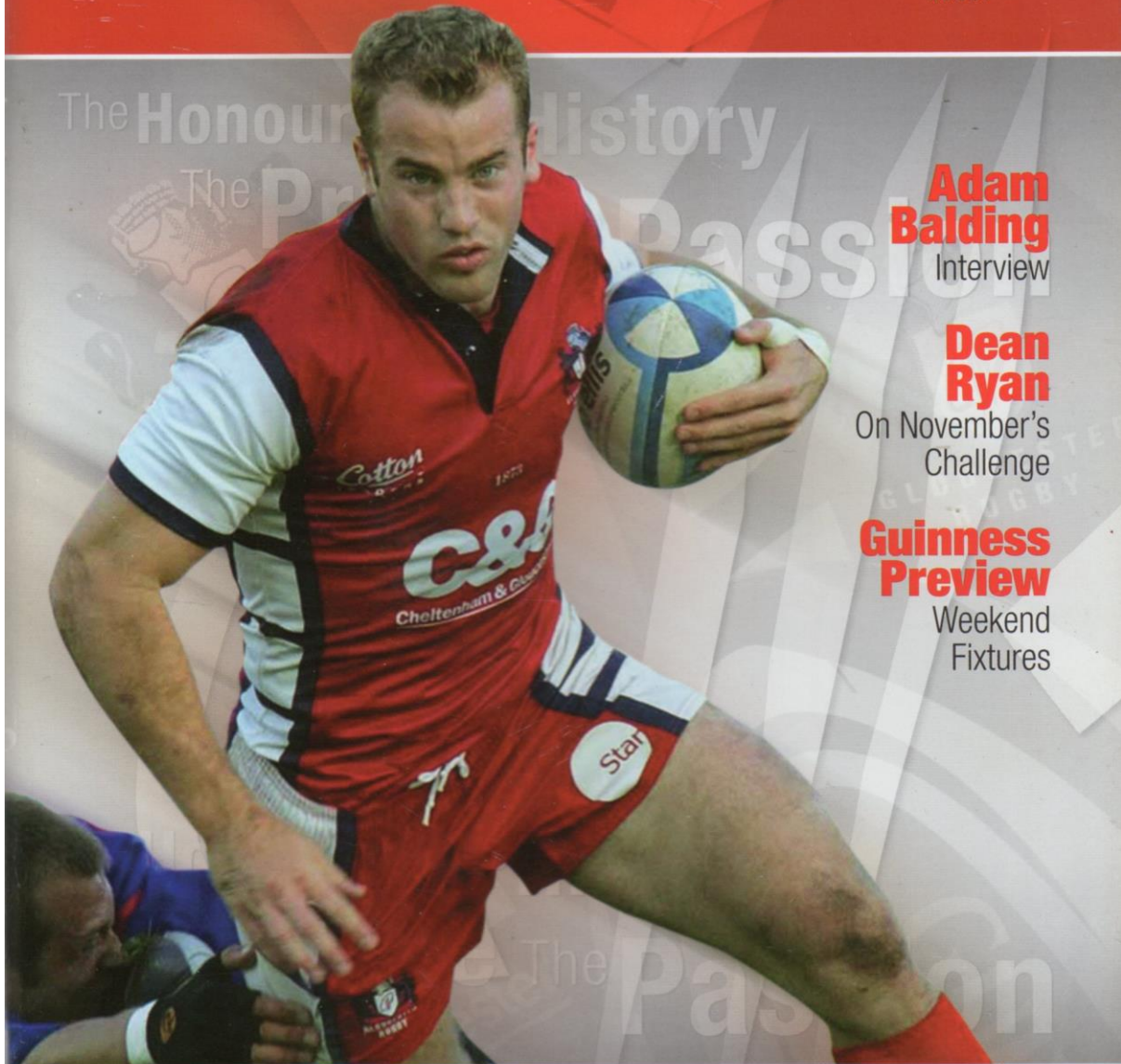


Gloucester Rugby

Gloucester Rugby Official Matchday Magazine | 2005/06 Season | Issue 05 | Price £3.00



