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GLOUCESTER RUGBY OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME 2018/19 SEASON

CHERRY & WHITES

..... GLOUCESTER RUGBY v NEWCASTLE FALCONS | 4 MAY 2019 | 3:00PM | GALLAGHER PREMIERSHIP | £3.50 | 16

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CAPTAIN

WILLI HEINZ



GOOD AFTERNOON, AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM STADIUM FOR THE FINAL TIME THIS SEASON, AND I'D LIKE TO WISH A WARM WELCOME TO EVERYONE MAKING THE LONG JOURNEY DOWN FROM NEWCASTLE FALCONS.

It's been a long season, plenty of ups and downs, and we're delighted as a squad to have secured our place in the play-offs. It's been a long time coming, but we know that it means nothing if we don't back it up.

We don't want to just be making up the numbers though. We know we need to keep building and really go into the play-offs with a lot of momentum, and that is why the final two games of the season are crucial for us as a group.

However, I can't say that we weren't disappointed with the result last weekend at Sixways. We should have won, but we left ourselves with too much to do after half time, and when it mattered we couldn't convert chances, and made too many errors against a team who were on their game and desperate for the result.

It was great to see so many Cherry and White supporters at Sixways, and we were gutted not to pick up the win, but we did record the losing bonus point we needed. To secure the top four spot with two games remaining, especially in one of the most competitive seasons is a big step forward for the team.

I have to agree with what Johan said after the game, we are still a long way off in terms of our best rugby. We know on our day we can compete with anyone, but that consistency is what



separates the best from the rest, and we have to set high standards each time we run out on to the pitch.

We know this weekend we're playing a Newcastle team that are scrapping for their lives, and we know we have to be on our game as they will be doing all they can for the result. We have to finish the regular season well, especially on home soil.

The end of the season is often a sad time too, as we bid farewell to some players and staff who will be moving onto pastures

new at the end of the campaign. There's still so much to look forward to, so today is the chance for the Kingsholm faithful to also show their appreciation and vice versa of course.

It goes without saying that the support the team have received this year has been massive for us. The next few weeks will be exciting, and as a club we are all in this together to achieve our goals and try and finish on a high.

Enjoy the game.

Willi

OWNER

MARTIN ST. QUINTON



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GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM FOR THE FINAL TIME THIS SEASON.

It seems barely five minutes ago that we were lining up for the Premiership season opener at home to Northampton.

And what a season it's been. I can safely say, it's been the most exciting season that I've had the pleasure of watching during my time with the club.

Not only has it been entertaining rugby, it's also been a winning brand of rugby. We've already bettered our points and win totals from last season, and won at a few venues where victory has proved to be elusive for a number of years.

Importantly, we secured Heineken Champions Cup rugby a few weeks ago when we defeated Bath, and last

weekend's losing bonus point takes us into the end of season play-offs for the first time in eight years.

However, there is still so much more to play for this season. We haven't made it this far to simply sit back and rest on our laurels. We know that on any given day, we can be a match for any side in this league.

That, of course, starts today against Newcastle when we are determined to finish our home campaign on a winning note.

We know that our visitors today are in a desperate scrap against relegation, so it will be another tough game, but we want to go into the play-offs in good form with momentum.

It's been a season of progress, and I genuinely believe that we can be better next season. The majority of the squad will be back next season, and will have benefitted from the experience of playing so many high profile games this season and having competed against Europe's elite in the Heineken Champions Cup. Exciting times lie ahead.

It just remains for me to thank you all for your magnificent support this season. Gloucester Rugby is a very special club and you are all a key part of it.

Here's hoping that the team can reward that support this afternoon.

Martin

DAVID HUMPHREYS

GOOD AFTERNOON AND I'M DELIGHTED TO WELCOME EVERYONE TO KINGSHOLM THIS AFTERNOON FOR OUR FINAL HOME GALLAGHER PREMIERSHIP FIXTURE OF THE 2018/19 SEASON AGAINST NEWCASTLE FALCONS. A PARTICULAR WELCOME TO DEAN RICHARDS AND ALL THE PLAYERS, STAFF AND SUPPORTERS WHO HAVE TRAVELLED FROM NEWCASTLE.

After another eventful and exciting season, a bonus point from Sunday's game against Worcester secured our top four league position and a place in the play offs. It was a long way from our best performance and, while it's easy to get caught up in the emotion of losing a local derby, it's a huge achievement for the Club to qualify for the play offs with two games still to play.

That's real progress from last season but no one in the group is satisfied with a top four finish. It will be a big test to beat Exeter or Saracens away from home but, with so many experienced international players in our squad, and some key players returning from injury, we're very excited about the challenge of our first play off in eight years!

