

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME || 2016/17 SEASON || GLOUCESTER RUGBY

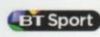


GLOUCESTER RUGBY

VERSUS

SALE SHARKS

ISSUE 17 || AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY
SATURDAY 15 APRIL 2017 || £3



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

GREIG LAIDLAW



GOOD AFTERNOON, AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM FOR TODAY'S GAME WITH SALE SHARKS.

We are now well and truly in the business end of the season, and we're at a point where results mean everything if we are to achieve anything in our final fixtures. And starting today we are very eager as a squad to get back to winning ways.

We've had a fortnight that has perhaps epitomised where we are as a team, we are putting ourselves in the position to win games, but not quite getting over the line.

We are so close to securing big wins on the road against good teams only to fall just short.

We can look at decisions and moments in games as to why we are ending up on the losing side, but we need to control what we can and close out these tight games. Unfortunately, there have been so many 'if only' moments this season.

Ahead of this weekend's game, however we can look forward with an air of excitement. We've had a big week of training and face a Sale team that have grown in confidence since the turn of the year. It has all the ingredients for a great game.

Last time out at home, we put in a very clinical performance against a quality Cardiff Blues side, and our second half performance gave us a lot to be buoyed about. It was a complete performance for forty minutes.



I was on Sky Sports duty at the game, but was kicking every ball and making every tackle in my head! I thought the boys put in such a brilliant performance, and the Kingsholm crowd was loving every minute.

The domestic season is not over in terms of our ambitions. We have made it difficult and it is perhaps out of our hands. But we know the task in hand and we have to do all that we can to put ourselves in the position to capitalise on any errors around us.

Personally, my recovery is going well, the medical staff at Gloucester have been working me hard, and I'm making good progress and I hope to be able to pull on this shirt again before the end of the season.

This club has been so good to me, and it has been a true honour to represent the Cherry and Whites, and I am so motivated to get the chance to wear the jersey again.

Enjoy the game

Greig



MARTIN ST QUINTON

Good afternoon and welcome to Kingsholm for the penultimate time in the Aviva Premiership this season.

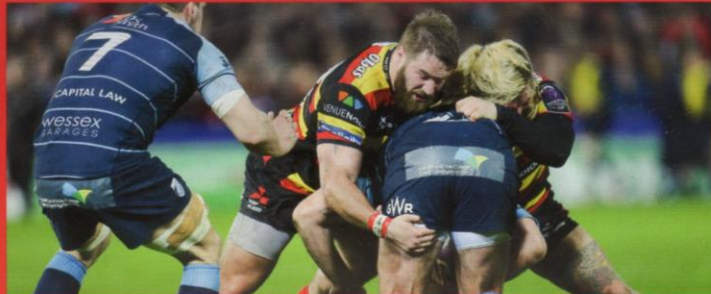
I'm still pinching myself slightly that we're this close to the end of the season. Events of the past few months have come so thick and fast that time seems to have flown by.

I said in my last set of programme notes that I was really looking forward to the Cardiff Blues, that I was hoping for a passionate Anglo-Welsh encounter.

And the game itself certainly didn't disappoint. The first half almost resembled a boxing match, with both teams landing some telling blows without actually being able to deliver a knockout punch.

The lead swapped hands several times and the game was nip and tuck until the final quarter, until I'm delighted to say that we really started to turn on the style and eventually ran out comfortable winners.

It's just a shame that our reward



for topping the group and winning the quarter-final is a semi-final on the road. It seems a bizarre way to organise the knockout stages, but we all know the rules at the start of the season and just have to play the hand we're dealt with.

Following on from that Cardiff win, we were all delighted to finally be able to confirm the appointment of Johan Ackermann as our new Head Coach for next season.

I think we've got absolutely the right man for the job, and I think that the reaction from all quarters, supporters and media alike, in South Africa very much endorses our decision.

The Lions themselves are obviously very disappointed to lose

Johan, but they were incredibly professional with the way they went about things and we're very grateful for that.

On to today, and we're expecting a very tough encounter against Sale this afternoon. We edged the first encounter between the two sides very early in the season and they will obviously be looking to put the record straight.

However, getting back to winning ways is incredibly important for us and going into next week's European semi-final off the back of a win would be a huge confidence booster.

Enjoy the game.

Martin

Good afternoon and a very warm welcome to everyone to Kingsholm this afternoon including, of course, Steve Diamond and all the players, staff and supporters from Sale Sharks.

As always seems to be the case when I sit down to write these programme notes, it has been another eventful couple of weeks in the life of Gloucester Rugby.

After a comprehensive win against the Cardiff Blues in the European Rugby Challenge Cup, we were delighted to confirm the appointment of Johan Ackermann as our new Head Coach.

Johan was our number one choice from very early in the recruitment process and will be a great addition to the coaching team going into the new season. He has transformed his Lions team over the past 3 seasons and led them to the Super Rugby final last year while playing a fast and attractive brand of rugby.

We played some very positive rugby in the Cardiff match and for the neutral, particularly in a topsy-turvy first half, it must have been a very entertaining game to watch.

The biggest difference from other games throughout the season was that we took almost every try scoring opportunity that we created and I was delighted with not only the ambition we showed in attack, but also how clinical we were in finishing off those opportunities in the Cardiff 22. It was a big step up in the level of performance from the Bristol game and we've now got the challenge of a trip to La Rochelle for the semi-final next weekend.

Unfortunately, we couldn't back up the Cardiff performance at Newcastle last weekend with another win. Once again we were winning going into the last minute of the game, but came out on the wrong side of another refereeing decision and lost with the last kick of the match.



Unlike the Cardiff game, we didn't get much opportunity in attack but we showed real resolve and character in defending for long periods which ultimately should have won us the game. Another losing bonus point was no consolation in another match we should have won.

With only three games to go in the Premiership, it's no time to feel sorry for ourselves and Sale, who are six points behind us in the Aviva Premiership table, will have taken a lot of confidence from a bonus point win last weekend.

