so long. It is tough, and you don't want to see anyone get injured especially when I had them back to back.

"I definitely had my low days, and with the injuries being out of my control, it comes with the territory because you do get a few knocks. At first I didn't know how to deal with it, it's mentally draining more than anything, because physically it's the pain. But mentally you are always questioning whether you want to go through it all again.

"When I did my second knee, it was a case of 'Oh no, do I really want to go through this again?' At the minute, I'm in a really good head space, and I'm really delighted to be back and playing and I really hope this continues."

So much time on the sidelines has seen him first to offer advice to his team mates in analysis and he is quick to offer his thanks to those around him to carry him to where he is now.

"My family have always been great, my wife and my parents have always been there. My wife, when I've been bed or sofa bound has

been amazing looking after me, picking up the pieces and looking after the house.

"I've been so lucky to have had that to fall back on, and the medical staff as well have been superb and they have pretty much done everything that they can to get me fit, and been by my side the whole time. It's exactly what I need.

"It's tough to see how I would have done it without those guys, you can put in the hard work of course, but if you haven't got those guys there directing you and looking after everything else so you can concentrate on the rehab and the rugby, it would have been much harder."

The light at the end of the tunnel was a bright one for the 27-year old, and a try-scoring return to Kingsholm against Dragons last month, saw a very happy celebration, which surely saw everyone reading this celebrating that little bit harder.





"TO PICK UP THE TRY AGAINST DRAGONS AT KINGSHOLM WAS A REALLY SPECIAL MOMENT FOR ME. IT WAS THE ICING ON THE CAKE. IT'S WHAT YOU VISUALISE WHEN YOU'RE COMING BACK."

Trinder admits however, the nerves that were there before his return to the field, and is refusing to set himself long term goals on the pitch.

"It's still in the back of your mind, when you come back off a long injury, and when you've had as many knocks as me, the aim is to get through the game. But, obviously, what happened at the end of the Dragons game, with Elliott Creed is a horrible reminder of the risks.

"I play rugby because that's what I wanted to do when I was growing up, and there is a choice when you're injured whether or not you want to come back or not and the drive for me was to keep playing the game that I love, and to play at Kingsholm, where I've played all of my rugby, at a place that I have grown up watching.

"To pick up the try against Dragons at Kingsholm was a really special moment for me. It was the icing on the cake. It's what you visualise when you're coming back - scoring that try that wins the game or swings the momentum, it was a special day for me.

"Bath away was also a good one, being the first game back, and it is the part of a really special journey that I've been on, and now I'm

starting to really enjoy my game and long may it continue, especially if we pick up some wins too."

With the Cherry and Whites nearing the business end of the season, the squad is strengthened further with Trinder's re-emergence to the matchday 23, and the centre is excited to be part of a strong final chapter, with plenty still to play for.

"The last two weeks have been a bit of a rollercoaster, we really did want to come away from Wasps with a win, but looking back at it, there is a lot of frustration as we put ourselves in a really good position

to push them, but we slipped off late on and they got the game.

"We're in the middle of the table, where it is very compact, and we really do have that target of the Top Six for the end of the season. Nothing is lost, and it's not something we think is unachievable, and every game will be a cup final, especially today against Harlequins, and against Bristol next time out.

"If we can find the extra few percent in our performances, be it getting off the floor, or making that last tackle, then that could make a real difference at the end of the day."





KINGSHOLM NEWS

with

Bob Fenton

Oh the frustration of being a Gloucester fan! A couple of weeks ago we were completely annihilated at Leicester, then we produce an amazing display against Saracens, then Wasps...

Saracens first. What a game that was, one of the ones to look back on and say 'I was there'. We didn't set the world on fire going forward, this was a game that epitomised the saying 'defence wins matches'. Whatever Jonny Bell had been doing with the team in the aftermath of Leicester paid off handsomely. I don't think I have seen such a ferocious defensive effort for some time - we absolutely dominated Saracens.

Sure, they were short of a few top players, but let's not use that to diminish our achievement - it was a glimpse of everything we are capable of. Hence the frustration over not being able to do that every week!