Adam Balding
Interview

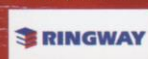
Dean Ryan
On November's Challenge

Guinness Preview
Weekend Fixtures

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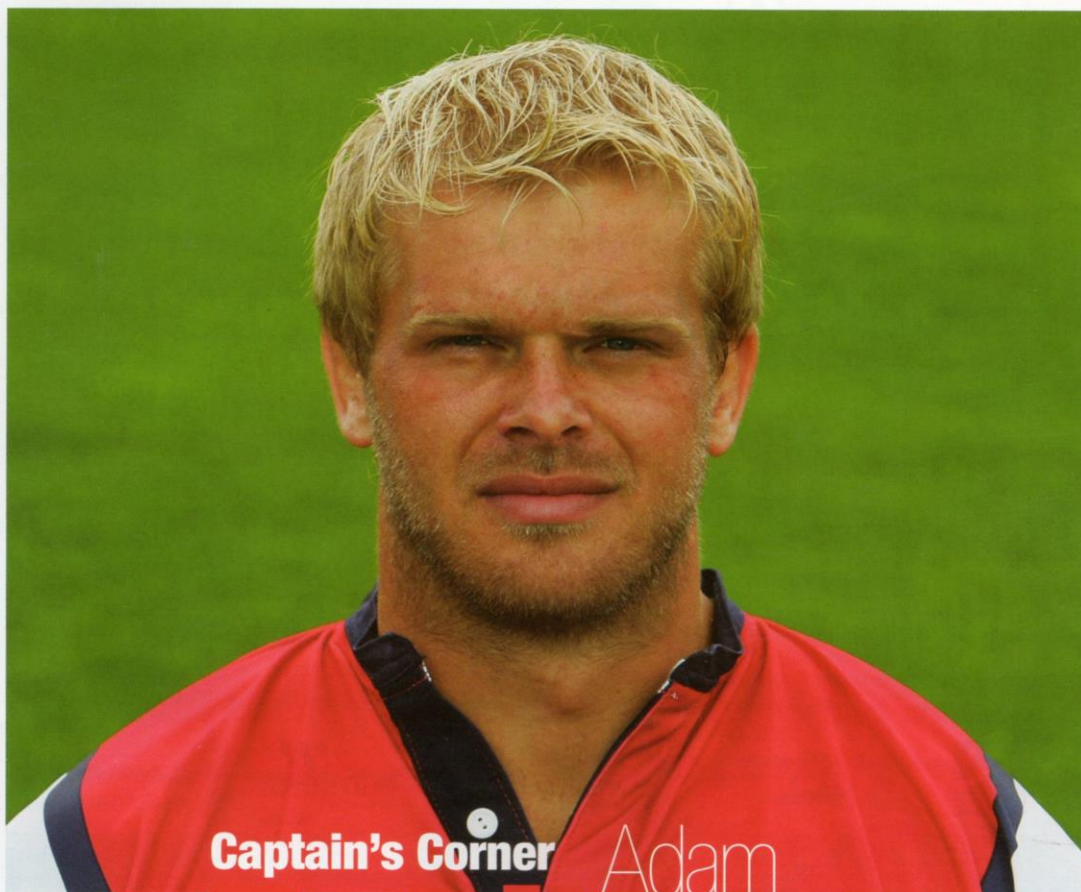


VS **Newcastle Falcons**

Saturday 5th November | Kick Off 15.00pm



www.guinnesspremiership.com



Captain's Corner Adam

In association with
dair*

Balding

TODAY we welcome Newcastle to Kingsholm for what should be a high quality match between two good sides in the Guinness Premiership.

Nobody in the squad needs telling that we came unstuck in our last Premiership match against Bath and that defeat ended our unbeaten league-record. We are sure to get no favours from a Newcastle side this afternoon who are capable of real damage on their travels.

Any team who can draw away at Leicester and win at Franklin's Gardens has enough quality to get results anywhere in this league, so we must be fully focused for the challenge and forget they are second from bottom in the table

Rob Andrew usually gets the best out of his squad when they come to Kingsholm and they will be bang up for this game, that is for sure.

Our task is made more difficult because we are missing

the core of the side through international call-ups and injury. Today heralds the start of the autumn internationals when we will be without Phil Vickery, Mike Tindall and Mefin Davies.

Although they are major loses, it gives the chance to other players to show head coach Dean Ryan what they can do and that can only be good for the squad.

Speaking of the squad, I hope to be back involved today following the injury to my

cheek and I cannot wait to return to action.

It has been a long 12 weeks since the incident at Worcester but I am fully ready to resume action. At the time of going to press, I had not had confirmation that I would be involved but if I am, it will be from the bench.

I have had enough of watching from the sidelines and I am desperate to play my part again in the coming weeks.

But first, we have to try and get the better of the Falcons. It will not be easy but enjoy the game today, get behind the boys and cheer Gloucester onto another crucial victory.


The Passion

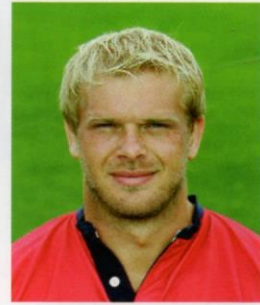
Guarantee a ticket at **Kingsholm** - call **0871 871 8781**

Six minutes into
the Guinness
Premiership
season

Adam Balding
shattered his
cheek in three
places after
a horrendous
collision with
Worcester's
Drew Hickey.
Since then,
the number
eight has been
on a one-man
crusade to
regain match
fitness.

Adam
Balding





WHEN ADAM BALDING straightened an attack from a defensive line-out barely minutes into the opening Guinness Premiership dust-up of the season against Worcester, little did he know he would not play again until November.

In fact, he could be forgiven for knowing very little about anything for a few anxious minutes. The collision he suffered at the hands of Drew Hickey was so fierce that it shattered his cheekbone and badly damaged his eye socket.