Over the last couple of seasons, this fixture with Sale has tended to be very tight and closely fought but the Kingsholm factor has lifted us to victory. This afternoon will require another big performance from the players and the supporters!

To finish, anyone who watched Gloucester United beat a very strong and experienced Exeter A team at Kingsholm on Monday night will have gone away excited about the next generation of players coming through from the Academy.

At the final whistle there were seven U19 players on the pitch when they scored two late tries to qualify for the semi-final of the A league. It was an experience they certainly won't forget and huge credit is due to Richard Whiffin, Neil McCarthy and all the support staff for their work with the A team throughout the season, and it would be fantastic to see many of you back here to support them against Wasps on 24th April.

Enjoy the game.

David

GLOUCESTER RUGBY
HERITAGEwww.gloucesterrugbyheritage.org.ukGLOUCESTER
PLAYERS WHO
WENT NORTH

ON THURSDAY 29 AUGUST 1895, AT THE GEORGE HOTEL IN HUDDERSFIELD, REPRESENTATIVES OF MOST OF THE MAJOR NORTHERN RUGBY CLUBS, AGREED TO BREAK AWAY FROM THE RUGBY UNION TO FORM THE NORTHERN RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION AND "PLEDGE THEMSELVES TO PUSH FORWARD, WITHOUT DELAY ITS ESTABLISHMENT ON THE PRINCIPLE OF PAYMENT FOR BONA-FIDE BROKEN-TIME ONLY."

Rugby had become very popular in the north of England, particularly in Lancashire and Yorkshire, with working class people. Communities quickly associated themselves with their local club, and crowds became quite large.

The problem for the working class player was that, particularly if picked for an away game, it became difficult to get time off work in order to travel. Naturally enough the clubs wished to field their strongest fifteen every week, and so wanted to compensate their players for money lost by missing or leaving work early.

However, in the south of England, where the game was perceived to be played by the middle classes, the attitude was extremely hostile to any concept of payments to players. The conflict between the Rugby Union dominated by middle class officials, and the northern clubs had been rumbling on for years, but culminated, in 1894, with the suspension of Leigh, Salford and Wigan for professionalism, making a split inevitable.

At first the rules for payments were

very strict. Players had to be in employment and payments could only be for compensation for time lost from work. There are examples of players being refused any payment if they were not currently in work. However, by 1903 Leeds were paying their players thirty shillings (£1.50) per match.

Although over most of the midlands and southern England rugby tended to be played by middle class players, it was certainly a different story in South Wales and Gloucestershire.

Consequently it was not long before Northern Union club scouts were on the look-out for recruits. Dicky Goddard, a plumber and fly-half who played for Gloucester from 1896-1902, and his half-back partner George Hall (1897-1902), one of seven brothers who all played for Gloucester, both signed for Hull. Goddard played 95 times for Hull, scoring six tries and kicking 33 goals, and George Hall made 85 appearances and scored 12 tries.

Jim Cook (1897-1902) a Blacksmith's labourer, was signed by Hull Kingston Rovers but only made five appearances, whilst his brother

George Cook (1907-08) played for Oldham from 1908 to 1914 making 113 appearances, scoring 30 tries and kicking six goals.

But perhaps the most interesting story of Gloucester's connection to the Northern Union at this time relates to the trio of Willie Hall, Alfie Wood and Dave Holland who all played for Oldham.

Alfie Wood first played for Bristol before joining Gloucester in 1905. He was acknowledged to be a brilliant full-back. He won three England caps in 1908, having just left Gloucester to play for Cheltenham, and in records of internationals he is listed as "Gloucester and Cheltenham".



In 1908 a Northern Union international between England and New Zealand All Golds, was played at Cheltenham just after Alfie had won his third cap. He watched the game and was spotted by an Oldham scout who signed him up for the Northern Union club. He played for Oldham until 1920, making 244 appearances and kicking 342 goals. He won two England and four Great Britain caps.

Willie Hall, a three-quarter and half-back, another of the Hall brothers, played for Gloucester from 1908-13, and then signed for Oldham. He played on until 1925 making 240 appearances for the club, scored 53 tries, and kicked two goals. He gained two Rugby League England caps and four for Great Britain



Dave Holland, was employed as a driller in an iron-works. He was a back-row forward, who represented Gloucester from 1906-10. In 1910 he played in the victorious Gloucestershire team which won the County Championship beating Yorkshire 23-0 in the final. He later played for Devon Albion, whilst employed as a skilled labourer in Devonport docks. He played for Oldham from 1913-21, appearing 81 times, and scoring 19 tries. He also won four caps for Great Britain.



Willie Hall, Alfie Wood and Dave Holland were all selected for the Northern Union Great Britain team which toured Australia in 1914. The first two tests were played in quick succession, each side winning one. The Great Britain team had picked up a number of injuries as a result of those games, and requested that the third and deciding test scheduled for 4 July be postponed until the end of August, by which time the team would have returned from the New Zealand leg of the tour. The Australians would not agree, so the game went ahead on the original date.

The test match which then took place is accepted as one of the greatest in Rugby League history. It is called the "Rorke's Drift Test". This recalled the battle of Rorke's Drift in the Zulu War of 1879, when British troops held a post in the face of overwhelming odds.

Alfie Wood was brought into the team, despite having a badly broken nose. Willie Hall and Dave Holland were also picked. Soon after kick-off Great Britain's Frank Williams injured his knee, limping on until half-time when he had to retire.

Despite this Great Britain led 9-0 at the break, having scored a try and Alfie Wood kicking three goals.

However, in the second half another British player was forced to go off through injury, reducing the team to 11 players. Incredibly they scored another try, and Wood converted. Willie Hall was then concussed and taken off. It was now ten men against 13, and it was inevitable that Australia would strike back. They scored two tries, but that was all, and heroic defence was rewarded by a famous 14-6 win.

After WW1, Jack Stephens, a centre or half-back made 93 appearances for Gloucester, and scored 45 tries between 1926 and 1929. He was yet another player who went north to Oldham and played 186 times from 1929-35, scoring 79 tries and kicking 37 goals.

