

CHERRY & WHITES



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**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY**

V **SARACENS**

**GLOUCESTER RUGBY
OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME**
2017/18 SEASON / ISSUE 06
AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY
FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2017
KO 19.45 / £3

WIGGIN OSBORNE FULLERLOVE
solicitors

TONIGHT'S MATCHDAY
SPONSOR



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

WILLI HEINZ

GOOD EVENING, AND WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM AS WE TAKE ON THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS, SARACENS, AND WHAT AN EXCITING EVENING LIES IN STORE.

We're in a good place at the moment as a squad, it's been a good few weeks for us where we have played some really promising rugby, albeit with a few areas that we're keen to improve on.

Taking on Saracens is one of those fixtures that springs out at you in the calendar at the start of the season. We've had some really good memories against them in recent seasons, and I'm sure many of you can reel off those moments in your head.

But, the challenge we have set ourselves as a squad is to not fall back on memories like that, but to go out and make our own amazing moments for ourselves, and our fans.

The important thing for us as players is to do the shirt, the supporters and the city proud when we have the opportunity to do so, and this Friday is no different.

Saracens have proven themselves to be one of the toughest opponents in European Rugby, and we relish the chance to test our progress as a squad against them.

What is exciting about our team is that we have had some great moments so far this season, but we are nowhere near the finished article. We're improving game by game and developing into the style of rugby that Johan wants us to play.

Looking back to our last Aviva Premiership outing at The Rec, we fought tooth and nail for that result, and the feeling in the changing room was such a special one.

I was chuffed with the way the boys stuck to the plan for the full 80 minutes. We didn't always get it right, but the intensity and desire was there and I thought that was particularly evident in our defence. We were talking under the posts when we went behind with five minutes to go, stressing that we had to keep calm and trust our processes, and we did!



The rest of course is history, and we all celebrated in style when Ed went over the line. We had stayed patient in the 22 and eventually seized our chance when it came which really shows the clinical edge we are trying to build this season.

Of course, outside this squad, there would have been a lot of nerves when Owen lined up the kick, but we know how cool he is under pressure, and he showed that by bisecting the posts and capping an amazing afternoon.

Since then, the Anglo Welsh Cup has given us a chance to refresh the bodies and minds, and the young lads really acquitted themselves well at Welford Road, and I think, were unlucky to be on the losing side, and showed the strength in depth that we're trying to get to.

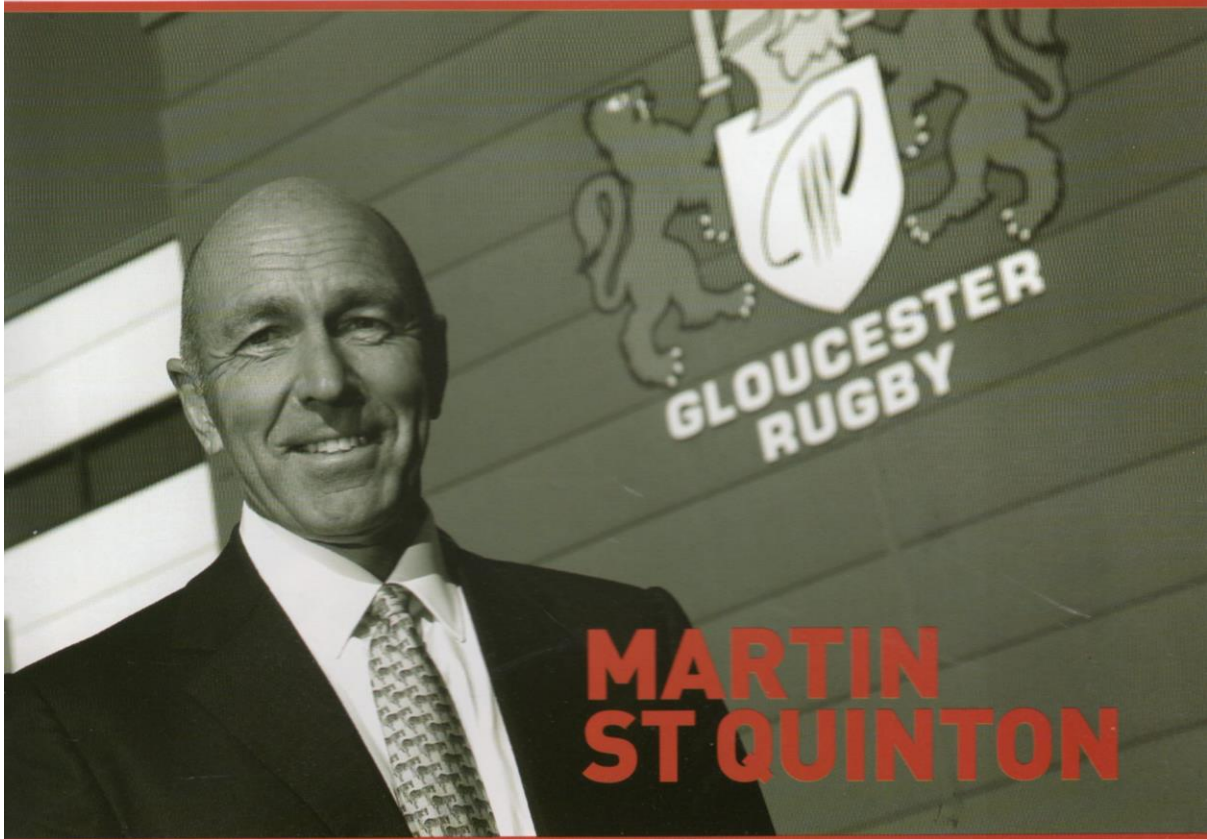
Last week was a valuable exercise for the squad, as we were able to shake off any rustiness in our game, in tricky conditions and then get into the groove against a determined Irish side.

We were able to run in some eye-catching scores, but we worked hard to earn the right to play, and we know that our game may be based on attack, but the important thing is knowing when and when not to strike.

This Friday will be a cracking atmosphere, I just know it, and we are buzzing to get out there.