He needed three metal plates carefully inserted into his face to pin his cheek together and a further 12 weeks of rehabilitation before it was deemed safe he could resume contact training and playing.

But he is now ready to resume action – possible today against Newcastle Falcons – and is determined to make up the ground he has lost this season.

Such was the impact he made towards the tail-end of last year as a number eight who had suddenly re-found his purpose and role within the side, head coach Dean Ryan made him club captain.

During Gloucester's difficult end to a difficult season last year,

he skippered the side with a dedicated distinction and a force of attitude that bordered on the heroic. Balding had switched from Leicester at the beginning of the year and initially struggled to make an impact in his new surroundings.

By the end though, he almost dragged them into the Heineken Cup following a play-off defeat

“I firmly believe that what makes a man a man is how he deals with the situation, good or bad.”

by Saracens and began the current campaign as the first choice number eight and chief tub-thumper.

His reign lasted fractionally longer than five minutes. “I firmly believe that what makes a man a man is his how he deals with the situation, good or bad,” Balding told the matchday programme.

“I have accepted what happened to me and moved on. I am certainly not happy with the challenge I received but I have not wallowed in what happened. I have concentrated on getting fitter and stronger and returning a better player.

“I train and graft all week for 80 minutes on a Saturday and when you cannot do that, it's very hard. Sometimes you do question why you do it because of the tedium and to have that release of playing taken away is very hard to take.”

Since his enforced lay-off, Balding has not missed a match. He has coupled intensive

training sessions with Mike Anthony – including vigorous Saturday morning runs up Cleeve Hill – with a watching brief.

Even when Gloucester began their European Challenge Cup match away in Bayonne, Anthony had him running shuffles up sickeningly steep steps from the beach.

“It is quite scary because I am in the best shape I have ever been in – physically and mentally,” he said. “I don't think I could be better prepared and I cannot wait to get back involved.

“To be quite honest, I am not

The History

a very good spectator. Some people like to watch the games but if I didn't have to I wouldn't. When you are out for a long time it builds up the aggression and I have to channel it in the right way when I am back.

"I need to concentrate on what I am good at, make good decisions and just try and get back into the groove of playing again. All I can do is be myself and play to the best of my ability.

"The decision on whether I am selected will obviously be taken away from me but I just want to put myself in contention. "The supporters have been

fantastic, Gloucester is a great club and it has really helped me."

Balding started the season as Ryan's first choice number eight, a position that has been assumed by James Forrester in Balding's absence. Ryan has plenty of back row options, particularly with Luke Narryway, James Merriman and Will Matthews all producing the goods in the A League.

But Balding's return cannot come too soon with the autumn internationals just around the corner. If he does not make it

this weekend then he could find himself heading back to his former employers next weekend and a date at Welford Road.

"We have drawn a game against Worcester and obviously lost against Bath but in some ways the season really starts now," he said. "We have Wasps away, Leicester away and Newcastle today – they are all big games and massive tests for us.

"It is about the team evolving and taking steps in the right direction every time we play – I just want to play a part of that."



"It is about the team evolving and taking steps in the right direction every time we play."

Match Action

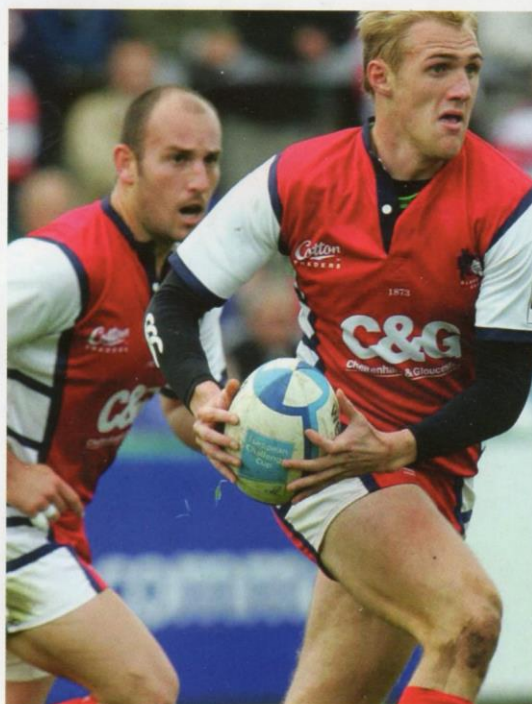
European Challenge Cup 



Gloucester Rugby 106 Bucuresti 3

Saturday, October 29 Kingsholm
Attendance: 8,806
Referee: Tim Hayes (WRU)

Pictures by Bruce Seabrook – GPA Images info@gpaimages.com



GLOUCESTER subjected a dedicated but outclassed Bucuresti side to a 100-point hammering at Kingsholm last weekend – running in 16 tries in the process.

They produced their highest competitive score to smash the Romanians in the European Challenge Cup. James Simpson-Daniel led

the way with four tries as Gloucester turned a 35-3 half-time advantage into an avalanche of second half points.