In more recent times, Ken "Tug" Wilson played two seasons for the Cherry and Whites (1961-63). He gained one England cap in 1963 against France, and almost at once signed for, of course, Oldham. He made no fewer than 316 appearances for the club from 1963 to 1974, scored 25 tries and kicked six goals.

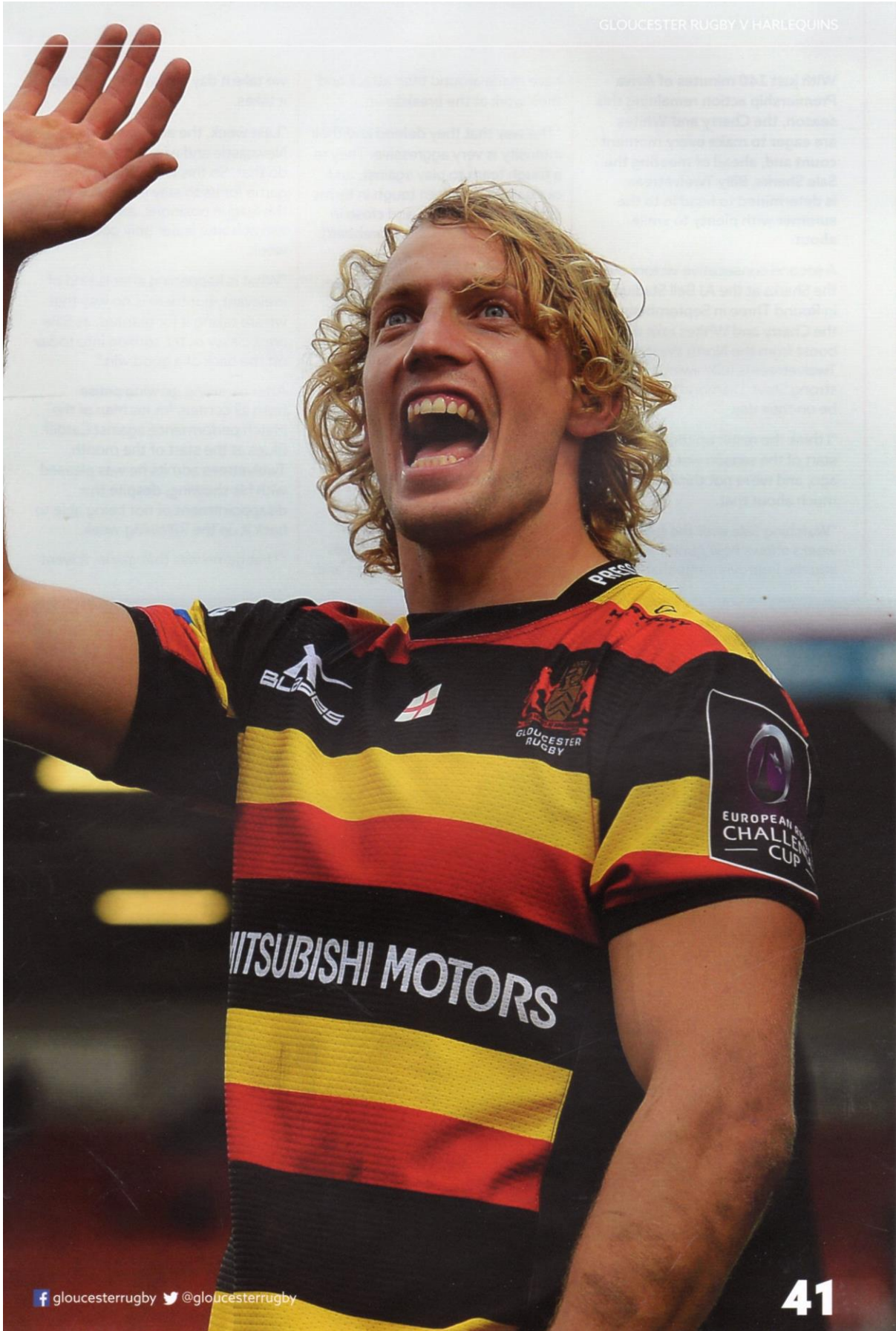
Ken was a very good boxer and was RAF Heavyweight champion, and his many wins included a points win over the very well-known Billy Walker. He also fought another great of the sport, losing on points to the then amateur Bob Foster, the American who went on to become Heavyweight Champion of the World.

When "Tug" retired his final two games for Oldham were against Australia and then, to bring the curtain down, there was a testimonial game against a full England side. The programme notes for that final game said, "When the England team come here on Tuesday it will be the chance for the fans to show their appreciation for all he has done for Oldham in particular and Rugby League in general."

ENDING ON A HIGH



40



With just 240 minutes of Aviva Premiership action remaining this season, the Cherry and Whites are eager to make every moment count and, ahead of meeting the Sale Sharks, Billy Twelvetrees is determined to head in to the summer with plenty to smile about.

A second consecutive victory over the Sharks at the AJ Bell Stadium in Round Three in September saw the Cherry and Whites take a big boost from the North West, but Twelvetrees is fully aware how strong Steve Diamond's men can be on their day.

"I think the result up there at the start of the season was a long time ago, and we're not thinking too much about that.

"Watching Sale over the last few weeks shows how good they are, and the improvements that they

have made around their attack and their work at the breakdown.

"The way that they defend and their intensity is very aggressive. They're a tough team to play against, and our games are often tough in terms of breakdown threat, and close in terms of points on the scoreboard.

"The result last weekend for us means that we will be wanting to put in a good performance on the pitch, in order to bounce back."

With the chances to impress now decreasing as the weeks tick by towards the season's conclusion, Twelvetrees knows how important it is for Gloucester to focus on the short term, with plenty of big games on the horizon in the coming weeks.