The best way for us to prepare for the play offs is to produce two really good performances against Newcastle Falcons and Sale. Newcastle are fighting for their Premiership survival and from bitter experience at the end of last season at Kingsholm, we know how difficult they will be today. This time last year Newcastle were preparing for the play-offs which again highlights the very small margins between success and failure in the Gallagher Premiership.

On Tuesday we had a very enjoyable evening at our Awards Dinner at Cheltenham Racecourse. There have been many outstanding individual performers throughout the season but Ben Morgan (Players' Player of the Year) and



Ollie Thorley (Young Player of the Year) thoroughly deserved the two main awards from the evening.

Perhaps more importantly, the evening highlighted so much of the hard work that goes on throughout the community and it is vital for the game of rugby in Gloucestershire to see that work recognised and rewarded. Congratulations to all the award winners.

At the end of every season, there are so many people to thank. We say goodbye to a number of the squad who will be at Kingsholm for the final time today and in thanking them for all their efforts, I'm sure you'll join me in wishing them every success as they move on to other clubs. In particular, a special mention for Tom Savage who has

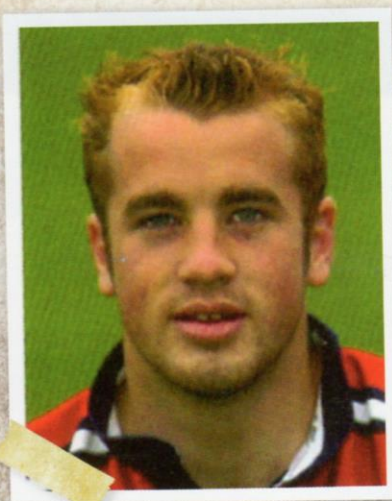
played such a central role at this Club over the past few seasons and is moving on to play club rugby in Japan.

The last word, as always, goes to all of you, the supporters. Kingsholm is a special place to play rugby and together with the way the team have played over the last 18 months, your support has made Kingsholm a very intimidating place for visiting teams to play.

On behalf of all the players and staff, thank you for the wonderful support and encouragement throughout the season and let's finish the season at Kingsholm with some more special memories from the 18/19 season.

David

SINBAD



A GREAT FAVOURITE WITH THE KINGSHOLM CROWD, JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL, "SINBAD", WAS THAT RARITY IN THE PROFESSIONAL GAME – A ONE CLUB MAN. HIS LOW CENTRE OF GRAVITY, BEAUTIFUL BALANCE AND KEEN RUGBY BRAIN MADE HIM ONE OF THE ALL-TIME GREAT WINGERS, THE SCORER OR INSTIGATOR OF SPECTACULAR TRIES. BUT HIS CAREER WAS SADLY BLIGHTED BY ILLNESS AND INJURY AND HE ONLY GAINED TEN CAPS FOR ENGLAND.

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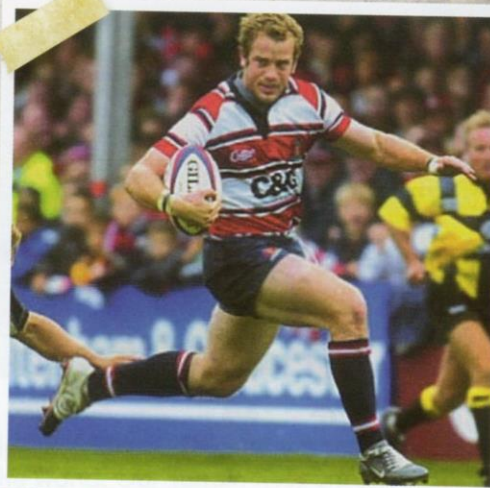
Sinbad played wing or centre for Gloucester Rugby from 2000 to 2013, making 272 appearances and scoring 119 tries. He scored 21 of his tries in the 41 Heineken Cup games that he played for the club and was the club's leading try scorer on five occasions.

James David Simpson-Daniel was born on 30 May 1982 in Stockton on Tees. He learned his rugby at Red House School & Sedburgh School in the Yorkshire Dales, which has produced a number of top rugby union players including Will Greenwood, Will Carling and also Phil Dowson, whom he played alongside in the same school XV. While at the school, he represented Yorkshire and the North East at Under 18 level.

While his schoolmates were attending university open days, Sinbad was visiting professional rugby union clubs. He eventually chose Gloucester Rugby. His 1st

XV debut was at Franklins Gardens, Northampton in December 2000, when at the tender age of eighteen he came off the bench to substitute for Jason Little. In his second game against Rotherham in March that season, he came off the bench again after 25 minutes

and scored a superb individual try. His Gloucester career was launched. He went on to start in Gloucester's defeat by Leicester at Watford in April, their only Heineken Cup semi-final appearance to date.