The moment of the match for me was in the second half, Ben Morgan - from nowhere - suddenly smashed his way through the midfield from deep in our half. This seemed to completely galvanise Gloucester and surprise Saracens. That and Jeremy Thrush's try... From my vantage point I couldn't see why the Saracens players were so vexed - it looked like our own Mr T had read the play and simply stole the ball.

Not so, replays show that Willi



Heinz had tapped it forward so maybe they had a right to feel aggrieved. Taking the conversion quickly ruled out any call to the TMO, and we were away and ahead. Happy days. It was about time that the rub of the green ran in our direction after it going against us for so much of this season.

After the game poor old Wayne Barnes seemed to be getting his ear bent by a few frustrated Sarries players. Love him or hate him, Wayne is not afraid of making a decision on the field and sticking to it. Despite the exhortations of the men in black he wasn't going to the TMO, he was happy and that's that.

I like that kind of refereeing - make the decision and crack on. Some decisions will go for you, others will go against. Just how it always used to be.

He does like his arm signals too, does our Wayne. At one point I think we got penalised for pushing pineapples and shaking trees (younger readers, ask your parents...) and a bit later on it looked like he was offering 4 - 1 on Charlie Sharples scoring in the corner as he went from 80's disco dancer to Cheltenham racecourse tic-tac man!

Last week then... I can't say too

much about it really – the day job had me negotiating howling winds scampering up the M6 in a fully laden transit van. Updates from a mate at the ground gave some comfort when I stopped just before half time, but by the time I crossed the border, it was all over. The Gloucester rollercoaster having plummeted against Leicester, soared back skywards against Saracens was heading back down into the depths.

To be fair there are not too many teams taking points from their visits to the Ricoh Arena at the moment. The back line that Wasps have put together makes for scary reading – and that was without Elliot Daly being around too. So obviously disappointed, but honestly – not all that surprised.

One bright spot from last weekend though was a successful tournament for our Wheelchair Rugby team. One of the great parts of my job is to look after that sponsorship, and it's always a pleasure to get along to see them.

I have to say the decision by our Paralympic funding body to cut the funding to the GB Wheelchair Rugby side is a travesty, the sport was a stand-out success at London



2012 and we've seen it grow over the last few years. To leave them in this predicament while throwing bundles of cash at other, more fashionable sports is manifestly unfair. You'll find all sorts of places online where you can sign up and pledge your support for the sport – make sure you do it when you get home.

So back to today – Harlequins. Like us they are in the mixer in the middle of the table, you don't need a blanket to throw over the teams

from about 6th to 10th, a tea towel would do the job for you. They suffered a reverse at home against Leicester last week and like us will be scrapping for points.

So that makes this game – and the next run of Premiership games against Bristol, Newcastle and Sale – all the more important for us if we are going to get away from the basement and into the European places.

The win against Saracens shows that if we play at our peak we can beat anyone, we have to do that consistently and there is no better time than now to get there. Win today and away against Bristol in a few weeks' time and we'll be on the road.

Newcastle have found form so any kind of a point there could be crucial before we welcome the lovely Mr Diamond and Sale Sharks to town. But we're in a run of four very winnable games, four games that we really have to target if we want to get into the big boys cup next season.

So, come on then, let's get into the men from the Stoop, let's push on up the table, let's have something to smile about again.



RANDALL on RUGBY



IT'S A WHILE AGO NOW SINCE TOBACCO ADVERTISING WAS ALLOWED IN THE MEDIA, BUT TIME WAS - AND I'M OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER IT - THAT WE WERE ADVISED THAT "HAPPINESS.....WAS A CIGAR CALLED HAMLET."

I'm reliably informed that not one of the current Gloucester squad is a smoker, which is no surprise, so defining joy in a rugby player in 2017 must be done in other ways. Success on the field with your club and country is measurable, as is your bank balance and if the rumour mill is right we may not be far off seeing the first £10,000 a week Premiership player next season.

Some factors, though, are more personal, and for Ben Morgan having a long injury free run, and being able to live with his wife and young son Finn in an area he knows well is currently adding that intangible element which is hard to buy off the peg.



"Finn has given me a different perspective on life and rugby" Ben said. "It's good for me to be settled after signing the new contract and to make sure the family are settled too, especially as I have roots around here.

"In any job you want to have security, and I can understand the boys who haven't got things sorted out yet being a bit nervous. I'm 28 now so this is my peak time, and of course I would be happier if we were top of the league and I was getting England recognition but on the whole I cannot complain."