"I think we have to be game by game, and you always have goals and aims in terms of the team, and

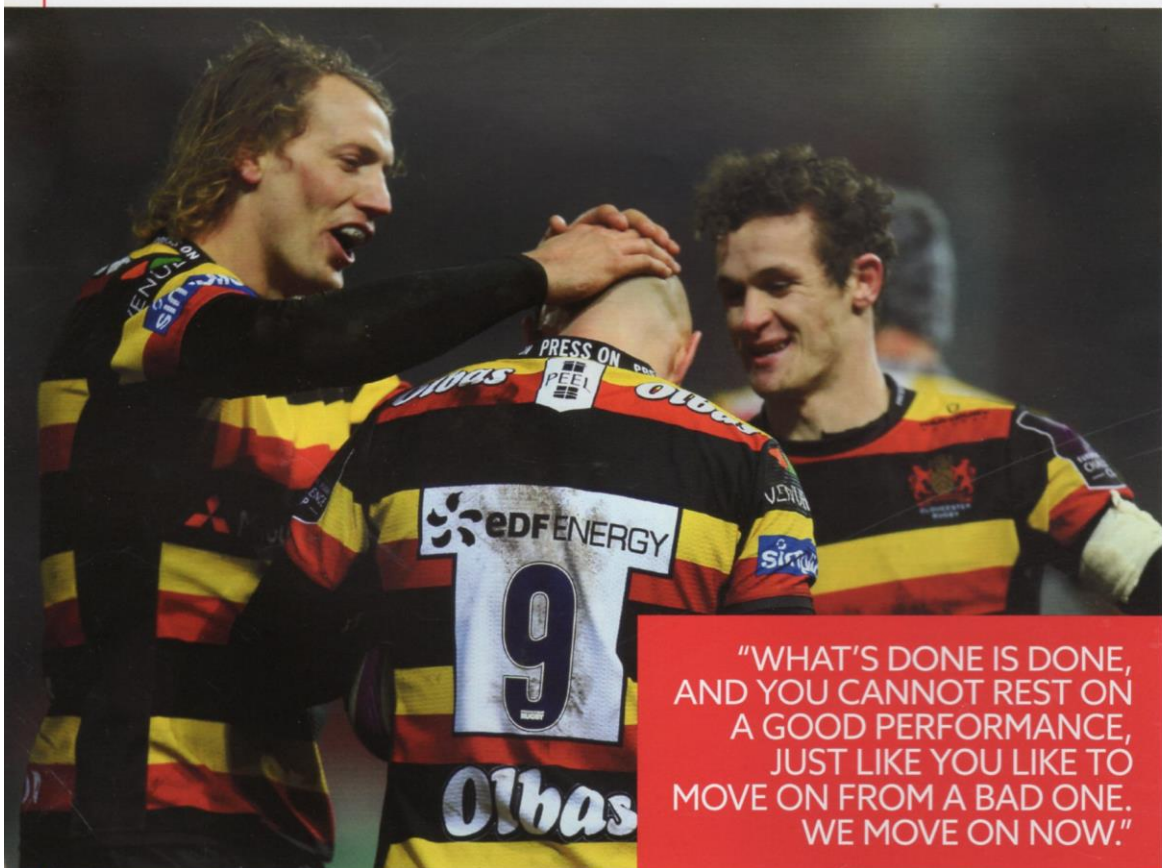
we take it day by day and the steps it takes.

"Last week, the aim was to go to Newcastle and win, but we failed to do that. So this week it is a massive game for us to stay in touch with the league positions, and to get a win at home is our only goal this week.

"What is happening after is kind of irrelevant, but there is no way that we are taking it for granted, as Sale are a classy outfit coming into today off the back of a good win."

After receiving glowing praise from all corners for his Man of the Match performance against Cardiff Blues at the start of the month, Twelvetrees admits he was pleased with his showing, despite the disappointment of not being able to back it up the following week.

"That game was that game, it went



**"WHAT'S DONE IS DONE,
AND YOU CANNOT REST ON
A GOOD PERFORMANCE,
JUST LIKE YOU LIKE TO
MOVE ON FROM A BAD ONE.
WE MOVE ON NOW."**



well for the team, and we scored some good tries as a unit.

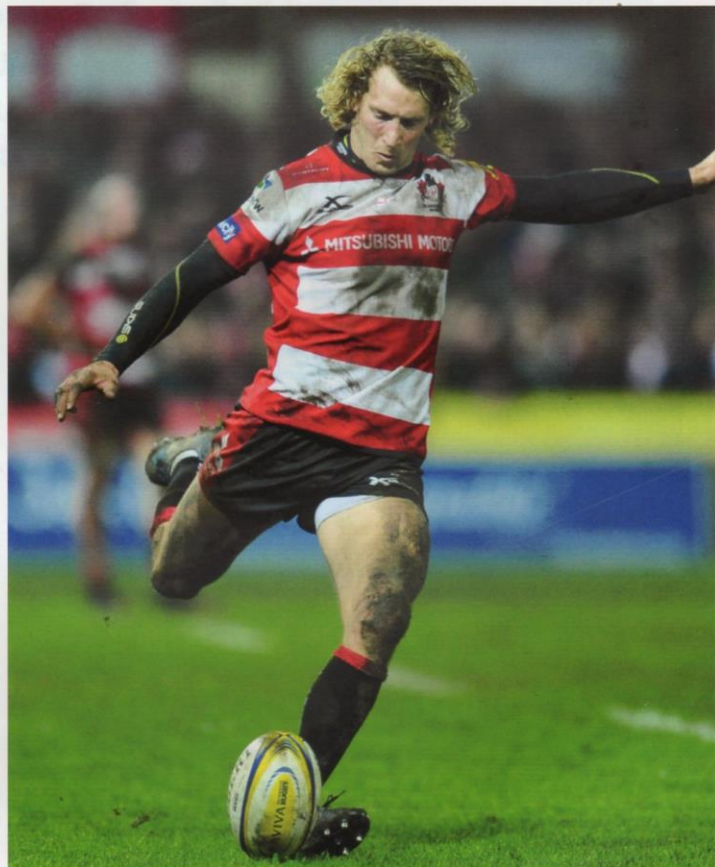
"Friday was a step back perhaps and that highlights the ebbs and flows of rugby, so that's why we take it day by day.