The following season he featured in 21 games for Gloucester, starting in 15, and scored 15 tries. He represented England at the Hong Kong Sevens and scored a hat trick in the final, which England won. He flew back

and followed it up with a hat trick in a premiership game against Bath, which Gloucester won 68-12. On the strength of these performances he was selected for an England XV to play against the Barbarians at Twickenham and, four days before his twentieth birthday, he rounded Jonah Lomu to score a try, which will long be remembered. To quote The Times report on the game:

"James Simpson-Daniel, giving away more than six inches and six stone to Lomu, produced one of the most audacious pieces of skill you will see on a rugby field. He left Percy Montgomery for dead after a dummy scissors with Phil Christophers... before beating Lomu so comprehensively down the right touchline that he left the big man flapping at thin air. He still had to beat one of the greatest full backs of the modern era, Christian Cullen, to score in the corner."

He was chosen two days later for England's summer tour of Argentina but had to withdraw due to a foot injury. This merely delayed his international debut, which he made against New Zealand in November 2002. He played in the second Autumn international against Australia but was then diagnosed with glandular fever and missed the South Africa test.

Fit again in January, Sinbad played for England against Italy in the Six Nations at Twickenham, scoring his first international try. For Gloucester, he took part in both the Powergen Cup Final victory over Northampton in which he scored two tries and the Zurich Premiership Final defeat by Wasps. He was selected for England's pre-World Cup 2003 tour of Australia and New Zealand, but was then one of six players who were flown from Wellington to Vancouver to bolster the England A squad for the inaugural Churchill Cup. England won the cup and he went on to play in the second of two matches between England A (as Churchill Cup winners) and Japan in Tokyo, scoring a try.

Returning home, he started for England in their 43-9 defeat of Wales in Cardiff in a World Cup warm-up game on August 21 but missed selection to the final 30 for World Cup 2003 because of a back problem.

Unluckily, injury once again prevented him from playing a part in the 2004 Autumn series in November and he missed further game time for the build-up to the 2005 Six Nations. He was picked in the centre for England's final 2005 Autumn test against Samoa but a hip injury forced him off at half-time.

A fine 2005-06 season for Gloucester, in which he scored 18 tries in 24 games, scoring a try in Gloucester's epic European Challenge Cup win over London Irish in the final at the Stoop, led to his making the squad for England's tour of Australia. He scored two tries in their win over the Barbarians on 28 May but suffered a dead leg midweek during training, and as a result missed both tests, in which England were resoundingly beaten.

Once more, he was beset by bad luck and fractured his collarbone in a pre-season match for Gloucester Rugby, which greatly reduced his chances of playing in the autumn tests.

He was recalled to the England squad for the 2007 Summer Tour of South Africa, alongside club colleagues Andy Hazell, Nick Wood, Iain Balshaw, Anthony Allen and Alex Brown. Coming on as a replacement for Balshaw in the first test at Bloemfontein, he scored England's only try of the match, but then fell prey to the illness which afflicted many of the England players on that tour. The Bloemfontein test was to be his last international.

After a series of marvellous performances for Gloucester throughout the 2007-08 season, Simpson-Daniel was named Guinness Premiership Player of The Season beating Olly Barkley and teammate Akapusi Qera. He joined the England Saxons squad in Italy in February and was recalled into the full England squad for the 6 Nations international against Scotland on March 8, but did not play.

Sinbad continued to dazzle the Kingsholm crowd over the next three seasons and his consistent brilliance could not be entirely overlooked by the England management. Still on the fringes of international selection, he was chosen to be part of the 2011 Rugby World Cup training squad, but on 1 August was one of five players released by manager Martin Johnson.



After missing a large part of the 2012-13 season due to shoulder surgery, he returned to Gloucester colours in autumn 2013 and was playing as well as ever when he dislocated and fractured an ankle while playing against Newcastle Falcons in an LV= Cup match at Kingsholm in November. He signed a further two year contract with Gloucester in January 2014 and there was every confidence that he would play again, but in the end to the sadness of the entire rugby community, he lost his fight to regain fitness and on September 2 2014, announced his retirement from professional rugby.

TOM SAVAGE



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The final home game of the season is always an emotional one. It's an occasion when a number of players will don the Cherry and White for the final time before moving on to new challenges.

Traditionally, thousands of Gloucester Rugby supporters stay behind after the final whistle has blown to watch end of season presentations and take the opportunity to say goodbye to those who are leaving. It's the end of a chapter, and sometimes people just don't want to drag themselves away and admit that it's over.





More than likely, that will be the case for Tom Savage this afternoon. It was confirmed recently that Sav, as he is popularly known, will be moving to Suntory Sungoliath this summer to continue his rugby career.

It came as something of a shock for many. Since making his first team bow in the 2011-12 season, Savage has become part of the fixtures and fittings at Gloucester Rugby – rarely injured, always performing at a consistently high level.

All good things come to an end of course, but many were caught unprepared by the news that Sav was to move on. The player himself admitted that the approach from Japan had come out of the blue somewhat.