Morgan has had no real fitness issues since the 2015 World Cup, when he won the last of his 31

England caps. His 17 Gloucester appearances this season have included 11 that have lasted a full 80 minutes, and he knows it'll need a series of strong performances to persuade England coach Eddie Jones to turn to him again.

"Eddie was in touch earlier in the season but I understand how he's a bit pre-occupied with the Six Nations at the moment" Morgan added.

"I know I've got to focus on playing consistently well for Gloucester, and if the team are doing well that can only help. For the team and I, that's not going to happen without a lot of hard work, and I personally feel I'm getting back to where I





need to be. We've both had some disappointments but as a club I think we are going in the right direction."

Morgan grins as I mention the arrival of Carl Fearn next season. He rates him as a powerful physical presence who should suit the Gloucester forward unit really well - but that's for the future.

More immediately, Harlequins arrive here today with - if you park the Anglo Welsh Cup - only one meaningful away win all season. Moreover, they are weakened by

England calls and the absence of Chris Robshaw because of his shoulder injury, and Morgan says the former England captain leaves big boots to fill.

"Playing with him for England you appreciate what he does" Morgan went on. "He's working from the first whistle to the last, and is a leader by his actions as well as being a calming influence.

"I know 'Quins won at Bristol a few weeks back but someone told me that was their only away win in the Premiership. If they are finding it

difficult that's something we have to use to our advantage without underrating them. They will have good strength in depth even with their internationals missing."

Leicester's win at the Stoop eight days ago enhanced their chances of a top six finish, and with home wins elsewhere last weekend it looks increasingly likely that only one Champions Cup space may be available for the clutch of teams in mid table. Both sides on show today are in that group and while Gloucester scored three tries in their defeat at Wasps, they conceded five - two of them late on to halt a trend Morgan had seen improve in the last two months.

"At the start of the season we were losing the last quarter of games, and in the Premiership you have to take your chances" to build a lead. If you make a few errors that lead can slip away. It was important we improved that and for half a dozen games until the one at Leicester we did, and I still say if we back ourselves we are there or thereabouts. Our injury list is coming down, we have more players training, and a better test in the week makes you a better team at the weekend."

It is worth pointing out that since Gloucester last finished in the top six, the lowest total for a team finishing in the last Champions Cup place is 57 points. Gloucester currently have 34, with six matches left. Without giving him that detail, I asked Ben how many of the remaining games Gloucester might need to win. His response was swift.

"Look too far ahead and you hit a banana skin and slip up. Put a run together and you can climb the table very quickly so if we could get six victories we'd be well in."

That, Ben, is probably the only way to look at it.





VIEW FROM THE

GLOUCESTER Citizen

Gloucester are their own worst enemies, according to captain Willi Heinz. The Kiwi scrum-half felt that the Cherry and Whites had league leaders Wasps rattled at the Ricoh Arena on Sunday but they were left to rue not making the most of their good spells as they slipped to a 35-22 defeat.

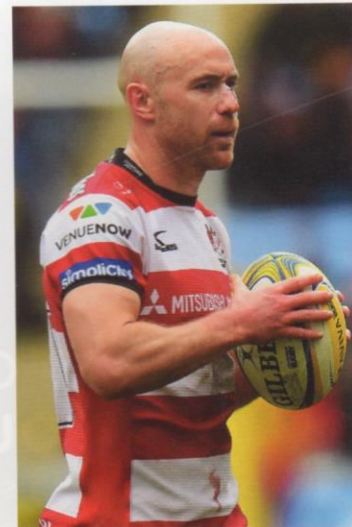
The scoreline was a harsh reflection on the game with Wasps scoring two tries in the final six minutes to make it 15 successive wins for them on their home turf with Heinz admitting Gloucester were taught some lessons.