"What's done is done, and you cannot rest on a good performance, just like you like to move on from a bad one. We move on now."

With a big few weeks on the calendar for the Cherry and Whites, and a trip to La Rochelle next weekend, Twelvetrees insists that focus on that particular game will begin on Monday morning, and the squad are playing for this moment, rather than having their mind on the trip to the Atlantic Coast.

"I think that externally it can be looked at like that, but it truly is just this weekend, I think that we are pretty naïve to think further than that.

"Sale is a big game for us, and the focus is four points on home soil, and anything more than that is a bonus. What has happened this season means we will not be getting too excited!"





KINGSHOLM NEWS with *Bob Fenton*

It's been another eventful fortnight, hasn't it? We followed up a great performance against Cardiff - three tries in ten minutes, when was the last time that happened - with a defeat snatched from the jaws of victory at Newcastle.

Getting that far north on a workday is beyond possible, unless you have your own helicopter or something, so it was one 'watched' on twitter and a sketchy web link. Referee Luke Pearce would have been well advised to stay away from social media after that game, he copped a lot of flack for his yellow card for Lloyd Evans and that last minute penalty.

David Humphreys' described the end of that game as '... disappointing...' He's not wrong, but really it was symptomatic of much of our season - so close, but no cigar. It's hugely frustrating as a supporter, one can only imagine what it must be like from his seat. After having a solid scrum all game, we get pinged in the most decisive one of the whole match. But that's the way it goes, and as the cliché says, the league table does not lie.

I guess it's lucky that the Aviva Premiership have not (yet) adopted that fad that Australian broadcasters are doing when they attach a heart monitor to the coach to monitor his stress during the game. Presumably there is a school of thought that it is in some way entertaining or informative, but I



don't get it. Anyway, I think if David had to undergo that torture the numbers on the dial wouldn't go high enough.

So today then, the penultimate home game of the season. Or is it... There is still, albeit it hanging by the thinnest of thin threads, a chance that we could end up in the end of season play off thing for the European Cup competition. The combination of results that would be necessary to get us into that position are so complicated, it would need a super computer to work it out. Aligning the planets would be easier, but chance there is.

The result that made it possible was Wasps defeating Northampton in the very last seconds of the match. And the scorer - some bloke called Paul Doran-Jones who was sent on a week's holiday to Coventry for some reason. This was clearly a coaching masterstroke, sending him there to grab the win that lowered that very slim rope. And there's no irony in the fact that one Gloucester boy got to feel the elation of a last second win, was there.

All that astronomy and number crunching will come to naught if we don't do the business today against Sale. I think everyone is slightly surprised at their position in the

league this year, things just haven't gone their way. And we know how that feels!

They have a good squad, with the exceptional talent of Denny Solomona in their ranks. That guy is a beast, a proper beast of a player. He's made the switch from league to union look easy, a bit like another winger who hopped over the fence between the codes to play for Sale. What was his name...? Jason someone or another. It must make Steve Diamond's team talk easy - 'Crash the ball up a bit and then throw it to Denny...' That should do it.

That is, of course, a bit disrespectful to the other Sale players, and I don't really mean it. But you have to admit that as a tactic it's pretty spot on!

But the league is not the only chance of us progressing, is it? The demolition of Cardiff earned us a semi-final in the Challenge Cup back at La Rochelle. It has to be said that snowballs visiting the deepest recesses of hell have been given better odds than some are giving us at the moment. You know what, though? We have more than a puncher's chance.



Yes, they are going fantastically well in the Top 14, way beyond anything anyone ever expected. Much of their success must be laid firmly at the feet of our old boy Patrice Collazo who has them playing a tight style of rugby that works for them. That and the fact that he is such a scary lump that players are probably terrified of having to face him after a defeat.

Patrice was / is one of my favourite Gloucester players of all time, a proper hard man of the front row. With him in the pack our opposition knew that they were in for a tough time. And now he's doing marvellously well as a coach.

We should go there with confidence though, it's one game and we have nothing to lose. We know we can beat them and we know that the result really will determine the season. And the sponsors will be on our side too - can you imagine how many people will be in Murrayfield for an all French final?

Of course, the other big news of the last two weeks has been the signing of Jan Akkerman as Head Coach. To be fair, as a guitar player in an ancient prog rock band I would have thought his coaching days were behind him, but he could give us some Focus. (Health warning, that poor attempt at a joke has a sell by date of about 1982!)

Seriously, Johan Akkerman has all the right credentials that you would look for in a coach and I look forward to seeing him here at Kingsholm next season.



RANDALL on RUGBY



IF WE AREN'T THERE ALREADY, THE SEASON IS APPROACHING CALCULATOR TIME.

In the round ball game (and I won't mention it again) 50 points is generally seen as the benchmark to avoid relegation. In the Aviva Premiership table, 50 points looks to be the minimum Gloucester will need to extend the season into the Champions Cup play offs so, needless to say, a win over Sale today is essential. A bonus point would be gleefully celebrated too.

The net result of last weekend's defeat at Newcastle, disappointing as it was to lose late on for what seems the umpteenth time this season, was ground gained on Harlequins. Northampton would have been almost out of sight if they had won at Wasps, but two points were still handy despite Matt Mullan's late try and they play Harlequins in their last game. The Falcons' last two matches are against Worcester and Bristol, so they cannot be discounted either, even if they return pointless from Leicester today. It's all brewing up to a tense finish.

Most of Charlie Sharples' work at Kingston Park was chasing kicks rather than ball in hand, and I was moderately surprised to find that his tally of Premiership tries for the season (9) is the highest of his career. Even Sharples himself wasn't aware of it.

"In other years I have scored a lot more tries but they have come in



the Anglo Welsh Cup or European games," Sharples said.

