

GLoucester Rugby Heritage

SALE SHARKS

Gloucester Rugby Heritage talk you through the history and some of our previous meetings with tonight's visitors, Sale Sharks.

Sale, Premier Club from the North of England

Gloucester people proudly point to the long history of our club founded in 1873. However, the Sale club from Manchester was founded as long ago as 1861, under the title Sale Football Club. The name Sharks was adopted in 1999. From 1905 to 2003 their home ground was at Heywood Road, Sale. From 2003 to 2012 Sale played at Edgeley Park, Stockport, before finally relocating to their current home at the A.J. Bell Stadium, sharing with Salford City Reds, the Rugby League team. The semi-professional arm of the Sale club still play at Heywood Road, and compete in National League 1. This season they are doing very well and are currently second.

Under the leadership of Philippe Saint-André, Sale won the Premiership in 2006. In addition, the club won the European Challenge Cup in 2002 and 2005.

The game against Sale last November was the 100th between the two clubs. Gloucester have won 53 times, Sale 45, with only two games drawn.

The first game was played on Easter Saturday, 1933, at Kingsholm, when Gloucester won 18-7. Tries were scored by Vernon Sheppard with a brace, whilst Harold Boughton kicked a conversion and two penalties. Roy James popped over a drop goal. This game started the tradition of playing Sale every other season at Easter, at Kingsholm. This continued almost unbroken until the early 1980's.



Vernon Sheppard



Harold Boughton

16 April 1988 Gloucester 61 Sale 7 (League Game)

Gloucester scored eleven tries in this overwhelming win. Marcus Hannaford and Paul Ashmead both scored a couple, whilst other tries came from Jim Breeze, Ruari McLean, Richard Mogg, Richard Pascall, Nigel Scrivens, Ian Smith and Paul Mansell. There were seven conversions, with Paul Mansell succeeding with six, and Mike Hamlin the other. Paul Mansell also kicked a penalty.

The Times correspondent was particularly impressed, "Time was when Gloucester's success was based on stern and resolute forwards, who ground the opposition down before claiming victory. The forwards are very fit, as formidable as ever these days, but they have acquired the running, handling and even some of the side-stepping skills of the backs. The way they opened up the game and linked with their three-quarters was a joy to watch and produced eleven tries, five of them by forwards".

This was the inaugural season for national leagues. Sale lost all eleven of their games and were relegated, not to return to the top flight until the 1994-95 season. They then proceeded to gain the double over Gloucester for three successive seasons!

28 April 2002 Sale 28 Gloucester 27 (European Challenge Cup Semi-Final)

This cup semi-final was played at Northampton. Sale, 13-0 down in the first half, scored 28 points without reply, in just over half an hour either side of half-time. At the start, Gloucester had scored a quick try through Terry Fanolua. That was converted by Ludovic Mercier, who then added a drop goal and penalty. It was then that Sale hit that purple patch with tries from Mark Cueto, Steve Hanley and Charl Marais in an eleven-minute spell. After half-time Dan Harris added a fourth try. The Sale pack was now well on top, and seemed on the way to a comfortable win. However, late tries from Fanolua and James Forrester, both converted by Mercier, brought the Cherry and Whites to within a point. With only minutes to go, Gloucester were awarded a penalty which was well within Mercier's compass, but he missed it, and at the final whistle he left the pitch in tears.

Sale won the cup, by beating Pontypridd in the final.

27 January 2007 Gloucester 44 Sale 24 (Premiership)

This was an exciting contest of eight tries, five of them scored by Gloucester. Ryan Lamb set the game alight after only two minutes when he scored a lovely try, following superb inter-passing between forwards and backs. A second try followed a speedy run from Ian Balshaw. Lamb converted both tries, and for good measure added a penalty and drop goal. By this time Sale had scored a try of their own through Ben Foden. This was converted by Rhys Jones, son of Kingsley Jones, the old Gloucester captain. On 35 minutes Ryan Lamb was stretchered off with an ankle injury. He was replaced by Ludovic Mercier, whose first act was to convert a try by Ollie Azam. Half-time was greeted with Gloucester leading 27-10.



Soon after the resumption, captain Marco Bortolami rumbled over, and Mercier converted to stretch the lead to 24 points. But to Sale's credit they bravely fought back. Tries from lock Dan Schofield and centre Chris Mayor, both converted by Jones, cut the lead to ten. Any Gloucester nerves were settled when, first, Mercier kicked a penalty, and then with five minutes left James Simpson-Daniel gave the scoring pass to Olly Morgan, and the Mercier conversion restored the 20 point gap.

27 February 2010 Gloucester 47 Sale 3 (Premiership)

A pre-match deluge meant that staff had to work miracles to make the pitch playable. As a result, most would have predicted an arm wrestle in the Kingsholm mud. Not a bit of it. Gloucester put on a champagne display of running rugby. At the first scrum Sale were driven off their own ball. A penalty try soon followed, and Sale never recovered. Big Lesley Vainikolo, finding space on the left, soon scored two tries, and when Akapusi Qera spectacularly dived over for the bonus point try, only 30 minutes had been played. At half-time it rained even more, which seemed to slow Gloucester for a while before they finished with a flourish, scoring three further tries. First, Nicky Robinson chipped over the defence, and regathered to score. Eliota Fuimaono-Sapolu's neat change of direction gave James Simpson-Daniel a chance to streak home, and finally Andy Hazell cut an angle to take a pass from Tim Taylor to score. Sale had only a Charlie Hodgson penalty to show for their efforts.