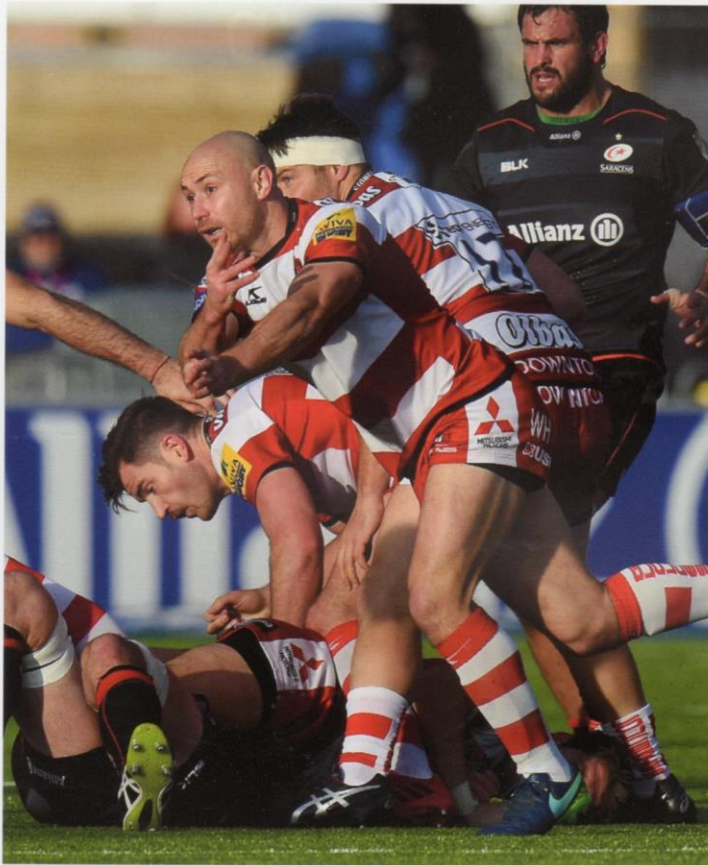
He said: "We played some good rugby and did take some good

opportunities but when we were presented with some more in the back half of that first half and again in the second half we couldn't quite convert. Probably the difference between the two sides is that Wasps were very clinical, particularly towards the back end of the game so there were some lessons for us.

"That try they scored on full-time hurt a bit but we're our own worst enemies at times and we were just thinking in the changing room 'what went wrong?'

"I don't think it was any one thing, it's just a few things that let them into the game when they had a strong foothold, whether it be just





"We had the top team in the competition rattled for good parts of that game, particularly in the first half."

things, but equally we've got to be better in the areas we fell short at."

The defeat leaves Gloucester ninth in the table but they will be looking to get their Champions Cup qualification hopes back on track at Kingsholm on Saturday when they meet Harlequins, who are just three points ahead of them in seventh after their loss at home to Leicester on Friday.

Making no attempt to play down the significance of the game, Heinz said:

"It's massive. They've come back off the top of a tough loss at home so they'll be hurting and we'll be hurting so we'll have a couple of wounded dogs going at it and we're looking forward to it."

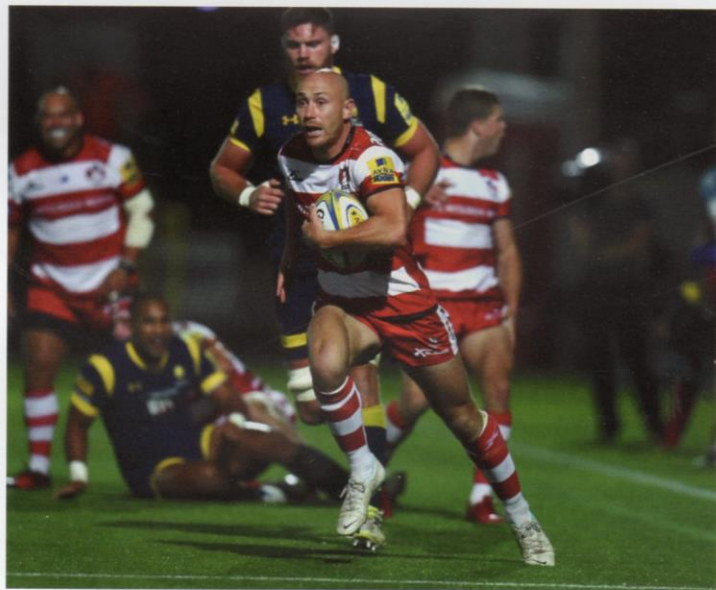
not quite there on the kick-chase and they get in behind us, and then the dangerous ball players are at the line and pulling the strings and that puts us under pressure, whether it's maul defence or our inaccuracy sometimes at set piece.