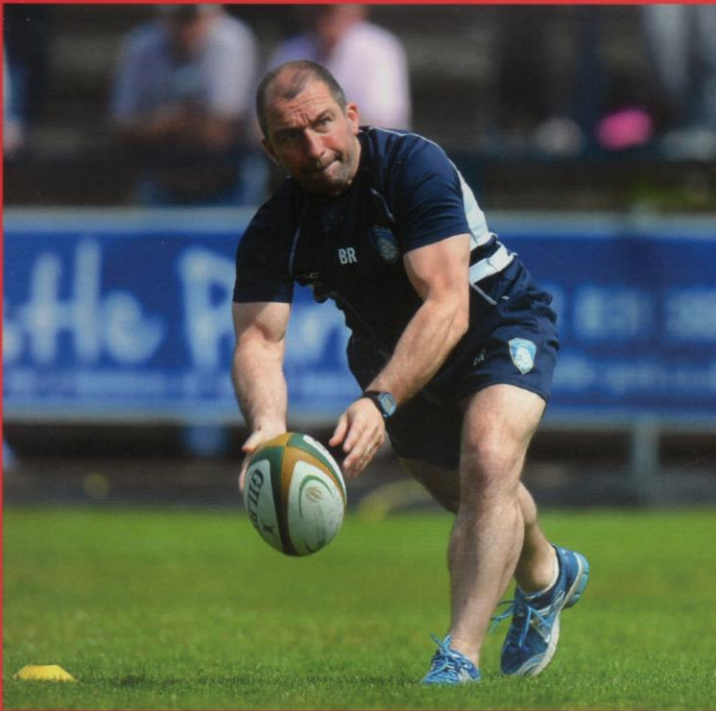
"I haven't scored a try in Europe yet and I didn't play in the Anglo Welsh competition so I can't complain and it's a bonus out of the season, along with the club awarding me a testimonial. You look at the other people who have had them - Olivier Azam, Alex Brown, Peter Buxton, Mark Cornwell, Andy Deacon, Andy Hazell, James Simpson Daniel, Nick Wood - and it's quite a list, all people who have shown a lot of loyalty to the club."

Sharples is still only 27, and at the start of next season he'll add Johan Ackermann's name to the list of Head Coaches he has worked under. He retains both pace and

acceleration, and his all-round game has been pieced together like a jigsaw since Bryan Redpath unleashed his potential.

"Brush (Redpath) was a big influence because you are impressionable in your late teens and early twenties," Sharples added.

"When I was coming through, Gloucester was a top four or top six team, and we had a big squad with a lot of international backs. People like James Simpson Daniel and Iain Balshaw would go through video clips with me after games, and we've had wings with different styles too like Lesley Vainikolo and Tom Voyce.



"Mike Tindall wasn't a wing but influential too when I played alongside him before he was backs coach for a year under Nigel Davies. The goal has always been to learn something from everyone."

Now married with a young daughter, Sharples strikes you as a balanced and rounded individual. This season he has taken on the role of being Gloucester's representative on the RPA Board - which is chaired by Northampton lock Christian Day - and he's a vice patron of the Pied Piper Charity. Both eat into his time away from playing, but he recognises the importance of creating a network of contacts for later life. For now though, there is only one focus.

"It's been a tough season but there are still a lot of motivating factors" Charlie added.

"We want to play in the Champions Cup, and ideally that would be from finishing in the top six. If that doesn't happen and we find ourselves in the play-offs again through our league position or the Challenge Cup then we'll address that when it comes round."

"Going to La Rochelle next week we know what's in store having played them four times in the last two years, and won three of those games. It's hostile and they're playing very well at the moment so we'll have to get it right on the day, but today is all about Sale.

"I'm not sure what their goals are but they are below us in the table and they are a team we need to beat by trying to play the Gloucester way, and when we get it right it does bring results.

"We've shown how good we can be, but it's disappointing how we have thrown points away by losing games in the last ten minutes. What we need is some consistency between now and the end of the season."



VIEW FROM THE

Citizen **GLOUCESTER**

Gloucester acted swiftly and decisively in appointing a new Head Coach following Laurie Fisher's departure and Johan Ackermann looks to be a good fit.

The Cherry and Whites soon decided that the South African was the man they wanted to take them forward with Director of Rugby David Humphreys leading the search, aided by Chief Executive Stephen Vaughan and Martin St Quinton.

Full credit has to go to them for landing a coach of Ackermann's calibre, showing how attractive Gloucester are as a club in the rugby world, and making sure the

process did not drag on for too long.

A young, hungry coach with a highly impressive CV, Ackermann looks like the ideal man to transform Gloucester from also-rans in the Premiership to genuine title challengers.

That is exactly what he has done with the Lions in South Africa, taking over a side that was not even playing Super Rugby in 2013 and had finished in the bottom three in each of their past 11 seasons in the southern hemisphere's premier competition.

After finishes of 12th and eighth in their first two seasons back in the competition, Ackermann led them





is someone that the Gloucester fans will be able to relate to and his durability as a player which saw him win the last of his 13 South Africa caps at the age of 37 demonstrates his commitment to the cause.

The only concern may be Ackermann's lack of Premiership experience but the best coaches in the world can adapt quickly and his short spell at Northampton as a player could help in that regard.

The building blocks are in place with Gloucester in a healthy position off the field and the proposed investment from France-based billionaire Mohamed Altrad.

Wins against Wasps, Saracens and La Rochelle have shown what the team is capable of on their day and there is an abundance of quality in the squad with the likes of former All Black stars like John Afoa and Jeremy Thrush, Wales star Ross Moriarty and England internationals Ben Morgan, Billy Twelvetrees and May.

to the final last season and they have started the current season from five wins in six games.

There has been a sense of under-achievement for a number of seasons at Kingsholm with Gloucester finishing ninth three times and eighth once in four of the past five years, and currently occupying eighth again this season.

But, if Ackermann can work his magic the way he has done with the Lions, there are reasons to be optimistic that they can return to the glory days of the noughties when they topped the Premiership three times in six years.