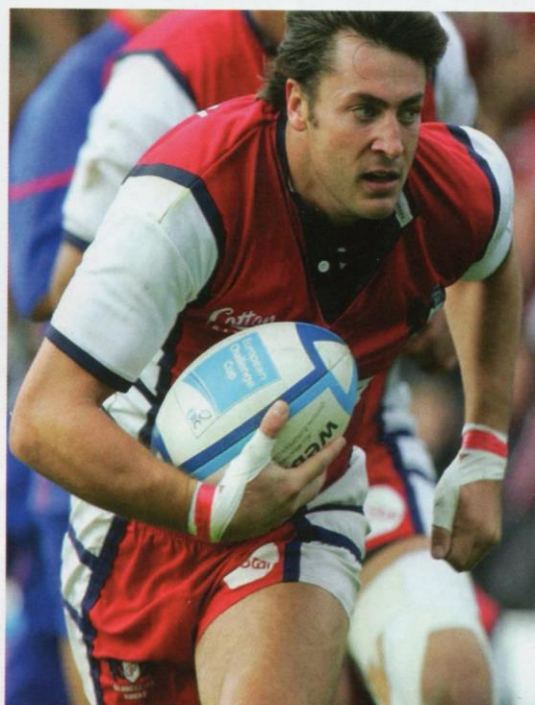
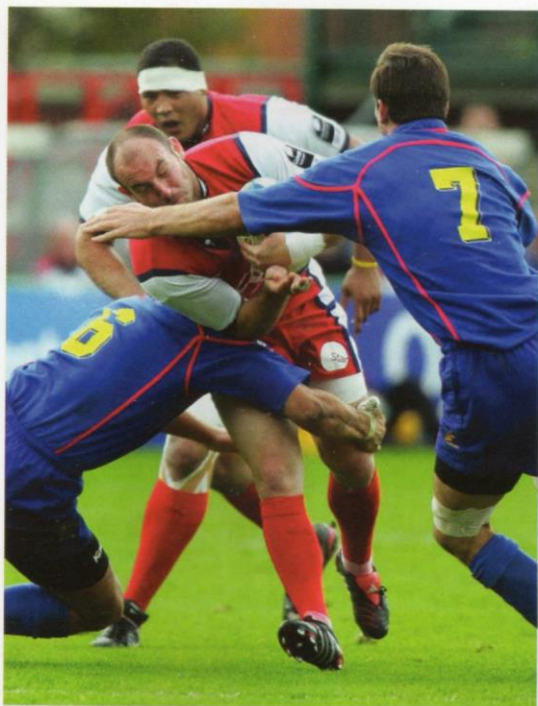
There were two tries apiece for Marcel Garvey and Rob Thirlby, while Haydn Thomas, Nick Wood, Adam Eustace, Andy Hazell, Luke Narraway, James Forrester and Anthony Allen also

crossed. Ludovic Mercier kicked 10 conversions. The century was reached when referee Tim Hayes awarded a penalty try after Peter Richards was taken out chasing through his own kick.

Bucuresti never gave up tackling but were literally out on their feet in the last quarter and that was when

Gloucester ran the ball from deep to cause maximum damage.

Gloucester's head coach Dean Ryan acknowledged the fact the game needs developing in emerging countries but questioned exactly what Gloucester would learn from such a one-sided contest.



"There is a lot of responsibility within the game to develop other nations and Bucuresti are part of that," Ryan said. "There's a delicate balance over whether games like that are developing them or just putting them in an environment that's beyond them. The people who look at the structure of the game need to bear that in mind."

Development isn't necessarily being exposed to the highest level from a player or team perspective.