"We've just got to dust ourselves down and be better next week."

Heinz was able to take some positives from Gloucester's performance though, coming off the back of their superb win over defending champions Saracens.

"We had the top team in the competition rattled for good parts of that game, particularly in the first half, and for us it's just about really persevering when we're in those moments, being really good, being really accurate because that's probably the difference between the sides," he said.

"We knocked over Sarries last week, we put Wasps under pressure so we've got to look at those good



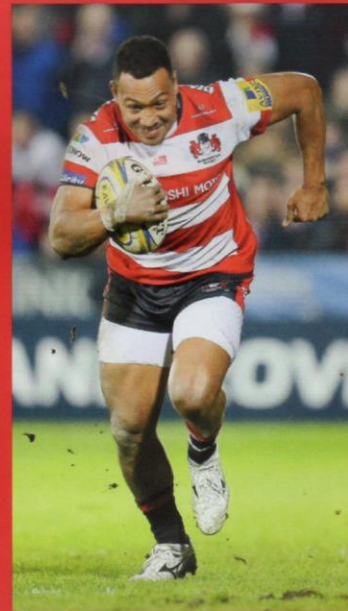
ACTION REPLAY || FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY || KINGSHOLM || ATT 11,889

Gloucester Rugby 31

Tries: Marshall, Thrush, Hibbard. Cons: Burns (2). Pens: Burns (3), Twelvetrees.

Saracens 23

Tries: Brits, Fraser. Cons: Lozowski (2). Pens: Bosch, Lozowski (2).



After the disappointment of the week before at Leicester, Gloucester's squad took a long hard look at themselves in the week leading up to the Saracens game and, on the night, delivered a quality performance to down the champions.

Based on the events at Welford Road, few outside of Gloucester gave the Cherry and Whites much hope of defeating the Men in Black but the Cherry and Whites defied the odds.

Right from the first whistle, it was apparent that there was an edge and physicality to Gloucester's game that boded well for the 80 minutes to follow.



- 15 Marshall 1T
- 14 Sharples ▼
- 13 Scott
- 12 Twelvetrees 1P
- 11 Halaifonua
- 10 Burns 3P 2C ▼
- 9 Heinz (c)
- 1 Hohnneck ▼
- 2 Hibbard 1T
- 3 Ma'afu ▼
- 4 Savage
- 5 Thrush 1T ▼
- 6 Moriarty ▼
- 7 Rowan
- 8 Morgan

Replacements used:
Matu'u, Thomas,
Doran-Jones ■,
Galarza, Ludlow,
Hook

- 15 Maitland ▼
- 14 Ashton
- 13 Bosch 1P
- 12 Barritt (c)
- 11 Ellery
- 10 Lozowski 2C 2P ▼
- 9 Wigglesworth ▼
- 1 M Vunipola ▼
- 2 Brits 1T ▼
- 3 Figallo ▼
- 4 Rhodes
- 5 Hamilton ▼
- 6 Fraser 1T
- 7 Burger ▼
- 8 Wray

Replacements used:
Saunders, Barrington,
Du Plessis, Flanagan,
Brown, Spencer,
Malins, Gallagher

Gloucester began well and earned an early 3-0 lead from a penalty from Billy Burns, but Saracens hit straight back and the clinical efficiency with which they created a try for Schalk Brits sent shivers down the spine. Marcelo Bosch followed it up with a long-range penalty.

Lesser teams may have crumbled but Gloucester dusted themselves off and took the game to the visitors, relentless pressure eventually resulting in a try for Tom Marshall, his first for the club.

Burns and Alex Lozowski then swapped penalties, but the former had the final word of the half as he knocked over a tricky one to give Gloucester a 16-13 lead at half time.

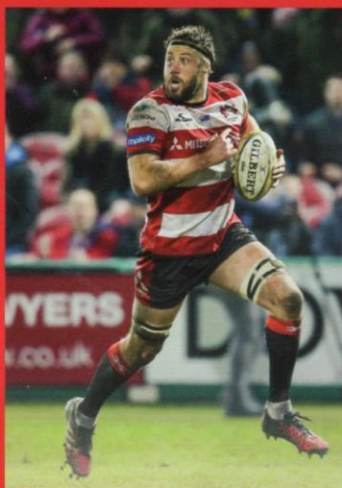
The anticipated fightback duly came after the resumption and it took some brave defence to keep Saracens at bay. And it was slightly against the run of play, and with a slight stroke of luck, that Gloucester increased their lead, Jeremy Thrush snaffling a loose ball and galloping home.