“It came about through the standard channels of contract negotiations. I had an option to stay here at Gloucester and talks were going really well with the club. I’ve enjoyed my time here and I wasn’t really looking to leave. I was actually hoping to extend my stay.

“Then, out of the blue, I got a message from my agent one day asking whether I’d consider playing in Japan. It wasn’t something that I’d ever considered before, but I had an open mind about it and things just kind of developed from there.

“Things gained momentum as I did some research into who the club was, what their squad was looking like, how long the contract offer was for etc. It was a tough decision, but exciting that I had an option to go out there and play so I decided to take it on.



“I had some sleepless nights while I thought things over, but I sat down with my family and talked things over, also some of my close team-mates and, of course, with my wife as it had to be the right decision for us as a couple.

“It’s a tough one, as we do exist in a bit of a training and playing bubble. The boys give everything to the cause and live and breathe Gloucester Rugby and you have to step away from that and take the emotion out of the decision in a way.



"I wanted to be open and honest with the coaches here at Gloucester Rugby, so I kept them in the loop. It was one of those where the opportunity had presented itself at this stage, but there was no guarantee that it would be there in the future.

"So, I didn't want to have any regrets in what can be a relatively short career and decided to go for it. It's a chance to play rugby somewhere new and experience a different culture and something that isn't offered to many."

And now, as his final home game as a Gloucester Rugby player approaches, how would he like his time at the club to be remembered?

"I've always tried to be consistent week in, week out and pride myself that I've been lucky enough to play a large number of games during my eight years at the club and just hope that I've delivered for the team.

"I've tried to be as professional as I can around all my stuff and always looked to improve as well. I've tried to keep growing as a player each year because you're always conscious that someone else is giving it everything to try and take your spot.

"So, hopefully, I'll be remembered as someone who's worked his socks off and delivered week in, week out. I've loved every minute of it."



KINGSHOLM NEWS

WITH BOB FENTON



I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE LAST MATCH OF THE SEASON... IT ONLY SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY THAT I WAS WRITING 'HERE WE ARE AGAIN, THEN...' AS THE OPENING LINES OF THE NORTHAMPTON PROGRAMME.



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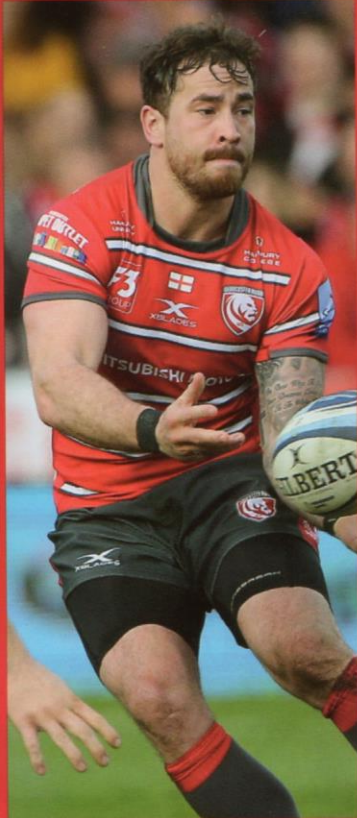
Yet this is it – the last home outing of the season. It has absolutely flown by, so I guess it must be true – time really does fly when you are having fun.

This time last year we were all frantically engaged in the mad mathematics of whether we could qualify for the Champion's Cup from seventh place, and even that spot was slightly shaky. Here we are now though, guaranteed to be in the end of season play offs with two games left. That, my friends, is progress.

Who knows what might happen in the play offs, our record so far leaves a bit to be desired, but these are one-offs – mini cup finals and anything is possible!

But what a season it has been – not only are we sitting pretty in third place, we have seen some of the best rugby I can remember for many a year. When the machine is purring it is a sight to behold. While admittedly biased, I would take our style of anyone else in the division. Exeter are rightly top of the pile with their grinding, attritional game plan that, while hugely efficient, is about as much fun as watching paint dry. Saracens can keep their minimalist muscular approach – give me the joie de vivre of Gloucester any day of the week.

It doesn't always come off, and sometimes it can go horribly wrong (for example, Harlequins and Sale at home, last week at Worcester). But



when it all clicks, sit back, close your eyes and visualise Ben Morgan bursting clear in the 22 before finding Thorley, Cipriani gazing one way and delivering a pin-point pass the other – the highlights list is endless.

At times this term we have been unplayable. And at times we have done it with an injury list that dragged players into positions they never thought they would have to fill – Jake Polledri on the wing, Matt Banahan almost getting a run out at lock and then ending up at full back recently.