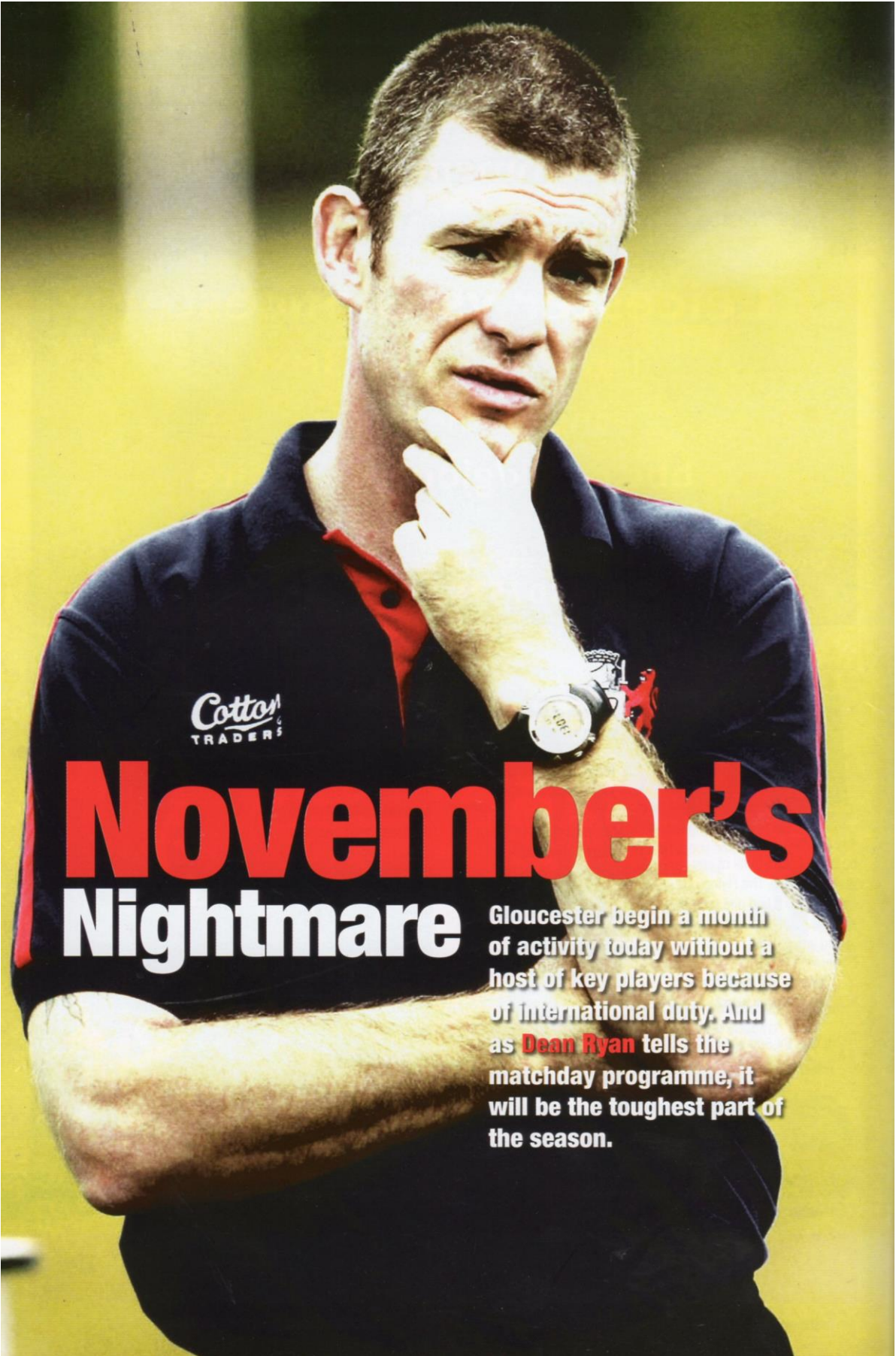
"Great credit to them, they worked very hard for 80 minutes."

"But for us, it's a bonus point. We won't take a huge amount from it going into

next week. We're starting to shape the side relating to those available and it would have been useful for those combinations to have been together."

Gloucester's next European assignment is away at Toulon in December and they will hope to strengthen their bid for a home quarter-final draw with another victory.

The History



November's Nightmare

Gloucester begin a month of activity today without a host of key players because of international duty. And as **Dean Ryan** tells the matchday programme, it will be the toughest part of the season.



THERE are plenty of pitfalls awaiting a rugby team at any one moment during a long and drawn out season and even more potential hazards faced by directors of rugby or head coaches.

But perhaps the greatest hurdle to afflict the country's top brass at club level looms into view in the coming weeks. The trio of autumn internationals is the greatest single drain on club resources in the entire season and, without putting too fine a point on it, have serious consequences to any side who do badly.

This time last season, Sale went on a dismal run of results in November, lost all their matches and struggled to regain the momentum such was the strain placed on an expensively assembled squad by Philippe Saint-Andre. It's a nightmare scenario that will

bother both Dean Ryan and Rob Andrew this afternoon as November kicks in.

After today's match against the Falcons, Gloucester make trips to Leicester and London Irish and host Saracens at Kingsholm before December. It is one of the singularly most difficult periods of the season and represents more than 20% of their Guinness Premiership matches.

So how is Ryan planning to cope and what does he expect to achieve over the next four weeks? The matchday programme investigates. "I think it's obvious to see we play a significant percentage of our games in November without key players," he said.

"We have an enlarged number of people away during the week and for us that will be a new experience. It will firstly test our resources and secondly our ability during

"I think it's obvious to see we play a significant percentage of our games in November without key players."