It appears as though Ackermann favours an expansive game, with the Lions playing with pace and width, which should suit the likes of Jonny May, Charlie Sharples and Tom Marshall and be a hit with the Gloucester fans.

At the Lions press conference announcing his departure, Ackermann also spoke of his special

bond with the players and his ability to build strong relationships should get the best out of the Gloucester stars.

An imposing and physical figure during his playing days, Ackermann

All it requires is a Head Coach to give them the right direction and there is no reason why Gloucester can't challenge near the top of the table and dine at Europe's top table in the Champions Cup again.



ACTION REPLAY || SATURDAY 1 APRIL || KINGSHOLM || ATT 11,206

Gloucester Rugby 46

Tries: Moriarty, Marshall 2, May, Atkinson, Purdy Cons: Burns, Twelvetrees 4 Pens: Burns, Twelvetrees

Cardiff Blues 26

Tries: Cuthbert 2 Cons: Shingler 2 Pens: Shingler 3 Drop-goal: Anscombe



There have been many classic Anglo-Welsh encounters at Kingsholm over the years and, with the benefit of hindsight, this match will be a worthy addition to the list.

A pulsating European Rugby Challenge Cup encounter ebbed and flowed, with neither team quite able to stretch away until Gloucester hit a purple patch in the second half and clinched a hard-fought win.

The victory secured Gloucester a second trip of the season to La Rochelle next Saturday evening, and the Cherry and Whites will be hoping for a more fruitful expedition than the last one, when they lost by 42 points to 13.



- 15 Marshall 2T
- 14 Sharples ▼
- 13 Trinder
- 12 Twelvetrees 1P 4C
- 11 May 1T
- 10 Burns 1P 1C ▼
- 9 Heinz (C) ▼
- 1 McAllister ▼
- 2 Hibbard ▼
- 3 Hohneck ▼
- 4 Savage ▼
- 5 Thrush
- 6 Moriarty 1T
- 7 Rowan ▼
- 8 Morgan

Replacements used:
Matu'u, Thomas,
Afoa, Galarza,
Ludlow, Braley,
Atkinson 1T, Purdy 1T

- 15 Morgan ▼
- 14 Cuthbert 2T
- 13 Lee-Lo
- 12 Shingler 2C 3P
- 11 Scully ▼
- 10 Anscombe 1D
- 9 Williams ▼
- 1 Jenins ▼
- 2 Dacey ▼
- 3 Filise ▼
- 4 Earle
- 5 Hoeata ▼
- 6 Warburton
- 7 Navidi
- 8 Williams ▼

Replacements used:
Rees, Domachowski,
Assiratti, Cook,
Bennett, Williams,
Halaholo, Summerhill

Under the Kingsholm floodlights against the Blues, both teams started out at a fair old pace and didn't seem to let up before the half time whistle blew. Cardiff started and finished the half the better, with Gloucester enjoying a good spell in between.

In fact, the Blues struck first in impressive style. Powerful ball carrying from the likes of Filise and Williams had Gloucester on the back foot before Alex Cuthbert showed good strength to power over.

Gloucester weren't fazed, far from it, and were back on terms quickly. Richard Hibbard made a telling half-break and as the ball squirmed out of his grasp, Ross Moriarty



gathered to shrug off Matthew Morgan and touch down.

The kickers added two penalties apiece, before Billy Twelvetrees produced a superb break before putting in Tom Marshall for Gloucester's second. That was swiftly matched by a second for Cuthbert after Josh Hohnneck was yellow carded and a drop goal from Gareth Anscombe gave the Blues a narrow 20-23 half time lead.

Cardiff kept up the momentum after the resumption and Cuthbert was close to a third, before Shingler kicked his third penalty.

Trailing 20-26, things looked bleak for Gloucester but the Cherry and Whites promptly turned the game on its head.

The catalyst was a handling error from the previously excellent Matthew Morgan which eventually resulted in a Twelvetrees cross-kick to Jonny May for a try which the former converted for a 27-26 lead.

Tom Marshall then finished off a break from Willi Heinz, and this was followed by a moment of class from Mark Atkinson who dived over for the fifth.

Despite a couple of moments of resistance, Cardiff's spirit was pretty much broken and it came as no surprise when Callum Braley floated a lovely long pass out to Henry Purdy to shrug off a tackler and score the final try in a 46-26 win.

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Referee Pascal Gauzere's biggest challenge on the night was probably keeping up with play, such was the end to end nature of the match!

On the whole though, the group of officials let the game flow and handled the difficult decisions well.



DIRECTOR OF RUGBY DAVID HUMPHREYS

"It would have been easy for us with what's happened here to panic and let our heads go down but I thought again the players responded well," said Humphreys.

"You saw the enthusiasm with which they played and the way they celebrated the tries, those small victories in the last 20, 30 minutes which was important for us winning the game.

"I thought again we got on the wrong end of a number of refereeing decisions and the penalty count but in the end the decision makers on the pitch managed the second half and the big difference this week was we took the opportunities we created."

ACTION REPLAY || FRIDAY 7 APRIL || KINGSTON PARK || ATT 7,738

Newcastle Falcons 16

Tries: Socino. Conversions: Dalaney. Penalties: Hodgson (2).

Gloucester Rugby 14

Tries: May, Marshall. Conversions: Twelvetrees(2).



Gloucester were at fault. Hodgson kicked the goal and Newcastle snatched the points.

It was an evening where Gloucester had to overcome so many obstacles – the loss of Ross Moriarty to illness before the game, several players limping off injured, having a try disallowed, seeing Lloyd Evans harshly yellow carded.

Despite all that, and they weren't at their best on the evening, Gloucester showed great spirit to battle hard on the night in the face of some persistent attacking play from the Falcons. Newcastle had plenty of possession, but Gloucester's defence was pretty solid.

For all that, the Falcons did take a first half lead through Juan Pablo Socino, but even that was shrouded in controversy. No-one in the ground, or looking at replays afterwards, could see the ball grounded. No-one apart from Mr Pearce, and it's his decision that counts.

Gloucester actually made more line breaks and created more chances. But the precision that had served them well against Cardiff Blues the weekend before was lacking, and several opportunities came and went.

That was until just before half time, when Gloucester laid siege to the Newcastle line. The defence was good around the fringes, but the quick feet of Jonny May eventually made the decisive yards and

Last week's long trip north resulted in bitter disappointment for the Cherry and Whites, in a manner they've experienced several times so far this season.

Having dug in deep to overcome any number of setbacks on the evening, Gloucester were clinging on to a narrow 13-14 lead as the countdown clock ticked down to zero with one scrum left to endure.

However, despite having edged the scrum encounters throughout, Gloucester were penalised for the first time in the match to give Newcastle fly-half Joel Hodgson the chance to win the game.

It looked as though the home pack had 'walked around' the scrum, but referee Luke Pearce decided that



- 15 Tait ▼
- 14 Goneva
- 13 Harris
- 12 Socino 1T
- 11 Watson
- 10 Delaney 1C ▼
- 9 Young ▼
- 1 Vickers
- 2 Cooper
- 3 Wilson ▼
- 4 Green
- 5 Olmstead
- 6 Wilson
- 7 Welch
- 8 Hogg ▼

Replacements used:
Welsh, Chick,
Takulua, Hodgson 3P,
Sinoti



- 15 Marshall 1T
- 14 Sharples
- 13 Trinder ▼
- 12 Atkinson
- 11 May 1T
- 10 Twelvetrees 2C
- 9 Heinz ▼
- 1 McAllister ▼
- 2 Matu'u ▼
- 3 Afoa ▼
- 4 Savage ▼
- 5 Galarza
- 6 Kalamafoni ▼
- 7 Rowan
- 8 Morgan

Replacements used:
Hibbard, Thomas,
Hohnneck, Denton,
Ludlow, Braley, Evans,
Purdy



Twelvetrees converted for 7-7 at half time.

Hodgson restored Newcastle's lead with a 46th minute penalty, but Gloucester hit back with what looked to be a crucial score as May made the initial break, before Tom Marshall chipped ahead and beat Ally Hogg to the bouncing ball to score.

The Cherry and Whites needed one more score to clinch it, but just couldn't do so. Hodgson then set alarm bells ringing with his second penalty to get the home

team back within a point.

Gloucester then had a try from Marshall ruled out as Tom Denton was adjudged to have knocked on, and then had to play the final ten minutes with 14 men when Evans was sinbinned despite seeming to win the ball in the air.

Minus Evans, Gloucester actually looked comfortable in defence and seemed to have done enough when Newcastle knocked on in the final minute.

But then came the scrum, and the fateful whistle....



APPLYING THE LAW WITH



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Gloucester were entitled to feel aggrieved at a number of decisions on the day, not least the award of Juan Pablo Socino's try where grounding was unclear, the yellow card to Lloyd Evans and the crucial final penalty.

It was an eventful evening for referee Luke Pearce.



DIRECTOR OF RUGBY:

DAVID HUMPHREYS

"To win rugby matches you've got to win and keep hold of the ball and we showed some glimpses in the first half of the threat that we had, but then we just couldn't get the ball and we spent the whole time defending.

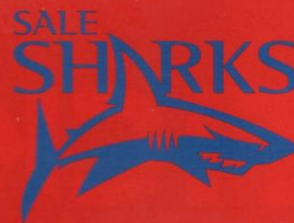
"To go into the last 10 seconds with our scrum, all we needed to do was get the ball in, get the ball out and we win the game but once again we failed to do that.

"That was probably our only scrum penalty of the night and to concede that with the very last play is hugely disappointing."



TEAM LINE-UPS

SATURDAY 15 APRIL
AVIVA PREMIERSHIP
RUGBY | ROUND 20



T P C D				T P C D								
				TOM MARSHALL	15	FULLBACK	15	MIKE HALEY				
				CHARLIE SHARPLES	14	RIGHT WING	14	DENNY SOLOMONA				
				HENRY TRINDER	13	OUTSIDE CENTRE	13	SAM JAMES				
				MARK ATKINSON	12	INSIDE CENTRE	12	MARK JENNINGS				
				JONNY MAY	11	LEFT WING	11	BYRON MCGUIGAN				
				BILLY BURNS	10	FLY-HALF	10	AJ MACGINTY				
				CALLUM BRALEY	9	SCRUM HALF	9	MIKE PHILLIPS				
				JOSH HOHNECK	1	LOOSEHEAD PROP	1	ROSS HARRISON				
				RICHARD HIBBARD	2	HOOKER	2	ROB WEBBER				
				JOHN AFOA	3	TIGHTHEAD PROP	3	HALANI AULIKA				
				JEREMY THRUSH (C)	4	LOCK	4	BRYN EVANS				
				MARIANO GALARZA	5	LOCK	5	ANDREI OSTRIKOV				
				ROSS MORIARTY	6	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	6	CAMERON NEILD				
				LEWIS LUDLOW	7	OPENSIDE FLANKER	7	TOM CURRY				
				FREDDIE CLARKE	8	NUMBER 8	8	JOSH BEAUMONT (C)				
REPLACEMENTS				REPLACEMENTS								
				MOTU MATU'U	16		16	BEN CURRY				
				PADDY MCALLISTER	17		17	JAKE POPE				
				SALESI MA'AFU	18	MATCH OFFICIALS	18	KIERAN LONGBOT-TOM				
				TOM SAVAGE	19	REFEREE:	19	GEORGE NOTT				
				BEN MORGAN	20	Tom Foley		LAURENCE PEARCE				
				BEN VELLACOTT	21	ASSISTANT REFEREES:	20	JAMES MITCHELL				
				BILLY TWELVETREES	22	Adam Leal &		SAM BEDLOW				
				DAVID HALAIFONUA	23	Peter Allan		JOSH CHARNLEY				