Those of us grizzled by years of watching an underachieving side know where the spark for all this joyous madness has come from – one name leaps off the page every time. Fraser Balmain... OK, two names... Fraser Balmain and Josh Hohneck. We all know that everything that happens on a rugby field starts up front, without that platform you get no ball and no chance for anything. At the time of writing we had the best performing lineout and one of the best performing scrums – there is the foundation for everything that follows. Those two guys have been immense this season – our new Vickery and Woodman double act.

Behind them Franco Mostert is a veritable goliath of a player. We've all seen a few good locks over the years, but his performance this year has seen the words 'Gloucester legend' etched well within his grasp. Ed Slater too – those who mourned the departure of Jonny May last term when Ed came the other way must be wondering what they were ever concerned about. The best second row pairing I can remember running out in Cherry and White.

Our back row... Ben Morgan should be in the England squad, no question about it. For me this has been his best season in a Gloucester shirt, not bad when some were wondering if he would get much game time given the massive strength in depth we have in that position.

Behind them, too many Rolls Royce players to count. In the centre it has been great to see Mark Atkinson get an extended run in the side – OK, given his legendary position as 'the slowest back' in every poll perhaps an 'extended ramble' is a better description. But what a player he is. My good buddy Tommo – who knows as much about back play as I know about tractor mechanics – likened him to the great Serge Blanco for the way he ghosts into positions and makes magic happen around him. Actually, on reflection, when I finish writing this I am going to have to brush up on my knowledge of tractors...

Our back three has been an interchangeable feast – Charlie started the year like he was desperate to make up for last season when injury after injury kept him out. He's currently stuck on nine tries for the term, I really hope he can get another couple to overtake Sinbad in the tries per season count. A true one team player and it's great to see him going well.

You can't write about the team without mentioning a certain Mr Cipriani. My friend Barney up at Wasps constantly reminds me that Gloucester fans used to delight in telling him that Danny would never be in the same class as Ryan Lamb. Of course, that was true back then, but like a wonderfully good bottle of wine, age improves things! Danny is a magician, he seems to fit the bill perfectly for how Johan wants the team to play. We've created his spiritual home and it was very fitting that he was the last piece of the jigsaw to slide into place last summer. His decision to extend his time here should have been marked with a special Gloucester only Bank Holiday.

But as everyone knows you are only as good as your next result. A win today gives us third place this year, who knows where that might lead to next term. Over the summer all those analysts will be sat with their laptops pulling our game apart, so we know it'll be hard next year – that difficult second album!

To sum up then, a great year – but it's not quite done. One more away trip to Sale, and today's last home fixture to take care of first. But as it will be our last time at Kingsholm for a few months, I'll take the opportunity to wish everyone a great summer and, as always, thanks for reading my stuff.

..... IAN RANDALL

RANDALL ON RUGBY



ACADEMY HOOKER HENRY WALKER HAS MADE 13 APPEARANCES ACROSS THREE COMPETITIONS FOR GLOUCESTER RUGBY THIS SEASON, AND THE 21 YEAR OLD IS THE LAST PLAYER TO TAKE HIS PICK FROM IAN RANDALL'S BARREL OF QUESTIONS ABOUT LIFE ON AND OFF THE PITCH...



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HOW WOULD YOUR TEAM MATES DESCRIBE YOU?

Quiet, calm and "one of the three front rowers" (along with Alex Seville and Ciaran Knight). We're always hanging around together.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN A HOOKER?

Yes, I started playing there when I was about 12, even though at school you tend to mix and match where you play. I was at Bromsgrove School and Tony Windo went there the same year I started so I had five years being coached by him. It was good fun.

IF YOU COULD SIGN ONE CURRENT PLAYER FOR GLOUCESTER, WHO WOULD IT BE?

Marcus Smith from Harlequins. I played England U20's with him, he was a good person to be around

in camp and for him to learn things from Danny Cipriani would be interesting for the future.

WHO DO YOU ROOM WITH ON AWAY TRIPS?

It varies. If Alex or Ciaran are there it'll be one of them. Alex likes to Facetime his girlfriend so over a long chat - like a couple of hours - it's interesting to hear what they're on about. You can talk to Ciaran for days about random stuff but overall both are good room-mates.

WHO GAVE YOU THE BEST PIECE OF RUGBY ADVICE AND WHAT WAS IT?

Tony Windo told me to enjoy playing for as long you can because you'll find it will come and go very quickly. I've tried to do that because you don't know if there is an injury around the corner which might mean you can't play any more.

WHO IS THE WEAKEST IN THE GYM?

Freddie Clarke. He'll be there with Alex, Ciaran and me and being a back row he's quick and agile but not as strong. He prefers to do the lighter weights!

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE LAW TO MAKE THE GAME BETTER WHAT WOULD IT BE?

I would have a TMO for scrums, because half the time I don't think the referees really know what's going on. Everyone makes mistakes, but it would be good to have someone like Nick Wood who has a great understanding of them. He's been in charge of a couple of A League matches and he's almost been coaching at scrum time to keep the game going.