Enjoy the game

Willi



MARTIN ST QUINTON

Good evening and welcome once again to Kingsholm for the second time in six days. In particular, a very warm welcome to the players, staff and supporters of Saracens.

I think I have mentioned before on this page about games under floodlights having a little bit of something extra about them – a special buzz around the ground giving an edge to the atmosphere.

This evening promises to be no different. Saracens arrive at Kingsholm as the current European champions and are currently topping the Aviva Premiership table. It looks very much like business as usual for them.

However, we've enjoyed some exciting moments against them in the past few seasons. Everyone will remember James Hook's last gasp penalty to beat Saracens here in January 2015, and we also triumphed earlier this year in a similarly thrilling encounter.

Both teams this evening will be missing a number of players who are away on international duty. Saracens

will arguably be affected more than ourselves, but, no doubt, will still be able to field a strong side. It is one of the questions I get asked quite regularly – why do important games have to be played when key players are missing? It doesn't happen in football, for example.

The answer is that the Aviva Premiership cannot be put on hold on weekends when international games are being played. Football can make up the backlog by playing a number of midweek games, but this would not be possible for our sport, given the physical nature of modern rugby union.

Now, back to this evening. Recent league wins over Saints and Bath have given us some good momentum going into this evening's game. The team really look as though they're starting to come to terms with how Johan wants to play the game, and a win would be great for our ambition to finish in the top six.

Enjoy the game

Martin

GOOD EVENING AND WELCOME BACK TO KINGSHOLM FOR TONIGHT'S AVIVA PREMIERSHIP GAME AGAINST SARACENS.

With 7 rounds of Premiership matches already played, and almost a third of the way through the season, it's been an exciting but challenging few weeks for the squad since Johan's arrival in Gloucester. The results, and particularly the level of team performance, have been encouraging but everyone knows there's a lot of hard work still to be done.

One thing that stands out for me is that we've found a way to win games in the last 10 minutes. Exeter, Worcester, Northampton and Bath have all come down to the last play but, unlike last season, when we couldn't close out any games, we've shown real character and composure under pressure to win.

In many ways, beating Bath at the Rec highlighted the changes from last season and the confidence that Johan and the coaching team have instilled in this squad of players. Against a quality Bath team, we knew we'd have to defend for long periods of time, but I thought we showed a real ambition to play, even when we were under pressure, and really deserved to win at the end. I still can't believe Richard Hibbard couldn't watch Owen's match winning kick – maybe held a big win bonus at stake....

We've approached the Anglo Welsh Cup slightly differently this season. Traditionally we've rested our senior players throughout the competition but last weekend against London Irish, we picked a strong squad to prepare for the massive challenge of Saracens this evening. With the large number of injuries we've suffered this season, there was always a risk in playing key players but I've no doubt we're better prepared for tonight's game after another positive performance.

I'm delighted to welcome Mark McCall and everyone associated with Saracens to Kingsholm tonight and, if the recent games are anything to go by, it will be another huge contest. Saracens have established themselves as the best club team in Europe but we're looking forward to extending our unbeaten home run at Kingsholm with another big performance.

We've been very unfortunate this season with a number of injuries to some of our key international players. The positive has been that the young players who have stepped up have played really well and proved they can perform at Premiership level. However, the attritional nature of this competition means you

DAVID HUMPHREYS



need depth to your squad and we're looking forward to welcoming back Mariano Galarza, Tom Marshall, Ross Moriarty, Charlie Sharples and Matt Scott into training over the next couple of weeks

With the start of Autumn Internationals last weekend, we were all delighted to see Owen Williams make his first start for Wales v Australia. He's made a big impression in the short time he's been here and we're delighted to see Gloucester players representing the Club on an international stage.

Owen, Motu Matu'u and David Halaifonua were all involved in games at the weekend and I know Motu is looking forward to playing against England next weekend!

Enjoy the game.

David

GLOUCESTER RUGBY HERITAGE



SEASON 1981-82

Captain Steve Mills

Played 48

Won 41

Lost 3

Drawn 4

For 1024

Against 300



BACK: T R Tandy (Hon Sec), T Pritchard, M Elway, R Collins, J Jarrett, AD Wadley (Hon Treasurer), A Brinn, CAR Lancaster, AC Pope, P Hawker, J Bennett, E Stephens

MIDDLE: R Morris, M Longstaff, M Teague, J Brain, S Boyle, A Turton, J Fidler, J Orwin, J Gadd, M Preedy, S Parslow, L Jones, S Ashmead, M Booth, T Day

Was this the greatest season in the history of the Gloucester club? If not, it was surely their greatest season in the amateur era. The figures speak for themselves. Coached by Dick Smith, captained by Steve Mills, with Mike Nicholls as team manager, the club carried all before them.

Gloucester were the first English club for five years to win the Daily Mail Anglo-Welsh merit table and reached the John Player Cup Final at Twickenham, drawing the match after extra time and sharing the cup. They were a young side (the average age of the team that played at Twickenham was 25) full of promising players, whose coach's philosophy was to

go forward at every opportunity, putting the ball on the floor and driving over the top of it. As coach Dick Smith said "We decided on a plan of rucking the ball and picking people up and carrying them into rucks and no mauling whatsoever. And it was very, very successful." A workmanlike side became a great side as the season progressed.

Three forwards in Gloucester's match day squad at Twickenham in May 1982 had already been capped by England; five more were to be capped in the future. Three (prop Phil Blakeway 1980, lock Steve Boyle 1983 and No 8 Mike Teague 1989 and 1993) toured with the British Lions and lock John Orwin went on to captain England on the 1988 tour of Australia. Hooker Steve Mills and lock John Fidler had been

capped on England's summer tour of Argentina, prop Gordon Sargent against Ireland the previous season, and prop Malcolm Preedy was to form part of an all-Gloucester front row in the first test of the 1984 tour of South Africa. Behind the international front five, the back row of Teague, John Gadd and Mike Longstaff were an outstanding unit and key to the team's success. Mike Teague, then just 22, was already a dominant force both as ball-winner and ball-player, scoring 20 tries as the side's leading scorer. The dynamic Gadd, also 22, with his impressive work rate, was (like Dick Smith himself) desperately unlucky not to win a full England cap while Longstaff, a converted full back and the unsung hero of the side, had the pace to be first to the breakdown, setting it up for Gadd and Teague to take over.



FRONT: R Smith (Coach), A Mitchell, P Ford, P Blakeway, R Clewes, AG Hudson (Chairman), S Mills (Captain), Canon HM Hughes (President), S Baker, R Mogg, P Taylor, J Holder, M Nicholls (Hon Team Sec)

SEATED: P Pritchard, K White

At scrum half, the promising Steve Baker, again only 22, who already had 100 games behind him, formed a sound partnership with county fly half Les Jones. In the threequarters, wings Richard Mogg, a veteran at 26, who had been capped by England at every level save full international, and the elusive Welshman Phil Pritchard who bagged 15 tries, played alongside the indestructible hard-tackling Paul Taylor and the creative Steve Parsloe. Full back Paul Ford scored 241 points including six tries that season.

During the season, notable away wins were achieved at Leicester, Northampton, Moseley, Bedford, Neath, Coventry, London Scottish and Bath. Ten tries were scored at home to Oxford University and six each against

Sale and Saracens. The team were unbeaten in the 22 matches played after Christmas.

In the John Player Cup, Gloucester met Sale in the semi-final at Kingsholm and, after containing the visitors while playing against a strong wind in the first half, shut them out of the game in the second to win 13-6, scoring two tries to nil. The try scorers were Ford, after a break from Parsloe, and Teague. Gloucester were drawn against Coventry in the semi-final at Coundon Road, just as they had been in the inaugural competition of 1971-72. This time the result was emphatic, as Gloucester, dominating the lineout through Steve Boyle, won 18-9, with tries from Phil Pritchard and Steve Parsloe.

And so to the final against Moseley, again their opponents of ten years before. Gloucester controlled possession for long periods, but for once lacked penetration and the game was a dull 9-9 draw (3 penalties apiece) at the final whistle, resulting in extra time. A fine Perry drop goal early in the second period seemed to have won the game for Moseley, but Paul Ford's penalty for Gloucester in the dying minutes just squeezed over off a post, and the Cup was shared for the only time in its history.

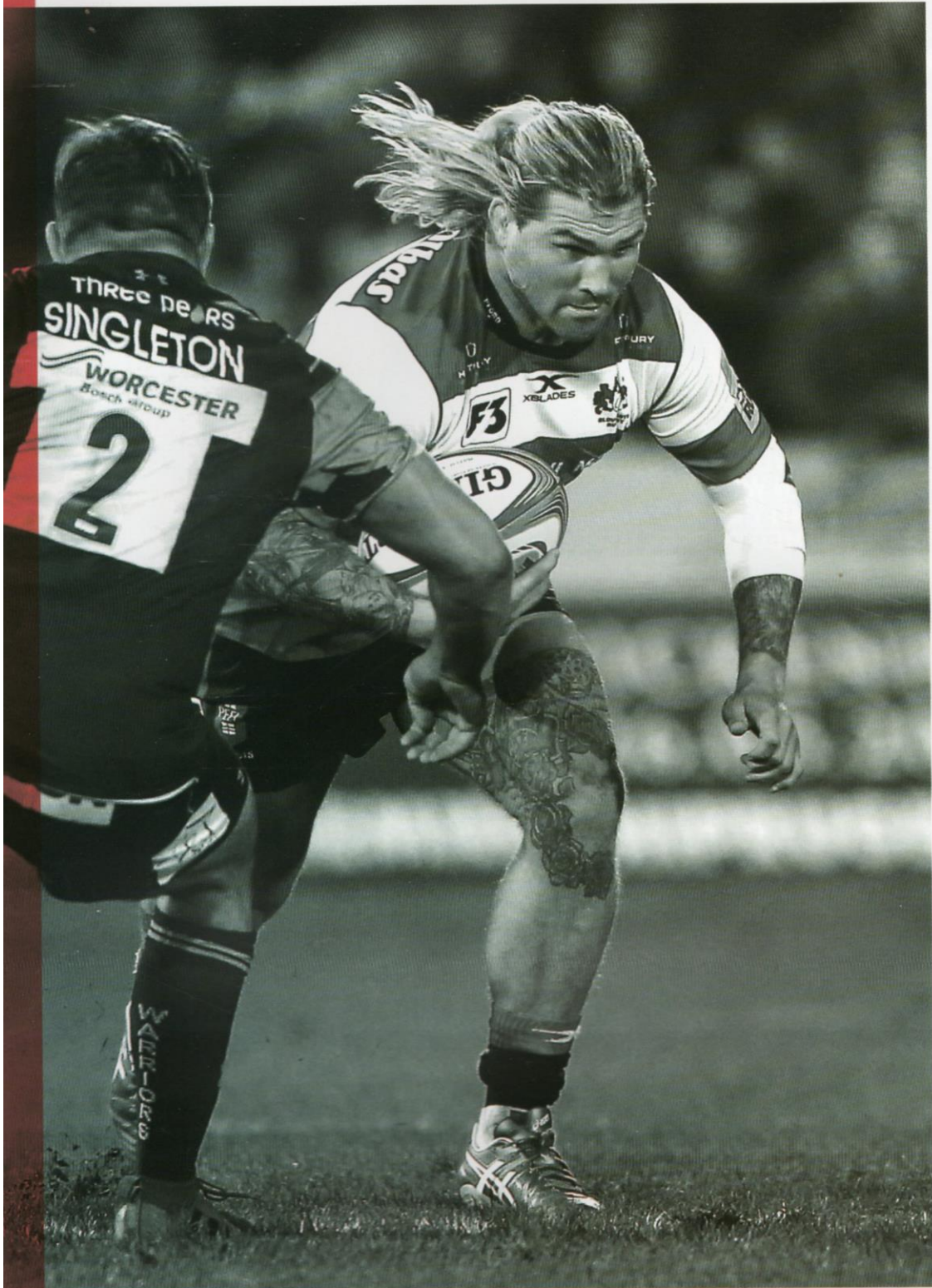
Not only was 1981-82 a triumphant season for the 1st XV, but Gloucester United, under the captaincy of John Haines, won 31 of their 35 games, only narrowly losing four.

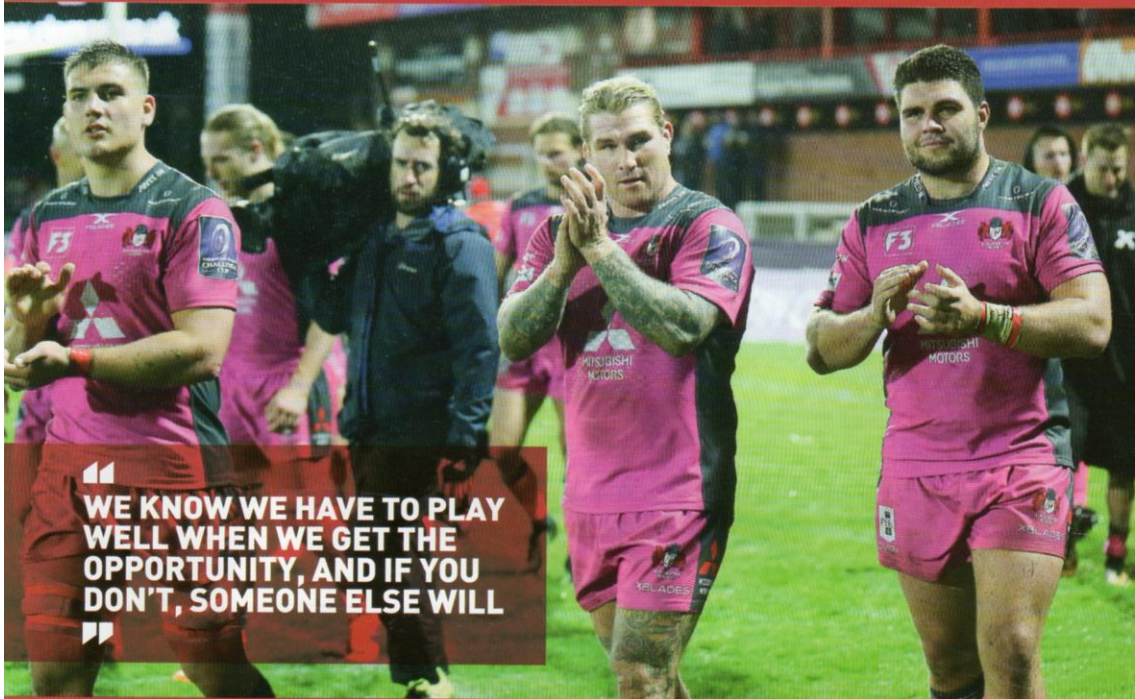


FEATURE INTERVIEW

RICHARD HIBBARD

“
WE WANT TO MAKE IT A
TOUGH PLACE TO COME
AND PLAY, AND HAVE A
HOME RECORD THAT WE
CAN BE PROUD OF.
”





“**WE KNOW WE HAVE TO PLAY WELL WHEN WE GET THE OPPORTUNITY, AND IF YOU DON'T, SOMEONE ELSE WILL**”

Going into the new campaign, the Cherry and Whites would have been targeting a boost in form at Kingsholm, and after a strong showing in GL1 early on, the hosts face yet another acid test this evening.

With Saracens continuing to set the bar at the top of the table, they pose challenges that need to be overcome, and the Cherry and Whites are determined to meet it head on this evening, with hooker Richard Hibbard as usual leading the charge.

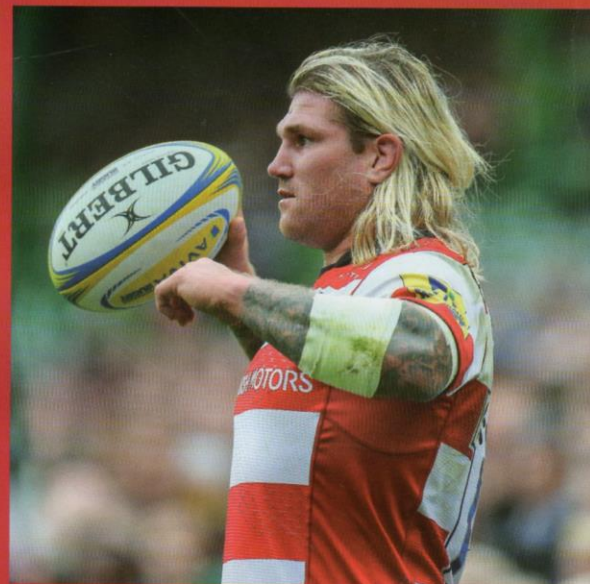
One of the key challenges set by new Head Coach Johan Ackermann at the start the season has been to establish good home form, one of the key initial targets, as Hibbard explains.

“The boys have started well this season, in this league it’s so important to pick up your home wins, and it’s been a real focus for us this season in making our home ground a bit of a fortress, and going from there.

“We want to make it a tough place to come and play, and have a home record that we can be proud of.”

Saracens sit atop the Aviva Premiership table with one solitary defeat in their opening seven fixtures, and with current Champions Exeter Chiefs and one-time leaders Northampton Saints both defeated in Cherry and White territory, another massive test lies ahead.

Hibbard pinpoints the team’s drive to make the most of every second of the game as they have recorded the points in tight fixtures so far.



“You have to do everything to win, and we have to play for the full eighty, and in a few games last year we probably fell a little bit short of that.

“This season we have really played to the end, and against Exeter, everyone saw that in evidence as we scored in added time. So it’s really good for the boys to find that ability to go for the full game, and always be in with a chance in every fixture.”



Johan Ackermann has instilled a new philosophy to the Cherry and White game plan, and the all-court game has caught the eye so far. Hibbard is looking forward to the boosts it will bring as the season progresses.

"It's been different to what we have been doing, and it has been a lot of getting used to how he would like us to play and for us to understand some of the terminology - that play doesn't mean play, but it means play and still build pressure and go from there.

"Someone has said it to me before that, 'a new coach really doesn't give off a full impression until at least four months down the line', so if that was true, then we are definitely not far away."

The home form is something that can very easily ended in one eighty minutes, a decision or a bounce of the ball can change things. But the foundations of the scrum has been massively important to the start to the season for Gloucester.

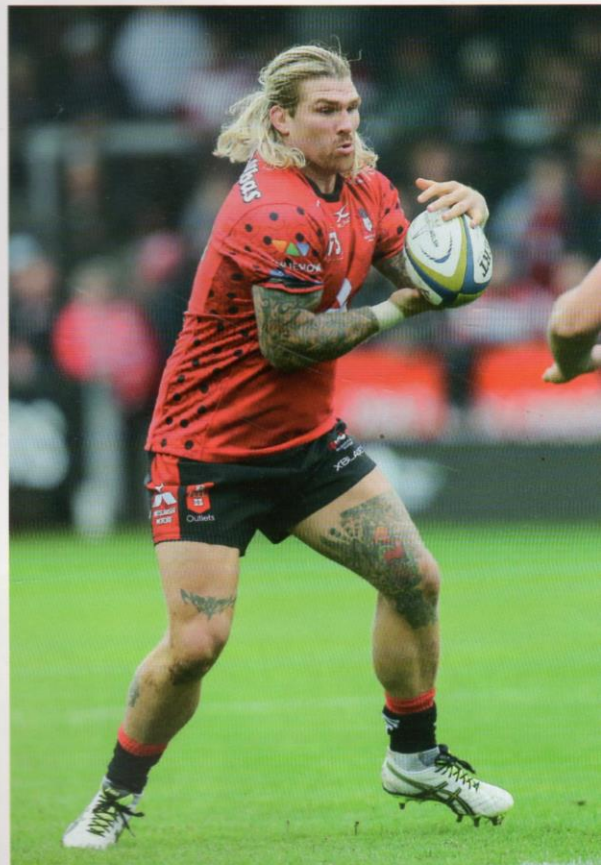
"The foundations that we have laid in the summer were superb. We put in so much work early on, and it was a savage pre-season regime. It was definitely the toughest that I've known, but during that time we laid the foundations.

"During that time, we put in a lot of focus on our foundations, and a lot of time in the scrum and the lineout.

"To sit here now, the scrum has gone well, and we want to keep pushing on, and we are still working very hard at the lineout, and finding out the way to be consistent, which is great to be part of, and carry that on."

Hibbard is joined in the senior squad hooking department by international duo Motu Matu'u and James Hanson, and he puts the challenge and heightened competition as a real drive, that all three are benefiting from.

"They are two guys that know what it takes. When you get



challenges in your position, especially quality players like Chibba (Hanson) and Motu, it really does push you to perform.

"We know we have to play well when we get the opportunity, and if you don't, someone else will. That truth really drives you."

Another hooker that Hibbard has spent a lot of time with is Darren Dawidiuk, and the Welshman is right behind his former team mate's battle with testicular cancer.

"It was amazing to show the support for Dukey alongside the club, and London Irish. Dukey is a very strong character, and it's the least we can do to support him.

"I'm pretty sure that he will do all that he can to come back from this, he's so strong. He's not even stopped training, he's an animal."



KINGSHOLM WITH BOB FENTON NEWS

Ah, it's good to be back after a few weeks off. And it's been a bit of an eventful few weeks hasn't it?

We've had a break for the Challenge Cup, the Anglo Welsh Cup thing and a couple of Premiership games too. Last time I wrote something for the programme it was for the Northampton game – as I recall we were not expected to get anything from that game? Except that we got five tries in a great display of gutsy rugby.

Then the week after we had the pleasure of the short trip down to The Rec. As I recall we were not expected to get anything from that game either... except we did! We made hard work of that one though – I thought we had it in the bag only to slip six points behind with just minutes left on the clock.

Part of me felt that a losing bonus point was not a bad return – and let's be honest a lot of us would have taken that a few minutes before kick-off. But, on the other hand, I felt cheated as our defence had been superb.

However cometh the hour cometh the men. From the re-start we battered the Bath line before Ed Slater burrowed over after what seemed like about 765 phases of possession. Having missed a few kicks against Northampton the previous week, the pressure was on Owen Williams to land the two points that would win the game for us. He didn't disappoint.

The league table show that the result added another four points to the tally but, to be honest, the bragging rights are worth a heck of a lot more than that!

Between the two Premiership games, we had a short trip to Pau and came close but left with just the one point, then the following week a hat full of points against Agen to take us into the Anglo Welsh competition.

Leicester away was a case of the last kick not going for us, and then last week a comprehensive battering of London Irish. With the final of the competition being held at

Kingsholm next year we have another incentive to go for it, more performances like we saw last week should get us there.

As ever the competition lets us see a few 'fringe' players strutting their stuff. And very encouraging that is too – can't help feeling that in Jake Polledri we have unearthed another gem – he looks a real prospect.

He's one of a growing number of youngsters coming through that is great for the club, but not so good for me – when a commentator said something about one of our team in the Leicester game being born in this century... Did I feel old? Try positively ancient.

All in all, then, quite a good few weeks for the squad. I think we are starting to see the 'Johan Effect' in the way we are playing – and it's an exciting brand of rugby for sure.

Look at last weekend. We score a try, take the ball from the restart and about 45 seconds later we are walking back into our own half while Billy Twelvetrees lines up a shot at goal.

Today though, time for a real test. And they don't come





much tougher than Saracens. To be fair though, if you could pick a time to play them then this is the time to do it while the autumn internationals are on.

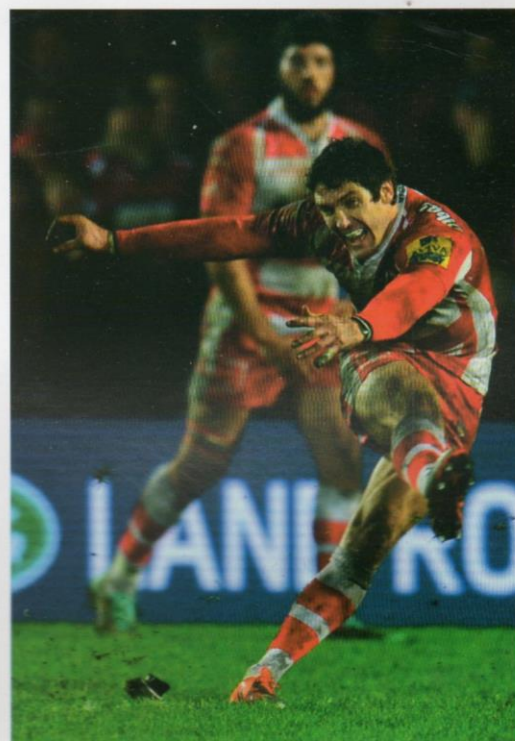
Last time we played them here was in February when, like today, they were without a bunch of internationals as a result of the Six Nations tournament – they must wonder what they have done to upset the fixtures people to keep getting drawn against us during the international windows!

It's not fair, though. I get the cup competition being played while the internationals are on but when it comes to the really serious stuff – when European places are potentially at stake – it's nuts. Why should the clubs be expected to compete without their prize assets? No other sport would tolerate it. Still, they are not going to change it for a grumpy old sod like me, are they?

But do I feel sorry for them? Not really... Even though they are shorn of a whole bunch of internationals, such is the depth of their squad that they will probably only be able to field about 15 international or ex-international players in their starting squad so they are hardly going to struggle.

They'll have one of my all-time favourite players with them – Schalk Brits. As you probably know, he has announced that he will retire at the end of the season and the game will be a little bit poorer without him. He plays rugby with a smile on his face and does things that other players would probably never dream of. It's been a pleasure to watch you play Mr B. Mind you, I hope you have one of those nights when you couldn't hit a barn door with a banjo!

We can go into tonight's game full of confidence, we can summon up the spirit and nerve of James Hook's last-



minute penalty from January 2015 and blast them out of the park and add another illustrious scalp to this season's tally.

No doubt about it...

RANDALL on RUGBY



THE INCREASED INTENSITY OF THE PREMIERSHIP RETURNS THIS EVENING WITH THE VISIT OF SARACENS WHO, WHISPER IT QUIETLY, HAVE LOST BOTH THEIR MATCHES IN THE ANGLO WELSH CUP.

Having seen first hand Director of Rugby Mark McCall's reaction when they won at Worcester in the league earlier this season - let's say their attacking play didn't please him - I would expect the European champions, even without nine players on international duty and the injured Billy Vunipola, to push Gloucester in every area tonight.

Last Saturday's win over London Irish, also in the Anglo Welsh Cup, returned a lot of the more senior players to the fray after a week off, among them lock Ed Slater who became the fifth former Leicester player to join Gloucester when he signed in the closed season.

Now 29, his move ended seven years at Welford Road, although that stint might have been shorter under other circumstances.

"There had been interest from Gloucester before but I was committed to Leicester at that time," Slater told me.

"When that interest was shown again, my first step was to speak to the guys I already knew at the club, especially Billy Twelvetrees who talked me through the changes he had seen and the plan with Johan Ackermann going forward.

"Leicester had brought back a coach who had been there before in Matt O'Connor and I felt I was at a point where I needed a change. I knew settling in



wouldn't be a problem and it was a chance to go somewhere and stamp my mark on the team."

Slater, in his role as a front jumper, has certainly done that in the line out and his try with the countdown clock having run out at Bath might yet prove a pivotal moment in the season, although Ed is cautious to categorically say so at this stage.

"It has to be a starting point because up until then we had been quite poor away from home and had conceded a lot of tries," he went on.

"There is still a lot of room for improvement and if we want to push up the league ladder then we to have to show that form away from home more consistently.



THERE IS STILL A LOT OF ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT AND IF WE WANT TO PUSH UP THE LEAGUE LADDER THEN WE TO HAVE TO SHOW THAT FORM AWAY FROM HOME MORE CONSISTENTLY

and I really believe it is a mental thing. Not everyone is the same but I enjoy being in an away team that silences the home crowd."

"When I was at Leicester I felt Gloucester only showed up 50% of the time, and since I arrived I have sensed that wasn't just a perception from outside the club. Within it, they were aware of where they had been and where they wanted to go, and hopefully me coming in can benefit that process. You can't just win at home and be successful."

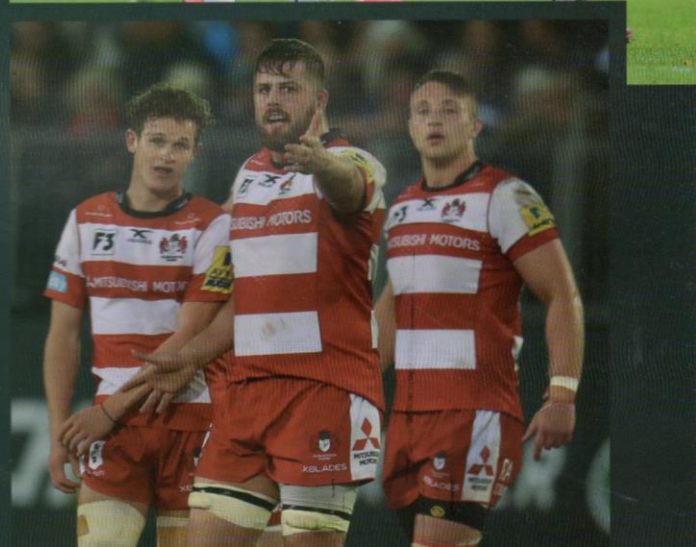
Certainly that is an attitude which has seen Saracens become a Premiership powerhouse under McCall. While their one league defeat this season was at Bath, their display in putting 50 points on Northampton at Franklins Gardens in the Champions Cup showed a ruthlessness efficiency that Slater knows Gloucester must combat tonight in what could be a fascinating tactical contest.

"Here at Gloucester Johan knows what he is looking for, and he tells you if he sees it or if he doesn't," added Ed.

"I have played under other coaches who were extremely structured, but he encourages you to understand the game and make the right decisions with that knowledge. A structured game worked well for me while I was learning the ropes, but now I'm older I think I have a better feel for the game and that freedom and responsibility is something I didn't realise I was craving for.

"Saracens are the best in Europe by quite a way in my opinion and that comes down to how they are coached. They don't want to play in their own half, so they pin you in, feed off any mistakes and then exploit them.

"Running everything out of your own half against them is not the best option so we have to patient and not become frustrated if it becomes a game of territory."





**BATH
RUGBY**

21-22

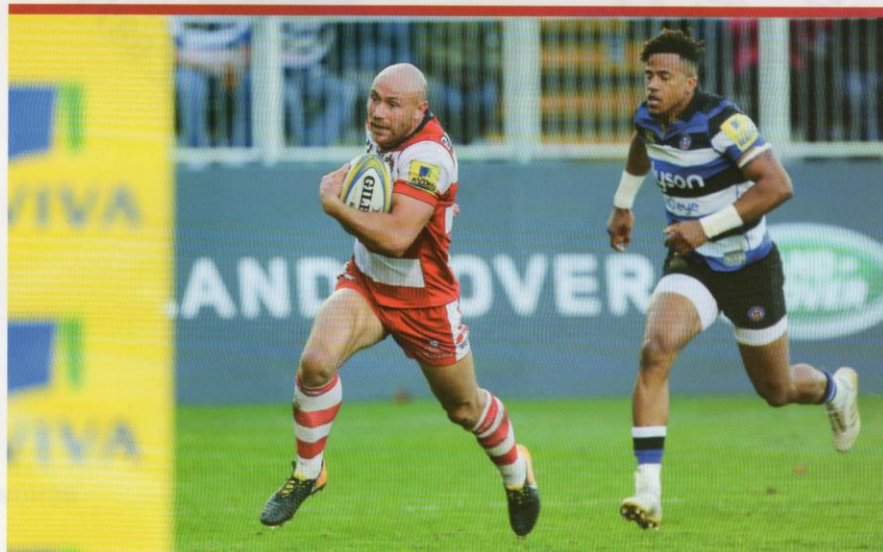
**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY**

TRIES:
Semesa Rokoduguni (2)
CONVERSIONS:
Rhys Priestland
PENALTIES:
Rhys Priestland (3)

DATE: Sun 29th Oct 17
KO: 15:00

TRIES:
Ed Slater, Willi Heinz (2)
CONVERSIONS:
Owen Williams (2)
PENALTIES:
Owen Williams

ACTION REPLAY



It's fair to say that Bath have had the edge in the West Country derby against Gloucester in recent times. But, on a chilly Sunday afternoon by the River Avon, the Cherry and White colours were painted all over the West Country following a brilliant performance from Johan Ackermann's men.

Bath came into the game in fine form, having won four on the trot in the Aviva Premiership, but Gloucester's all court game and fierce defence saw them taste victory at The Rec for the second time in three seasons.

Willi Heinz got the scoring underway on the day, owing much to a wonderful shimmy and break from Henry Trinder, taking play flowing out of the Gloucester half, Heinz applying the finishing touches following a dummy which froze the covering defence to dive over, sending the pockets of Cherry and White travelling support into raptures.

Bath then struck back, their England international trio of Jonathan Joseph, Anthony Watson and scorer Semesa Rokoduguni combining to cross for a sweeping score.

Gloucester's defence was working overtime in the first half, wave upon wave was coming from Bath, but the door was shut. David Halaifonua in particular delivered away a pair of bone crunching hits on Watson and Rokoduguni as Bath tried to make hay in the wide spaces.

Rhys Priestland's penalty was the only other score in the first period, but Owen Williams soon levelled the scores with a penalty of his own as Gloucester hammered away at the Bath line.

Priestland then added a penalty to see the lead back with Bath, but it wasn't long before the Cherry and Whites entered the Bath 22, and it was a beautiful score.

On the front foot, the quick thinking of John Afoa saw him pick up from an unguarded ruck to get across the gain line, and a no-look offload found skipper Heinz on a perfect support line to skate away from Anthony Watson and score a crucial try.

Williams added the conversion as the game entered the nervous final quarter, and a soft penalty against Ben Morgan gave Priestland a shot at goal which he duly chipped over.



It looked like the Cherry and Whites were readying for a final ten minutes of all out defence, when a powerful break from Welsh and Lions number eight Taulupe Faletau stretched the visiting defence and, as the Bath support caught up, Rokoduguni shimmied his way inside to score. Priestland's conversion saw Bath lead, and the bragging rights were set to remain on the Avon.

But Gloucester were quick to dust themselves down and, despite conceding a free kick at the restart, earned a turnover at the set piece setting up the attack. The ball was lost in contact with 30 seconds on the clock, but crucially Bath kicked it to the safety of the stands.

Jeremy Thrush was impeded at the throw, and the resulting penalty was kicked deep into the 22. After a number of close range mauls, the Cherry and Whites neared the try line.

It looked as if Bath were holding on, and the final whistle would soon blow, but deep into seven minutes of added time, Ed Slater was driven over, and thanks to the help of the TMO, the try was awarded.

Gloucester celebrated, but still trailed by a single point. Over to Owen Williams who took his time, and sent his kick straight down the middle, sending the travelling party into raptures.

“I WAS TRYING TO COMPOSE MYSELF AND CONTROL MY BREATHING BEFORE THAT KICK. I KNOW HOW BIG OF A KICK IT WAS, BUT IT WAS JUST IMPORTANT TO CONTROL MY PROCESSES AND AS SOON AS I SAW IT GOING THROUGH THE POSTS, I LET OUT A BIG SCREAM.”

“IT’S RELIEF TO WIN AS WE WERE IN THE GAME THROUGHOUT AND WE JUST MANAGED TO STAY IN THE GAME DESPITE GOING BEHIND LATE ON.”

FLY-HALF OWEN WILLIAMS





**LEICESTER
TIGERS**

26-24

**GLOUCESTER
RUGBY**

TRIES:

Adam Thompstone, Jonah Holmes, Charlie Thacker

CONVERSIONS:

Joe Ford

PENALTIES:

Joe Ford (3)

DATE: Sat 4th Nov 17

KO: 15:00

TRIES:

Paddy McAllister, Ben Vellacott, Tom Hudson

CONVERSIONS:

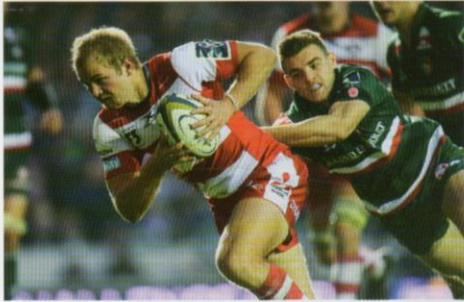
Lloyd Evans (3)

PENALTIES:

Lloyd Evans

ACTION REPLAY





It was a case of so near and yet so far for a young Gloucester Rugby side in the opening Anglo-Welsh Cup tie of 2017-18.

The Tigers are defending champions and Kingsholm has been announced as hosting the final in March 2018, so there was plenty of incentive for both teams going into the game.

Whatever the competition, and whoever takes the field for the Tigers, Welford Road is always a tough place to visit and Gloucester came so very close to securing a rare win.

Having trailed 21-10 approaching the hour mark, the Cherry and Whites launched an impressive comeback and deservedly took a narrow lead as the game went into the final ten minutes, only for the Tigers to hit back and hold on for a nervy win.

Gloucester did have one late opportunity, but Lloyd Evans' 78th minute penalty drifted just wide of the right hand upright and the chance was gone.

There was little to choose between the two teams throughout the game. Leicester started well and took an early lead through a Charlie Thacker try, but Gloucester got off and running with a penalty from Evans.

The Tigers responded in kind through Joe Ford, before the Cherry and Whites stunned the home crowd by taking the lead as Paddy McAllister burrowed his way over from close range. Two late penalties from Ford gave the home team a 14-10 lead at half time.

And the Tigers seemed to take a grip on the game when, nine minutes into the second half, Jonah Holmes finished well to score Leicester's second try with Ford's conversion opening up a 21-10 lead.

With the home crowd expecting their team to ease to a straightforward victory, Gloucester's young guns promptly ripped up the script as Ben Vellacott and Tom Hudson both finished well, Evans converting both tries to edge Gloucester into a 21-24 lead.

However, despite Gloucester seemingly coping well in defence, the Tigers finally worked an opening for Adam Thompstone to cross on the left and restore the Tigers advantage.

It was a blow but the Cherry and Whites responded positively, the pack earning a penalty from a massive scrum effort in the Tigers half only for Evans' attempt to agonisingly stay the wrong side of the post.

“HAPPY THAT WE GAVE OURSELVES AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN THE GAME, REALLY PROUD OF THE PERFORMANCE TO GET US INTO THAT POSITION BUT ULTIMATELY DISAPPOINTED THAT WE DIDN'T COME AWAY WITH THE WIN THAT, ESPECIALLY AT TIMES IN THE SECOND HALF, THAT I THOUGHT WE DESERVED.”

HEAD OF ACADEMY, RICHARD WHIFFIN



TEAM LINE-UPS



FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER // AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY // ROUND 8

T P C D				POSITION	T P C D						
				TOM HUDSON 15	FULL BACK	15	ALEX GOODE				
				OLLIE THORLEY 14	RIGHT WING	14	NATHAN EARLE				
				BILLY TWELVETREES 13	OUTSIDE CENTRE	13	MARCELO BOSCH				
				ANDY SYMONS 12	INSIDE CENTRE	12	BRAD BARRITT (C)				
				HENRY TRINDER 11	LEFT WING	11	CHRIS WYLES				
				BILLY BURNS 10	FLY-HALF	10	ALEX LOZOWSKI				
				WILLI HEINZ (C) 9	SCRUM-HALF	9	RICHARD WIGGLESWORTH				
				JOSH HOHNECK 1	LOOSEHEAD PROP	1	RICHARD BARRINGTON				
				RICHARD HIBBARD 2	HOOKER	2	SCHALK BRITS				
				JOHN AFOA 3	TIGHTENED PROP	3	JUAN FIGALLO				
				TOM SAVAGE 4	LOCK	4	GEORGE KRUIS				
				ED SLATER 5	LOCK	5	WILL SKELTON				
				RUAN ACKERMANN 6	BLINDSIDE FLANKER	6	SCHALK BURGER				
				LEWIS LUDLOW 7	OPENSIDE FLANKER	7	CALUM CLARK				
				FREDDIE CLARKE 8	NUMBER 8	8	JACKSON WRAY				
REPLACEMENTS				REPLACEMENTS							
				JAMES HANSON 16		16	SCOTT SPURLING				
				VAL RAPAVA RUSKIN 17		17	HAYDEN THOMPSON-STRINGER				
				GARETH DENMAN 18		18	VINCENT KOCH				
				JEREMY THRUSH 19		19	NICK ISIEKWE				
				JAKE POLLEDRI 20		20	JOEL CONLON				
				BEN VELLACOTT 21		21	BEN SPENCER				
				MARK ATKINSON 22		22	NICK TOMPKINS				
				HENRY PURDY 23		23	MIKE ELLERY				

MATCH OFFICIALS**REFEREE**

Karl Dickson

ASSISTANT REFEREES

Peter Allan & Jack Makepeace

TMO

David Rose

CITING COMMISSIONER

Paul Hull