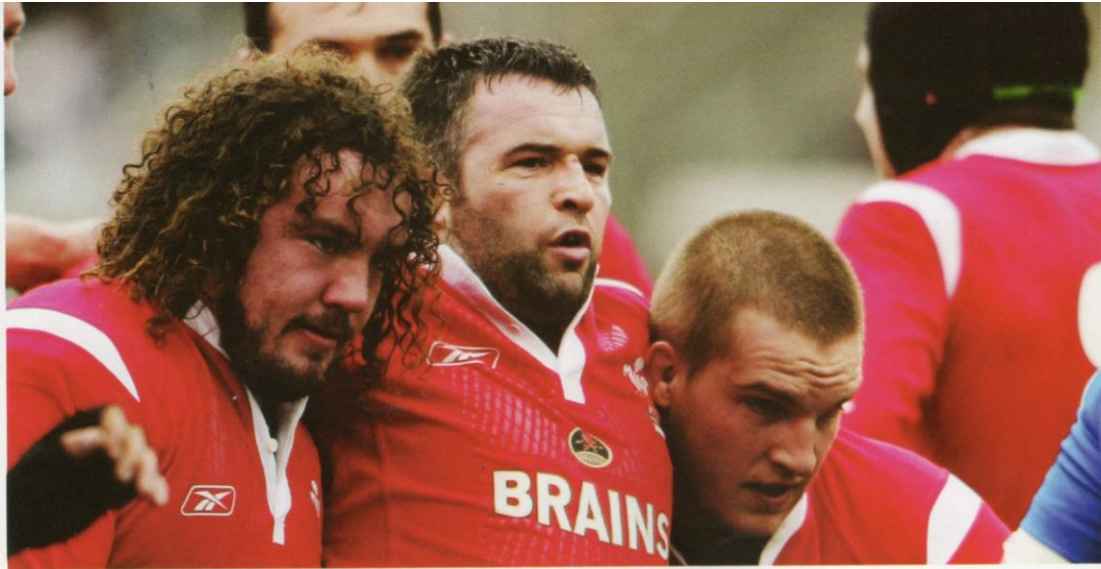
that time and whether the youngsters we have can step up to this level.

"This is an intense period of activity and for me it's not necessarily about winning or losing. As a group we recognise this is an extreme examination of us but we have a clear understanding of what we expect as a team and we can only go from there.

"It will test character and preparation but will also give us a great insight into the group of people we are working with. To me, that's the most important thing." Gloucester will certainly be

The **History**

Guarantee a ticket at **Kingsholm** - call **0871 871 8781**



“Gloucester will certainly be without England stars Phil Vickery and Mike Tindall, Mefin Davies of Wales.”

without England stars Phil Vickery and Mike Tindall, Mefin Davies of Wales and Terry Fanolua of Samoa, should a knee injury sufficiently heal to allow him to take part.

It could be worse too should James Forrester, Andy Hazell or Peter Richards get England calls. Throw in injuries to Alex Brown, Olivier Azam and Jake Boer and the task to keep a semblance of normality and results coming in is almost impossible given the restrictions imposed.

“To get four wins is very tough – we are not even thinking about it like that because we could lose all the games,” Ryan said. “Sale lost every game during this

period last year and they had prepared for it, so you need absolutely everything going for you.

“I like to think we have already created a strong foundation and we have a great work culture within the group. We appreciate we have not produced the level of performances we would have liked but the culture to improve and get things right is very strong.

“If we have that in place I am confident the performances will follow. This is all part of our development and what would concern me was if we were not making progress.

“We are developing all the time, learning about ourselves and getting better and that is what will get us through the next four weeks because we have a group of people who

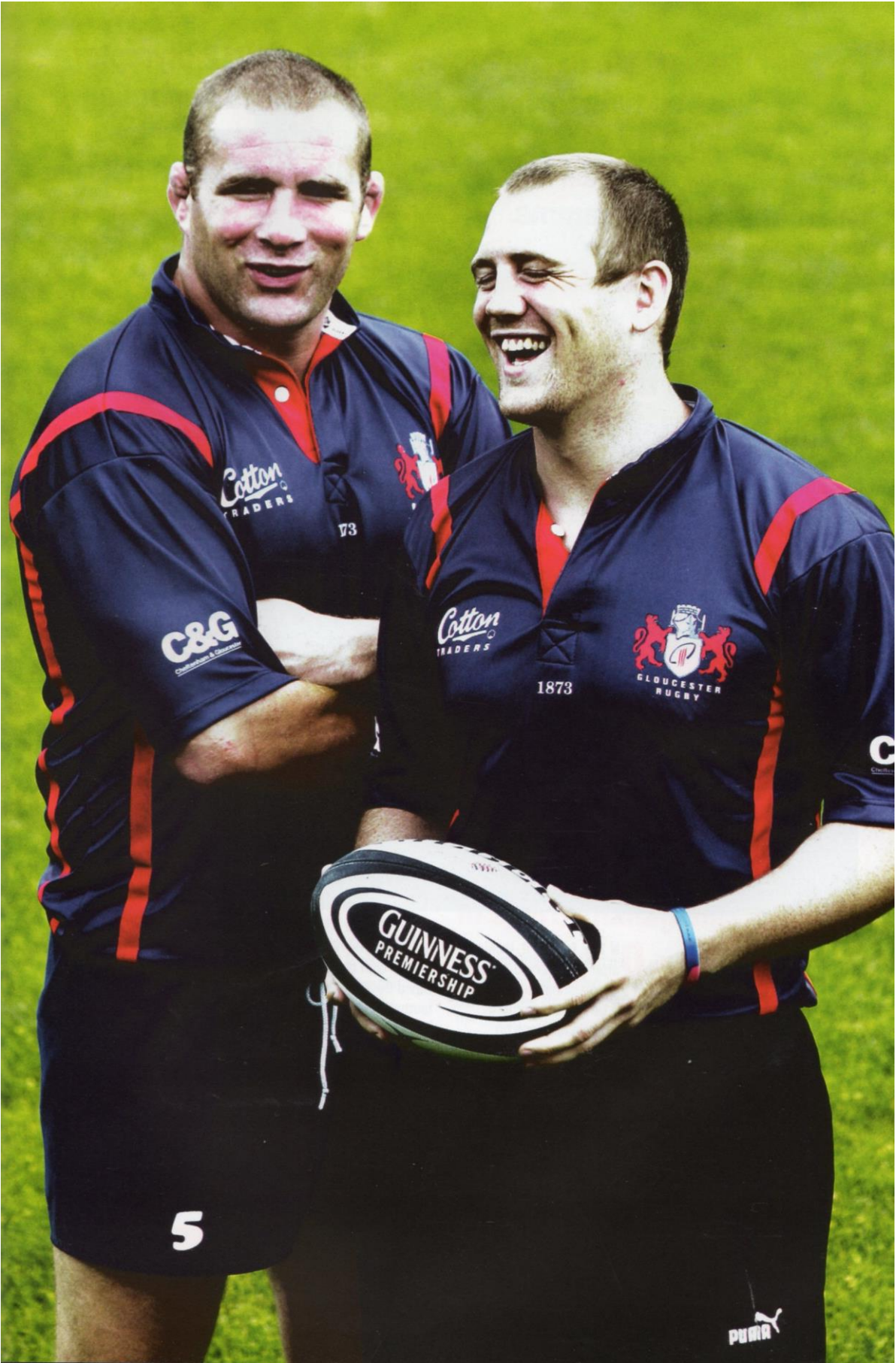
work very hard for each other. “One eye will have to be on where we want to be in the future but we have to keep going forward, no matter how difficult.”