WHAT IS THE FAVOURITE SONG ON YOUR IPOD?

Little Lion Man by Mumford and Sons.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE ALBUM OF ALL TIME?

I usually just stick the radio on and scan around to find something I like, but I'll go for the Mumford and Sons one with Little Lion Man on it, which is called Sigh No More.

ARE YOU GOOD AT ANY OTHER SPORT?

I used to play cricket as an all-rounder for Warwickshire at age group level from U12 to U16, and I liked hockey and swimming as well.

IF YOU COULD GIVE £1M TO CHARITY, WHO WOULD YOU GIVE IT TO?

Macmillan Cancer Support. My grandad passed away from cancer so that's quite close to me.

WHAT WAS THE LAST PRESENT YOU BOUGHT?

I bought flowers and a card for my mother on Mothering Sunday when we had a nice meal out. I like to look after her because she's looked after me through school, taking me to matches and so on. Apart from that, it would be a pair of wellies for my girlfriend. We live on a farm and it can get quite muddy walking the dogs.

WITHOUT RUGBY WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE WITH YOUR CAREER?

My mother is a PE teacher so I might have ended up going down that line. I would want to be active and outdoors rather than being cooped up in an office.

COULD YOU FIT A KITCHEN?

No. I could have a go at the tiling but I would have to ask my dad to give me a hand.

THIS IS THE FINAL HOME GAME OF THE SEASON AND A BIG ONE FOR NEWCASTLE. WHAT ARE YOU EXPECTING?

It'll be interesting to see how they go because they gave us a very tough game up there and we lost the last time they came here when we had to clear the snow off the pitch. We can't be letting them have free ball to play with.

It's the last time the home fans will see us so it would be good to go out on a high note, although there is still another game with the play off semi-final and hopefully the final as well because we still have the chance to win the league.





NORTHAMPTON SAINTS 31



GLOUCESTER RUGBY 40

“WE ARE NOT GETTING OVER-EXCITED BUT IT’S A NICE POSITION TO BE IN. BUT WITH FOUR GAMES TO GO, THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF TEAMS ON OUR TAIL.”

HEAD COACH JOHAN ACKERMANN



Gloucester Rugby took a huge step towards a top four finish as they made it a Premiership double over Northampton Saints with a 31-40 triumph at Franklin's Gardens.

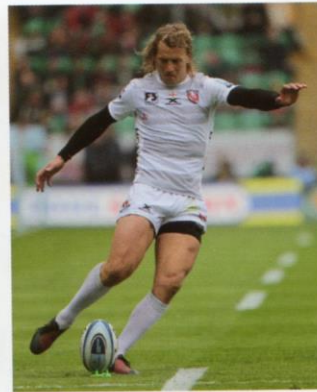
For the second away game in succession, the Cherry and Whites were underdogs, Northampton coming into the game on a fine run of form which included lifting the Premiership Rugby Cup with victory over Saracens.

However, Gloucester Rugby upset the odds with a dogged performance which, despite resulting in a five point haul, came at a price as several players had to limp out of the action with injury in what was a bruising encounter.

It was an end to end encounter, with four tries coming in the first 15 minutes alone. But it was Gloucester Rugby who were to emerge triumphant, outlasting their opponents to earn an important win.

Taqele Naiyaravoro smashed his way over early to give his team a great start, but the big winger duly missed a tackle on Mark Atkinson which allowed the centre to get outside him and open Gloucester Rugby's account.

A handling error promptly gifted the lead back to Saints, before a perfectly worked lineout move saw the Cherry and Whites regain the ascendancy, Atkinson gliding over for his second try.



Ruan Ackermann then powered his way over as Gloucester Rugby looked to press home their advantage, but the good work was undone as a missed tackle as the Cherry and Whites chased a kick ahead, led to Cobus Reinach sprinting away for his team's third try.

Gloucester Rugby had one last chance to score in the first half, however, and made it count as Jaco Kriel's fine break saw him split the defensive line before

putting Atkinson clear for his hat-trick.

The second half saw the Cherry and Whites follow that up with a close-range score for Ed Slater and, with a 14 point lead, the game looked to have been sewn up.

Injuries then started to take a toll, and Saints hooker Reece Marshall touched down from a five metre catch and drive to set the nerve ends jangling. However, Gloucester Rugby did

exactly the same to Saints a few minutes later, hooker Franco Marais claiming the score.

By this time, the Cherry and Whites had several players playing out of position in the back line and this probably played a part in Rory Hutchinson slicing his through to narrow the gap to 31-40.

But it was all a little too late for the Saints, who had run out of time and Gloucester Rugby were able to reflect upon a job well done.



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

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BATH RUGBY

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"I'M SO PROUD OF THE BOYS. IT WASN'T A PERFECT GAME AT ALL, THE FIRST HALF WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH. WE WERE NOT THERE PHYSICALLY AND WE COULDN'T GET OUR HANDS ON THE BALL."

"CREDIT TO THE PLAYERS, THERE'S A LOT OF FIGHT IN THIS TEAM AND TO TURN IT AROUND IN THE SECOND HALF WAS CRUCIAL."

"WE CLEARED UP A FEW THINGS AT HALF-TIME AND IT'S A CREDIT TO THE TEAM."

HEAD COACH JOHAN ACKERMANN

In perfect conditions at Kingsholm, the two West Country giants went toe to toe with valuable Gallagher Premiership points as well as local bragging rights at stake, and delivered a full-blooded and exciting encounter in front of a sell-out Kingsholm crowd.

Credit to the visitors, they came to Kingsholm having not tasted defeat at Gloucester Rugby's home ground since 2012. And they started like a house on fire in the opening 20 minutes, as they took the game to Gloucester Rugby who could only cling on for dear life.

Bath's sheer physicality, accuracy in attack and ball retention saw them dominate the opening exchanges – it was one way traffic as they took a deserved 0-17 lead with the Cherry and Whites barely able to get hold of the ball.

However, Johan Ackermann's side bravely fought their way back into the game although they had to overcome some dogged defence before they finally broke through.

That first score, on the stroke of half-time, proved to be crucial and

Bath only had themselves to blame. Having soaked up so much pressure, they then sought to try and run down the clock with a series of pick and goes near their own line, only to be penalised and Gloucester Rugby took full advantage and pounced for the first try.

They emerged re-invigorated at the start of the second half and there was only ever going to be one winner from that moment on.

A home win looked a forlorn hope after the first 20 minutes. Freddie



Burns could do no wrong during that period, floating a superb cross-kick for Ruaridh McConnochie to catch and score before slotting a penalty and then pinning Gloucester Rugby back as Bath crossed again, this time Tom Dunn claiming the score.

But the Cherry and Whites dug deep and gradually got a foothold in the game, spending pretty much the rest of the half in the Bath 22. The visitors defended bravely and looked set to make it into half-time with their 17 point lead intact, but gifted possession to their hosts and Cipriani's 'no-look'

pass put Josh Hohneck into a gap and over the line.

Twelvetrees converted and the Cherry and Whites were back in the game with momentum behind them. And they built on this change in fortunes straight after the restart – Beno Obano was yellow carded for a no arms tackle and, shortly afterwards, Ruan Ackermann crashed over.

Burns slotted a penalty to give Bath a little breathing space at 14-20, but a Cipriani-inspired Gloucester Rugby got back to within a point as he put Matt

Banahan into a gap whose pass sent Henry Purdy over in the corner.

Burns dropped a goal, but was promptly withdrawn in a puzzling substitution, and Gloucester Rugby weren't to be denied, Cipriani and Banahan combining again to put Tom Seabrook over in the right hand corner.

The Cherry and Whites had their first lead of the afternoon with the score now 24-23 and Billy Twelvetrees widened the margin with a 70th minute penalty as Gloucester Rugby closed out the game without too many alarms.



WORCESTER WARRIORS

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GLOUCESTER RUGBY

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“LIKE I HAVE CONSTANTLY SAID, WHEN PEOPLE STARTED TO GET CARRIED AWAY AFTER WE HAD A GOOD RUN, WE ARE STILL NOT THERE.

“THERE ARE TIMES WHEN WE DON'T PLAY AS WELL, AND TODAY JUST SHOWED IT.”

HEAD COACH JOHAN ACKERMANN



Gloucester Rugby have laid a number of away day bogies to rest so far this season – lengthy waits for wins at the likes of Wasps, Harlequins and Northampton have been brought to an end.

However, the Cherry and Whites couldn't quite repeat the feat last weekend at Sixways when a Worcester side, desperately fighting against relegation, had just a bit too much on the day as they