23-13 was a decent advantage, but there was still plenty of time for Saracens to hit back. Lozowski added a penalty to narrow the gap before the visitors really applied the squeeze. Paul Doran-Jones was yellow carded and Will Fraser was then driven over by his pack to level the scores.

The momentum was now well and truly with the visitors and most bookmakers would have been receiving bets on a Saracens win.

However, Gloucester dug deep, focused on playing the game in the Saracens half and reaped the rewards. Billy Twelvetrees put Gloucester back in the lead with a well-struck penalty before Richard Hibbard finished off a catch and drive to send Kingsholm into raptures.



This time, there was no comeback from the Men in Black and Gloucester's supporters were able to celebrate an impressive win.

APPLYING THE LAW WITH



Official Legal Partner

Wayne Barnes got all the key decisions on the day spot on. He was proved right when he referred the David Halaifonua 'try' upstairs and handled the injury to Motu Matu'u superbly.



DEFENCE COACH JONNY BELL

"Last week, we didn't fire a shot, we didn't really turn up for whatever reason. I can't emphasise how much it means to the players. We know how passionate the supporters are and last week hurt incredibly for everybody.

"We knew Sarries were on the back of a defeat and they weren't going to sit back. The boys showed huge character and we got the response we knew was there."

ACTION REPLAY || SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY || RICOH ARENA || ATT 15,691

Wasps

Tries: Gopperth (3), Le Roux, Wade. Conversions: Gopperth (2). Penalties: Gopperth (2).

35

Gloucester Rugby

Tries: Hook, Halaifonua, Scott. Conversions: Twelvetrees(2). Penalties: Twelvetrees

22



their scoring opportunities as they pounced for 10 points in those final four minutes of the half to swing the game decisively their way.

Credit to Gloucester, they threw everything at Wasps in a bid to get back into the game, drawing level on 44 minutes and then to within three points after 72 minutes. But every time Gloucester got within striking range, Wasps immediately hit back and the final scoreline had a distinctly flattering look for the home side.

The performance was a real contrast to the last away display, away at Leicester. Gloucester looked up for it from the off and deservedly took an early lead through a Billy Twelvetrees penalty.

However, Wasps were quickly on the front foot and took a slightly fortuitous lead as they actually lost possession, but regained it immediately when James Hook palmed the ball backwards but only into Wasps hands. Jimmy Gopperth finished well in the corner, somehow grounding despite being driven into touch by Tom Marshall, the TMO confirming the score.

Gloucester settled into the game and hit back on 20 minutes. A powerful carry off the base of the scrum by Ben Morgan set up the position, but it was lovely hands by the backs that put James Hook over.

It was at this point that the momentum turned. Gloucester were dominant and came so close

Another frustrating day at the office for Gloucester who were so competitive for long periods against the 'galacticos' of English club rugby, yet came away from the Ricoh Arena empty-handed.

Indeed such was Gloucester's dominance in the first half, for example, that many neutrals would have been left scratching their heads at how the Cherry and Whites were trailing 15-10 at the half-time whistle.

With 36 minutes played, the home crowd were a nervy lot and the PA announcer had to crank up the volume to maximum as he screamed out "Allez, allez, allez" in an attempt to wake things up.

But Wasps then made Gloucester pay dearly for not making more of



- 15 Beale
- 14 Wade 1T
- 13 Gopperth 2P 2C 3T
- 12 Eastmond ▼
- 11 Le Roux 1T ▼
- 10 Cipriani
- 9 Simpson ▼
- 1 Mullan ▼
- 2 Taylor ▼
- 3 Cooper-Woodley ▼
- 4 Symons
- 5 Gaskell ▼
- 6 Johnson
- 7 Young ▼
- 8 Rieder

Replacements used:
Festuccia, McIntyre,
Moore, Rowlands,
Willis, Robson, Leiua,
Bassett