Ryan will ensure that his reduced squad work harder than ever in the coming weeks. He has the luxury of James Simpson-Daniel available – their outstanding three-quarter – and at least two, even three, victories are not out of the question.

But Ryan will not allow himself to get carried away by such thoughts. He is working with a new squad, is relatively new to the top job himself and his side are still bedding down.

“Our aim is to get through this month by taking each game in isolation,” he said. “It’s a great test of the squad but we have the attitude to keep making progress.”







Peter Arnold chews the fat on Sinbad's exclusion from the England squad, hopes Alex Brown is dominating the line-out again soon and applauds Bucuresti for their efforts last Saturday

Peter Arnold



Ben Cohen

RAW DEAL

I DON'T KNOW about you, but I reckon James Simpson Daniel has been treated very

James Simpson-Daniel



shabbily over the squad for the autumn Internationals. In case you hadn't heard, he has been bumped down to standby status to make room for Northampton's Ben Cohen, who wasn't even in the squad previously.

No one would deny that Cohen has been in great form recently,

What sort of message does this send to the poor bloke? In effect, it's saying "Ben Cohen is better than you, and you're not even one of the best 30 players in the country."

Worryingly, this isn't the first instance of what, from an ordinary fan's perspective, appears to be a case of poor

"Loyalty is an admirable trait. But it cuts both ways."

and probably deserves a place in the elite 30. However, he wasn't when the squad was selected, and that's just the way the cookie crumbles.

In my view, that's his bad luck, and that of the coach. As far as we know, Sinbad has done nothing wrong. He hasn't, for example, missed a training session, or decided to trot off and do a television show when his presence was required. He certainly does not deserve to be demoted in such a cavalier fashion.

man management by the current England management. How can they expect players to bust a gut in the national cause if they are likely to be treated in such a cavalier fashion?

Loyalty is an admirable trait. But it cuts both ways.

Not wishing to get anyone into trouble, perhaps I should point out that all this is my opinion and my opinion only. There was no input from anyone at the club whatsoever.

HOW ABOUT THE REST?

IT'S GREAT to see that Andy Hazell is back in the squad, although I must say that I never could see why he wasn't included from the beginning. He seems to have acquitted himself when given his chances last season, and has been in storming form so far this year.

Before anyone accuses me of special pleading, I would point out that Andy regained his place in the squad following injury to Joe Worsley, who wasn't dropped on a whim.

“What is it with Gloucester players and England selection?”

So how about the rest of the lads? Of course, we shall know the final 22 by the time you read this, but at the time of writing, Phil Vickery looks a certainty to make the cut. Of the rest, I'd say that Mike Tindall is an odds-on bet, Hazell and Django Forrester's chances are fair-to-middling, and Peter Richards is a rank outsider.

Of course, I could be wrong.

I mustn't forget Mefin Davis. The Welsh selectors would

be bonkers to leave him out, and they've shown excellent judgement over the past season or two.

PAIN IN THE NECK

ALEX BROWN has suffered some very cruel luck. Obviously, a disc problem in the neck isn't something to be treated at all lightly, and it's to be expected that our own medics won't let him venture on to any sort of field until the problem has been sorted out.