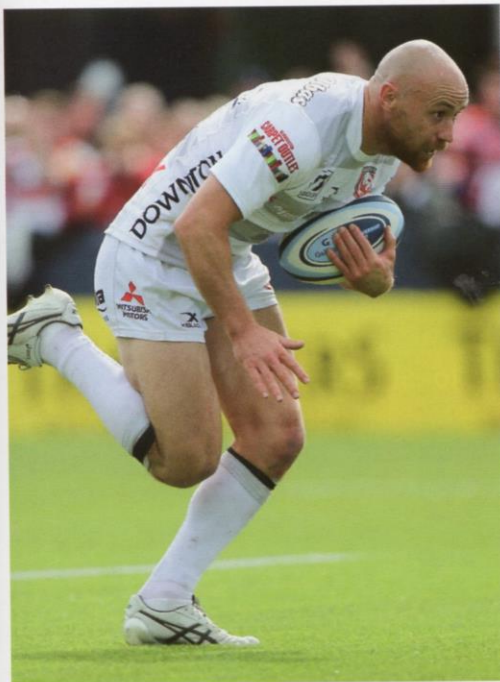
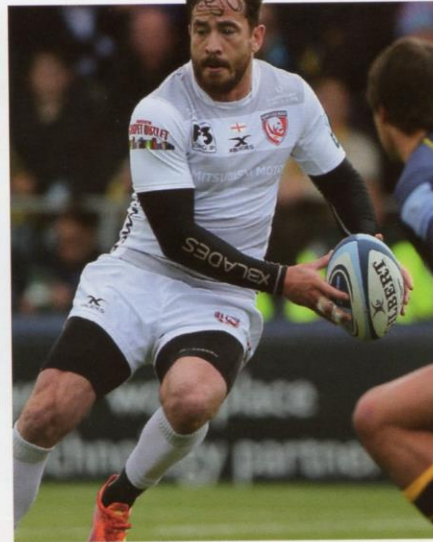
clinched a vital 27-20 Gallagher Premiership victory.

Whilst the outcome on the day was disappointing, there was at least one positive outcome on the day as the losing bonus point was enough to secure an end of season play-off berth for the first time in eight years.

Gloucester Rugby came into the game in good form and were looking to make it five wins in a row in the tournament for

the first time since December 2017. However, despite leading at half-time, Worcester's determined second half comeback proved to be crucial.

With so much at stake, you could have forgiven the home side for being a little nervous on the day but, with the wind at their backs, they pinned the Cherry and White back in the early stages and opened the scoring with a Duncan Weir penalty.



Gloucester Rugby took a little while to get going, but hit back with a fine try as Atkinson and Cipriani combined to give Henry Purdy a metre of space and the winger broke a tackle to score the game's first try.

Weir responded with his second penalty, and then extended the lead as he scampered over under the posts following Perry Humphreys' midfield break.

Leading 13-5, Worcester

looked well placed, but Gloucester Rugby spent the final 15 minutes of the half camped in the Worcester half. Twelvetrees narrowed the gap with a penalty before Cipriani, Twelvetrees and Atkinson linked up to send Willi Heinz over for his team's second try.

The conversion gave the Cherry and Whites a 13-15 lead at half-time, but they couldn't build on it at the start of the second half as ill-discipline

allowed Worcester to seize the momentum and close range tries from Niall Annett and Darren Barry, both converted by Weir, turned the game on its head.

Gloucester Rugby did get back into losing bonus point range as Charlie Sharples' long pass put Henry Purdy over for his second, but they couldn't quite get back on terms as Worcester held out for a vital win.



GLOUCESTER RUGBY



NEWCASTLE FALCONS

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T	P	C	D		POSITION		T	P	C	D	
■	■	■	■	Jason WOODWARD 15	FULL BACK	15	Simon HAMMERSLEY	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Charlie SHARPLES 14	RIGHT WING	14	Vereniki GONEVA	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Billy TWELVETREES 13	OUTSIDE CENTRE	13	Chris HARRIS	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Mark ATKINSON 12	INSIDE CENTRE	12	Josh MATAVESI	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Matt BANAHAN 11	LEFT WING	11	Sinoti SINOTI	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Danny CIPRIANI 10	FLY-HALF	10	Toby FLOOD (CC)	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Willi HEINZ (C) 9	SCRUM-HALF	9	Sonatane TAKULUA	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Josh HOHNECK 1	LOOSEHEAD PROP	1	Logovi'i MULIPOLA	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Franco MARAIS 2	HOKKER	2	George McGUIGAN	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Fraser BALMAIN 3	TIGHTHEAD PROP	3	Rodney AH YOU	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Ed SLATER 4	LOCK	4	Calum GREEN	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Franco MOSTERT 5	LOCK	5	Andrew DAVIDSON	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Ruan ACKERMANN 6	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	6	Callum CHICK	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Jaco KRIEL 7	OPENSIDE FLANKER	7	Mark WILSON (CC)	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Ben MORGAN 8	NUMBER 8	8	Nemani NAGUSA	■	■	■	■
REPLACEMENTS											
■	■	■	■	Mike SHERRY 16		16	Kyle COOPER	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Val RAPAVA RUSKIN 17		17	Sam LOCKWOOD	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Ruan DREYER 18		18	Trevor DAVISON	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Lewis LUDLOW 19		19	Sean ROBINSON	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Jake POLLEDRI 20		20	Gary GRAHAM	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Callum BRALEY 21		21	Michael YOUNG	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Lloyd EVANS 22		22	Tim SWIEL	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	Henry PURDY 23		23	Johnny WILLIAMS	■	■	■	■



MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: Tom Foley

Assistant Referees: Jack Makepeace & Simon McConnell / TMO: Keith Lewis