- 15 Marshall
- 14 Sharples
- 13 Scott 1T
- 12 Twelvetrees 2C 1P
- 11 Halaifonua 1T
- 10 Hook 1T ▼
- 9 Heinz ▼
- 1 Hohnneck ▼
- 2 Hibbard ▼
- 3 Doran-Jones ▼
- 4 Savage ▼
- 5 Thrush
- 6 Ludlow ▼
- 7 Rowan
- 8 Morgan

Replacements used:
Matu'u, Orr, Afoa,
Galarza, Kalamafoni,
Braley, Trinder



to a second try but were denied by desperate defence. Twelvetrees was also off target with a tricky penalty attempt. Another score would have taken Gloucester clear.

But a Gopperth penalty, followed up by his second try and a conversion as half-time approached saw a 5-10 deficit for the home side become a 15-10 lead.

If Gloucester were rocked, they didn't show it. More patient build-up play creating an opening for David Halaifonua and the winger shrugged off Christian Wade to level the scores.

Wasps responded at once, a Rieder break followed by a Cipriani grubber and Thomas Young's

offload put Willie Le Roux over. Gopperth extended the lead with a penalty on the hour.

Gloucester hung in there though, and got back into the game on 72 minutes as Matt Scott finished well after good work from Tom Marshall. It was 25-22 to Wasps with eight minutes to play.

But any hopes of a thrilling comeback were quashed at once. A needless penalty gave Wasps A1 field position, their catch and drive was well executed and Gopperth claimed his hat-trick.

Christian Wade's last gasp try rubbed salt into the wounds and left Gloucester pondering about what might have been.



APPLYING THE LAW WITH



Official Legal Partner

On the day, referee Andrew Jackson got most things right and allowed the game to flow well.

Frustratingly for Gloucester, both marginal TMO calls went against them but the referee made the right call in checking them on the big screen.



DIRECTOR OF RUGBY: **DAVID HUMPHREYS**

"I thought for large parts of the game we were very good and we played some great rugby, with some great tries.

"There was so much good in the game but to beat the best teams you have to cut down the errors."



TEAM LINE-UPS

SATURDAY 4 MARCH
AVIVA PREMIERSHIP
RUGBY | ROUND 17



GLOUCESTER RUGBY				MATCH OFFICIALS				HARLEQUINS				
T	P	C	D					T	P	C	D	
				TOM MARSHALL	15	FULLBACK	15	AARON MORRIS				
				CHARLIE SHARPLES	14	RIGHT WING	14	MARLAND YARDE				
				MATT SCOTT	13	OUTSIDE CENTRE	13	JOE MARCHANT				
				BILLY TWELVETREES	12	INSIDE CENTRE	12	MATT HOPPER				
				DAVID HALAIFONUA	11	LEFT WING	11	ALOFA ALOFA				
				BILLY BURNS	10	FLY-HALF	10	RUARIDH JACKSON				
				WILLI HEINZ (C)	9	SCRUM HALF	9	CHARLIE MULCHRONE				
				YANN THOMAS	1	LOOSEHEAD PROP	1	MARK LAMBERT				
				RICHARD HIBBARD	2	HOKKER	2	ROB BUCHANAN				
				JOHN AFOA	3	TIGHTHEAD PROP	3	ADAM JONES				
				MARIANO GALARZA	4	LOCK	4	GEORGE MERRICK				
				JEREMY THRUSH	5	LOCK	5	CHARLIE MATTHEWS				
				LEWIS LUDLOW	6	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	6	JAMES CHISHOLM				
				JACOB ROWAN	7	OPENSIDE FLANKER	7	DAVE WARD (C)				
				BEN MORGAN	8	NUMBER 8	8	MAT LUAMANU				
REPLACEMENTS				REPLACEMENTS								
				MOTU MATU'U	16		16	JOE GRAY				
				JOSH HOHNECK	17		17	OWEN EVANS				
				PAUL DORAN-JONES	18		18	MATT SHIELDS				
				TOM SAVAGE	19		19	STAN SOUTH				
				SIONE KALAMAFONI	20		20	GEORGE NAOUPU				
				CALLUM BRALEY	21		21	LUC JONES				
				JAMES HOOK	22		22	TIM SWIEL				
				HENRY TRINDER	23		23	CHARLIE WALKER				