What is it with Gloucester

players and England selection? Time and again, just when one of them has seemed to be on the verge of a breakthrough, injury or illness has struck. Alex is only the latest in a list which includes James Simpson Daniel, Jamie Forrester and Andy Hazell.

At Kingsholm, we're no strangers to neck injuries. John Bayliss played scads of games after breaking his neck, as did Phil Blakeway. In fact, Phil won a whole clutch



of caps after his injury. So there is light at the end of the tunnel for Alex, although you can't blame him if he feels all is dark at the moment. We obviously wish him well, and look forward to seeing him soaring above the line-out before very long.

Of course, we could be selfish about it, and point out that remarks made by Andy Robinson on TV lately would seem to indicate that he would have been away on England duty for the autumn Test period, so we would have had to manage without him in any event.

But that's not to deny that this is a nasty injury, and we can only hope it is sorted quickly, for the sakes of both Gloucester and England.

Best of luck, Alex!

CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE.

ITHINK WE do have to compliment the Bucuresti club for their performance last Saturday. I can't imagine what it must be like to endure a 106-point beating, especially when you've never played on a ground like Kingsholm, in front of a committed crowd of supporters like ours. Yet the Romanians never gave up, and never let their heads

droop, right to the end. I've seen Premiership sides not conduct themselves so well when coming second by a lot fewer points. It was a pity that the final score had to be a penalty try, but I think we can forgive them one small lapse under the circumstances, and we can all think of referees who wouldn't have given it.

It must have been a terrific experience for them, bearing in mind that their whole home ground doesn't hold as many people as our Shed does. I'm told they were delighted with the support they got from the Gloucester crowd.

And we've still got to go there – in mid-January, when, I'm told, the temperature can fall to minus 20. Not a heart-warming prospect, and remember, they gave an admittedly weakened Toulon side a considerable fright in Bucharest.

Which reminds me. Toulon are the only side in our pool who we haven't met yet, so can't make any real judgements. But did you notice that Bayonne beat them on their own patch last week?

Of course, there's a lot of domestic baggage between French sides, so we shouldn't read too much into it.

Time will tell.



The History



Today's Teams



Gloucester Rugby

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- Olly Morgan
- Mark Foster
- James Simpson-Daniel
- Anthony Allen
- Rob Thirlby
- Ludovic Mercier
- Haydn Thomas
- Patrice Collazo
- James Parkes
- Terry Sigley
- Quinton Davids
- Adam Eustace
- Peter Buxton (C)
- Andy Hazell
- James Forrester

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- Rob Elloway
- Gary Powell
- Mark Cornwell
- Adam Balding
- Peter Richards
- Brad Davies
- Terry Fanolua

Newcastle Falcons

T C P D

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- Matthew Burke
- Tom May
- Mathew Tait
- Mark Mayerhofler
- Anthony Elliott
- Jonny Wilkinson
- James Grindal
- Grant Anderson
- Andy Long
- Tino Paoletti
- Luke Gross
- Geoff Parling
- Owen Finegan
- Cory Harris
- Mike McCarthy

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- Micky Ward
- Matt Thompson
- David Wilson
- Andy Buist
- Ben Woods
- Lee Dickson
- Joe Shaw

- 15 Full-Back
- 14 Wing
- 13 Centre
- 12 Centre
- 11 Wing
- 10 Fly-Half
- 9 Scrum-Half
- 1 Prop
- 2 Hooker
- 3 Prop
- 4 Lock
- 5 Lock
- 6 Flanker
- 7 Flanker
- 8 No.8

Replacements

- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22



Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	TF	TA	TB	LB	Pts
1	Sale Sharks	5	4	0	1	131	91	12	10	2	1	19
2	Leicester Tigers	5	3	2	0	145	91	15	7	2	0	18
3	London Wasps	5	3	1	1	143	101	14	7	2	0	16
4	GLoucester Rugby	5	3	1	1	121	84	10	5	1	1	16
5	Worcester Warriors	5	3	1	1	102	103	9	10	0	0	14
6	Saracens	5	2	0	3	124	115	15	11	3	1	12
7	London Irish	5	2	0	3	92	107	10	11	1	2	11
8	Bath Rugby	5	2	0	3	96	108	7	8	1	1	10
9	Northampton Saints	5	2	0	3	75	108	7	11	0	2	10
10	Bristol Rugby	5	2	0	3	77	118	4	10	0	1	9
11	Newcastle Falcons	5	1	1	3	87	94	7	8	0	2	8
12	Leeds Tykes	5	0	0	5	85	158	6	18	0	1	1

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

REFEREE: Ashley Rowden
 TOUCH JUDGE 1: Paul Emerson
 TOUCH JUDGE 2: Paul Dix
 FOURTH OFFICIAL: Mark Tovey
 REPLACEMENT REF: Tim Beddon
 ASSESSOR: Paul Bridgman
 TMO: Laurie Bryant

TODAY'S RESULT

GLoucester:
 Newcastle:

