

# CHERRY & WHITES



**MITSUBISHI  
MOTORS**

MAIN CLUB  
PARTNER

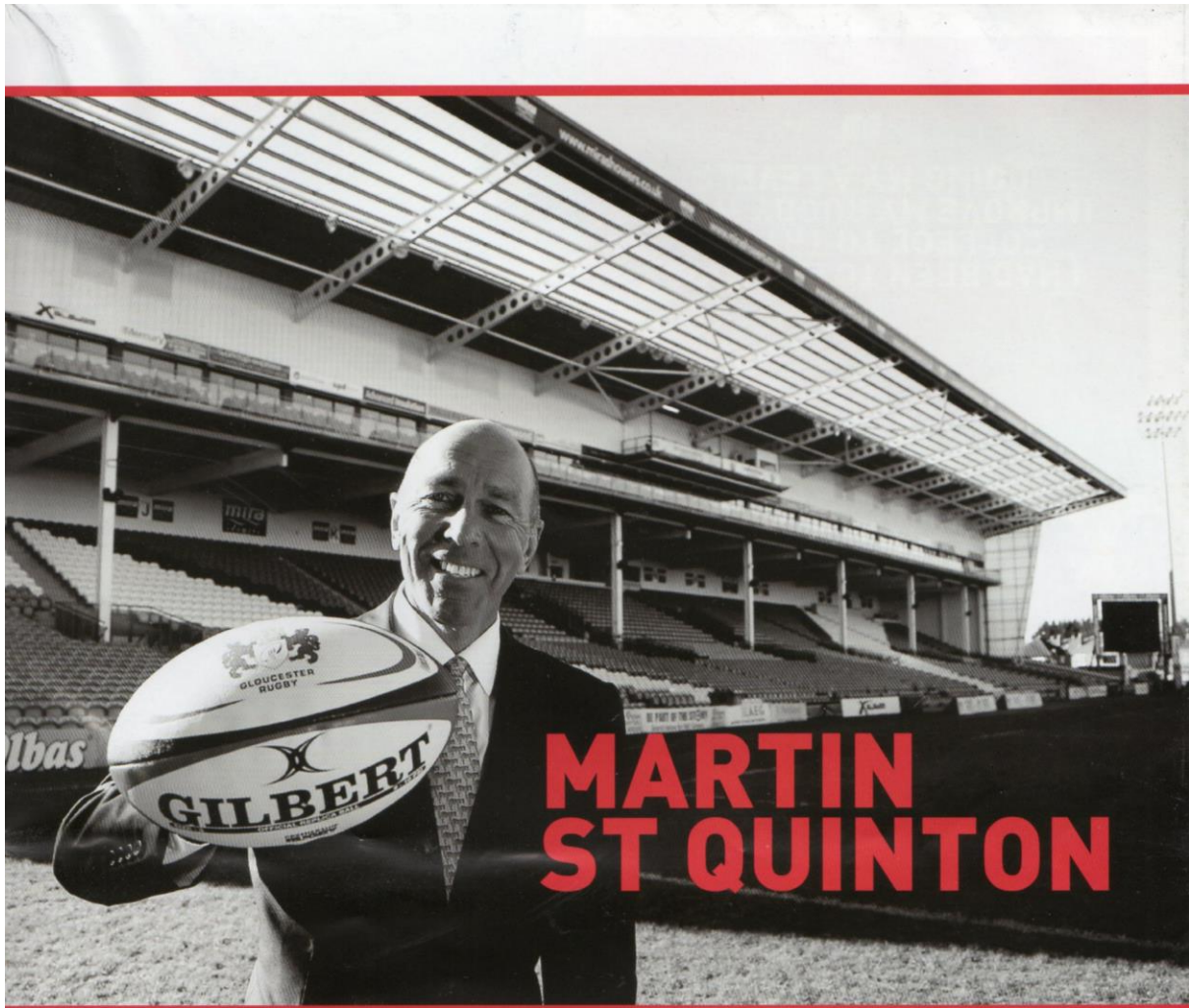


**GLOUCESTER  
RUGBY**

## V LONDON IRISH

**GLOUCESTER RUGBY  
OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME**  
2017/18 SEASON / ISSUE 05  
ANGLO WELSH CUP  
SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2017  
KO 12.30 / £1





**G**ood afternoon and welcome to Kingsholm for Round Two of this season's Anglo-Welsh Cup, and a warm welcome also to the players, staff and supporters of London Irish.

The past few seasons have seen this tournament repositioned as an opportunity for the best of young English and Welsh talent to demonstrate what they can do, and I am sure that both clubs today will be showcasing the best of their Academy players.

That was certainly the case last weekend when we kicked off the tournament away at Leicester Tigers. I felt, on the day, that our younger players acquitted themselves very well and were desperately unlucky not to come away with a memorable win.

Today is also a significant occasion because it is the fixture closest to Remembrance Day and, as always, we

will be paying tribute to the members of the Forces, including nurses and fire-fighters.

Last season saw us introduce the Poppy-themed shirt for the first time, and the limited edition version sold out very quickly. I am delighted to say that we are repeating the initiative this season with £5 from every shirt sold being donated to the Royal British Legion. It's an eye-catching design and a noble cause.

Now, let's give the team today our full support. As you probably saw announced last week, this season's Anglo-Welsh Final will be played at Kingsholm and it would be great if we got there!

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*Martin*





## EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN GETS UP AND RUNNING

**T**he European Rugby Challenge Cup campaign got underway on a tricky night in the foothills of the Pyrenees as the Cherry and Whites met a Pau side at the Stade du Hameau and, despite a hugely spirited and determined comeback, the visitors tasted defeat.

The game was a huge banana skin, Pau chanced their arm and opened up an early lead through Daniel Ramsey and Colin Slade tries, opening up a 20 point advantage.

But in the second half, a pushover from Ruan Ackermann, his first for the club, followed by a well worked Ben Vellacott score and the game was there for the taking. But a cross kick from Owen Williams was pounced upon by All Black winger Frank Halai for a long range interception score, and the hosts gleefully took the points.

Williams showed his class with the final kick of the game, slotting a touchline conversion to Henry Purdy's last gasp score to secure a losing bonus point.

Back on home soil, Gloucester hit their groove, and dispatched an inexperienced Agen outfit, again in front of the Sky Sports cameras.



With the try bonus point secured in the first half, through Vellacott's second in a week, Henry Trinder, Ben Morgan and a powerful Tom Savage finish, the second half was an equally one sided affair, with another five tries notched up.

Henry Purdy, Owen Williams, Richard Hibbard, Jake Polledri and a second for Man of the Match Vellacott secured a big win, and set up the Pool One table nicely ahead of the return to action in mid-December, where the Cherry and Whites take on a tricky looking Zebre outfit.





FEATURE INTERVIEW

# ON CLOUD NINE

BY IAN RANDALL

Ben  
**VELLACOTT**



# 9



“  
I HAD BEEN TO IVYBRIDGE  
COLLEGE TO TRY AND  
IMPROVE MY RUGBY WHILE  
DOING MY A LEVELS  
”





SOME WEIGHTY TALKING POINTS ARE SWIRLING AROUND RUGBY AT THE MOMENT, NOT LEAST THE NUMBER OF INJURIES, THE POTENTIALLY EXTENDED FIXTURE SCHEDULE AND THE FINANCIAL STATE OF AFFAIRS AT CLUB LEVEL BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE PREMIERSHIP.

**O**n the field, meanwhile, we welcome London Irish for this lunchtime liaison in the Anglo-Welsh Cup, where some of the up and coming talent from both clubs will be on show. For those players, belief in your own ability is paramount as they strive to get a foothold in the professional game, and scrum-half Ben Vellacott's career path perfectly illustrates how you never know when a door will open for you.

When I met Ben, I joked with him that it was in the digital version of the North Devon Gazette that I heard about him joining Gloucester's Academy - not perhaps a source you would expect. Although born in Surrey, his father hails from Ilfracombe, and the family had moved back there by the time Vellacott had finished the first year of his Sports Coaching degree at Hartpury and was offered a foot on the ladder. Until that point, he admitted a professional career was still a dream.

"I had been to Ivybridge College to try and improve my rugby while doing my A levels," Ben said.

"I ended up going through the Scotland Exiles system, which is for boys who are eligible to play for Scotland (his mother is from Peterhead) but are not based there. I had played for the Under 17's, and hoped to pick up something from Glasgow or Edinburgh but nothing came of that. So, with no professional opportunities at that stage, I applied to Hartpury to do my degree and play at a good standard. I've been here ever since."

Having banked his degree in 2016, Vellacott has just started a Masters after taking a year off from studying, but his rugby education is accelerating rapidly. He made his Premiership debut last season, and found himself involved in the Challenge Cup for the first time in Pau last month.

So far he has only started twice, but he scored a try on each occasion - one of them at Welford Road last Saturday - as well as being a regular energiser of the team from the replacements bench this season. You also won't be surprised that former Gloucester and Scotland scrum half Greig Laidlaw has been a big influence on his career.

"When I was first in the Scotland U20's squad it was during the Six Nations period of the season and we joined the senior team at some of their training sessions," Vellacott added.

"Greig was obviously there and when I was younger my rugby was pretty loose and my control wasn't where it needed to be. Greig is one of the best there is and being able to pick his brain was a great help because I'm trying to take every opportunity I can at the moment."

Vellacott doesn't want to be pigeon-holed as an impact player but Willi Heinz's form at the moment makes him the clear first choice, which leaves 22-year-old Vellacott often packing 80 minutes energy into 20 with predictable results, and he's impressed number eight Ben Morgan.

"Ben has electric pace and whether a defence is tired or not, he has the potential to cause them some headaches," Morgan said. "His appearances have been strong and he offers a different dynamic."

On his own admission, Vellacott still has work to do on his tackling - "...not the greatest part of my game..." was how he put it - but he has a spark which we may see again today against a London Irish side also narrowly beaten last Saturday, in their case by Bath who top Gloucester's group after the first weekend of matches.

"Any time you pull on a Gloucester shirt, you want to go out and win," he concluded.

"I'm sure the squad will again be made up of some young players and others coming back from injury looking to get some minutes. It's a senior game and everyone wants to prove what they can do. London Irish will have some experience in their side as well and for us (and them) it's a chance to put on a good show."





# TEAM LINE-UPS



SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER // **ANGLO WELSH CUP**

T P C D				POSITION	T P C D						
				TOM HUDSON 15	<b>FULLBACK</b>	15	JAMES MARSHALL				
				HENRY PURDY 14	<b>RIGHT WING</b>	14	JOE COKANASIGA				
				HENRY TRINDER 13	<b>OUTSIDE CENTRE</b>	13	FERGUS MULCHRONE				
				BILLY TWELVETREES 12	<b>INSIDE CENTRE</b>	12	LUKE MCLEAN				
				OLLIE THORLEY 11	<b>LEFT WING</b>	11	ALEX LEWINGTON				
				BILLY BURNS 10	<b>FLY-HALF</b>	10	THEO BROPHY CLEWS				
				WILLI HEINZ (C) 9	<b>SCRUM-HALF</b>	9	BRENDAN MCKIBBIN				
				VAL RAPAVA RUSKIN 1	<b>LOOSEHEAD PROP</b>	1	HARRY ELRINGTON				
				RICHARD HIBBARD 2	<b>HOOKER</b>	2	DAVID PAICE (C)				
				JOHN AFOA 3	<b>TIGHTENED PROP</b>	3	PETRUS DU PLESSIS				
				ED SLATER 4	<b>LOCK</b>	4	FRANCO VAN DER MERWE				
				JEREMY THRUSH 5	<b>LOCK</b>	5	TEOFILO PAULO				
				ROSS MORIARTY 6	<b>BLINDSIDE FLANKER</b>	6	MAX NORTHCOTE-GREEN				
				JACOB ROWAN 7	<b>OPENSIDE FLANKER</b>	7	BLAIR COWAN				
				LEWIS LUDLOW 8	<b>NUMBER 8</b>	8	JAKE SCHATZ				
REPLACEMENTS				REPLACEMENTS							
				JAMES HANSON 16		16	TOM WOOLSTENCROFT				
				JOSH HOHNECK 17		17	TOM SMALLBONE				
				GARETH DENMAN 18		18	OLLIE HOSKINS				
				TOM SAVAGE 19		19	WILL LLOYD				
				JAKE POLLEDRI 20		20	OFISA TREVIRANUS				
				CALLUM BRALEY 21		21	SCOTT STEELE				
				LLOYD EVANS 22		22	ASELI TIKOIROTUMA				
				ANDY SYMONS 23		23	BEN RANSOM				

**MATCH OFFICIALS**

**REFEREE**  
Jack Makepeace

**ASSISTANT REFEREES**  
Greg Garner  
& Sara Cox