



INSIDE...

Club News › 2010/11 Fixture List › Opposition feature › Hospitality

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

PRE-SEASON FRIENDLY
VS. LLANELLI SCARLETS
14 AUGUST 2010, KO 3PM // £2.50



PRE-SEASON FEATURES:
MEET THE NEW BOYS,
HOSPITALITY PACKAGES,
SEASON TICKET
APPLICATION FORM



**PRE-SEASON
FITNESS WITH
BARNY ALLEN**

**+ PREMIERSHIP
INS & OUTS**



**"YOU CAN CALL IT
TEAM BUILDING OR
BONDING BUT IT
WAS GREAT FOR US
TO GO AWAY AS A
GROUP AND FOCUS
ON WHO WE ARE AT
GLOUCESTER RUGBY
AND WHAT WE AIM
TO ACHIEVE."**

**EXCLUSIVE
HEAD
COACH
NOTES**

BRYAN REDPATH

GLOUCESTER
RUGBY.CO.UK

BR

Q. TWELVE MONTHS AGO YOU WERE PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST SEASON AS HEAD COACH OF GLOUCESTER RUGBY. HOW DO YOU FEEL THIS TIME AROUND?

"Incredibly excited. We've put in a lot of hard work this summer. But, for all the training and preparation you do in the close season, there's nothing quite like playing matches."

"Ultimately, that's why we're all involved in rugby and it all kicks off this afternoon against the Scarlets."

Q. IT'S QUITE A TESTING PRESEASON SCHEDULE?

"Well, it has to be really. There's no point playing friendlies against a couple of weaker sides and racking up a couple of 50 point wins. You learn nothing from that."

"Before the Aviva Premiership Rugby season gets underway, we need to test ourselves against some decent opposition. You can train as hard as you like and play simulated matches in training but it's only in a genuine match environment that you really find out where you are."

Q. LAST SEASON, WE PLAYED THREE PRESEASON FRIENDLIES AT KINGSHOLM. THIS TIME AROUND, THERE ARE TWO ON THE ROAD. IS THERE A REASON FOR THAT?

"Definitely. It's no secret that we were much better at home last season than we were on the road. In the Premiership, for example, we only won away at Leeds Carnegie and Worcester Warriors."

"That's certainly an area where we'll be looking to improve this season. I've been around too long to suggest that we're going to go out and win away from home every week."

"However, I hope that we'll be in a better position this season to close out a few of those tight

matches where the result went against us last season. Playing away at the likes of the Ospreys and Munster will help that process."

Q. WHAT'S DIFFERENT THIS TIME AROUND?

"We're certainly more settled as a squad. We reported back a year ago having been through a lot of change in the close season. I was new to the role and we'd seen a lot of turnover in the squad."

"There are obviously some new faces this time around but it's been about continuity for us. We've kept the bulk of the squad together and that will be a real bonus."

"I think everyone will agree that the second half of our season was a huge improvement on the period before Christmas and that's what we're looking to build upon. We've only got to integrate a few new faces so we'll hope to pick up where we left off."

"We've also been lucky enough to have a training camp away in Portugal which was hugely beneficial. A lot of the players carried on playing a long time after our season finished with that win up at Worcester as they were away on various international tours."

"As a result, they've reported back to us at different times and it was important for us to get away as a group, away from distractions, to get in some hard work and also sit down and establish our aims and expectations for the forthcoming season."

"You can call it team building or bonding but it was great for us to go away as a group and focus on who we are at Gloucester Rugby and what we aim to achieve."

Q. WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GET OUT OF THESE FRIENDLIES?

"Well, it's not necessarily about the results themselves which, of course, are all important when it comes to

the competitive fixtures."

"We've put in a lot of hard work over the summer and now's the time to see how well the things we've been focussing on work in a live match environment."

"We're also in the fortunate situation of having competition for places at every single position so we'll be looking at different combinations and partnerships."

"It is a great opportunity for players to really push themselves forward in terms of selection. Last summer saw young guys like Freddie Burns and Jonny May announce themselves for the first time."

"They were young lads who had come through the Academy and were both still young enough to play in the U20 Junior World Cup only a couple of months ago. They had an opportunity, they took it with both hands and did enough throughout the season to earn new contracts with the club."

Q. WHAT ABOUT AIMS FOR THE SEASON?

"(Laughs) I've been around too long to get caught out making predictions! What I will say is that I'm confident that we've got a group of players here who I'm confident are 100% committed to playing with pride for Gloucester."

"I keep going back to it but my belief is that the relationship with his club is the most important aspect of his career."

"I want my players to be committed to the club, the supporters, the city and the community and I think we've got the right ones here at the club."

"The Gloucester supporters are fantastic but what they really want to see is 100% commitment to the cause. If they see that, they'll forgive the inevitable mistakes and continue to back us in the magnificent way that have done in the past."

PITCHSIDE



If you talk about the Kingsholm pitch last season to most Gloucester Rugby supporters, their immediate reaction will probably be to think back to the game against Sale at the end of February when near monsoon conditions shortly before kick off turned proceedings into a mud bath.

The pitch actually bounced back quite well following that game, thanks in part to a one month gap until the next home fixture but Stadium Manager Dave Balmer was determined that there would be no repetition.

So, this summer Dave and his team have been pulling out all the stops in order to deliver the lush green surface that you'll see Gloucester and the Scarlets performing on this afternoon.

Dave explained: "Basically, because we didn't do anything on the pitch last year, we've tried to improve the surface drainage so that the water gets off the surface a little bit quicker than it did last season so that we don't end up with the same scenario that we did this spring."

Gloucester, like a number of other sports clubs, suffered from an extraordinary run of bad weather last season. A wet autumn was followed by a freezing December and January with two European matches, Glasgow and Biarritz, only taking place thanks to the herculean efforts of the Kingsholm staff.

Once the snow and ice melted, torrential rain followed and the Guinness Premiership fixture at home to Sale was the one most affected.

Had Dave seen anything like it before?

"Not really, no. That's probably the worst winter I've seen in the 14 years that I've been here. It was almost a throwback to the winters of the 60s and 70s."

So, what exactly has been happening over the summer?

"First of all, they took the top surface off. This involved stripping off the existing turf layer which was predominantly full of annual meadow grass, a shallow rooting grass which doesn't bind into the surface."





REPORT

with
**Stadium Manager
Dave Balmer**



Meadow grass is an invasive species, blown in on the wind and not one that you'd plant."

"Once that was done, they then installed 100 tonnes of sand in bands which are 35mm wide by 250mm deep at 250mm intervals across the pitch."

"The next step was to spread and mix 100 tonnes of sand into the top 75mm of the pitch surface which will help with the drainage and allow the root structure of the grass to develop better."

"Finally, it was over seeded and fertilised ready for this season with a mix of four types of perennial rye grass."

For a while it all looked pretty bare out on the pitch but Dave promised that he'd be out there mowing it within four weeks and his prediction was spot on.

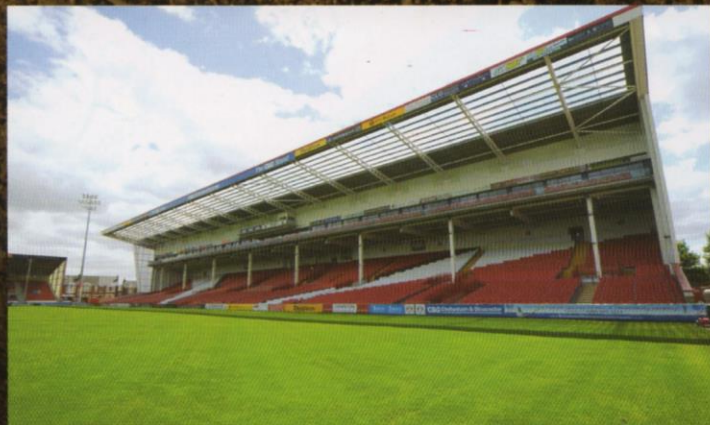


He confessed that, in contrast to the winter months, he'd been aided by some helpful weather conditions.

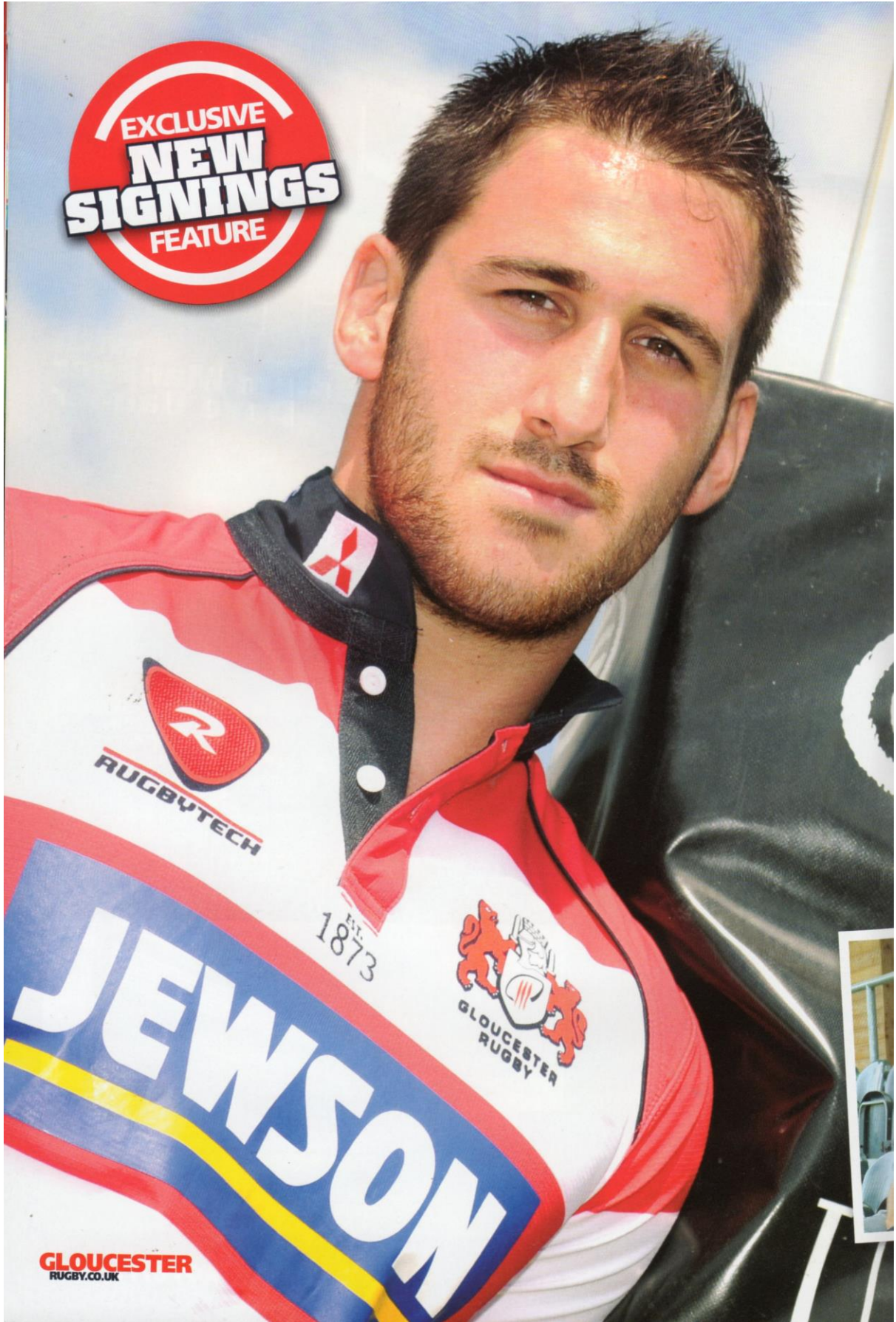
"June and July were pretty good really. We had lots of sun and also quite a bit of rain which helped matters."

"We still had to water it quite a bit though and I've been out there cutting it every single day."

"The result will be a stronger, more resilient and better drained surface for the team to perform on. I think players and supporters alike will notice the difference."



**EXCLUSIVE
NEW
SIGNINGS
FEATURE**



GLOUCESTER
RUGBY.CO.UK

THE MEET NEW BOYS

In contrast to a number of their Aviva Premiership Rugby rivals, Gloucester Rugby have been relatively quiet on the recruitment front this close season, opting instead for continuity with the majority of the first team squad from last season still on board.

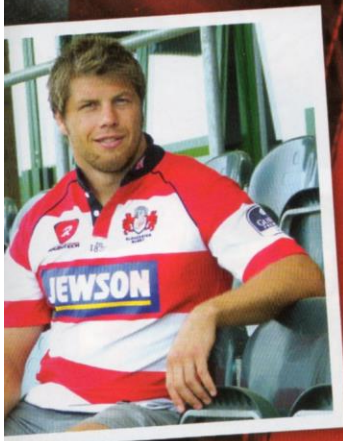
That said, there are some new faces at Kingsholm this summer who may or may not be involved against the Scarlets this afternoon!

Matt Cox, Brett Deacon and Jim Hamilton are the new recruits for 2010-11 and all have quickly got down to hard work on the training ground.

Back row forward **Matt Cox**, a summer recruit from the Worcester Warriors, was the first of the club's new recruits to report for preseason training and admitted that it was a little nerve wracking when he arrived.

"I was a bit nervous because I've never changed clubs before but the boys have been great. You do wonder before you arrive if they're going to take to you and how you're going to get on with the staff and the training but I've really enjoyed it so far."

"Rugby banter is the same wherever you go and a few of the boys have been piping up a bit but they're a good bunch and I've been getting on really well with Andy Hazell and Will James in particular."



Brett Deacon, also a back row forward, is another who has been a one club man to date having spent his entire playing career up to this point at his home town club, Leicester Tigers.

Brett also confessed to a few nerves before starting at his new club but was quick to admit that he was immediately impressed with the set up at Gloucester.

"It's really good. The boys have been really

welcoming which makes life easy. I've had a few preseason nerves coming into a new environment at a new club but I'm really happy with it so far."

"I've been very impressed with the professionalism of the boys. The hard work is there to see."

"Some people talk about Leicester doing more training etc than anyone else, Leicester do this and Leicester do that, but I've come down here and that impression has gone out of the window."

"Barney (Allen) works the guys really hard and I'm sure, once the rugby starts, Brushy and Hoggy will make us work hard too. It's a similar approach to the one Leicester adopt."

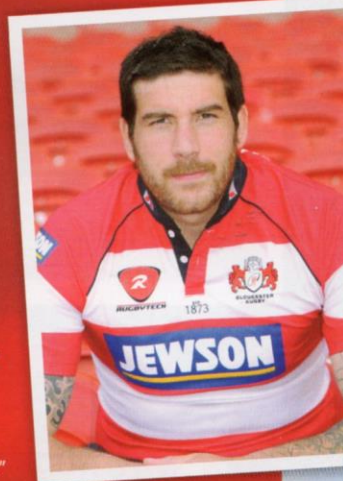
The final new face to report was lock **Jim Hamilton** whose arrival was delayed due to him taking part in Scotland's historic 2-0 series win over the Pumas in Argentina. Jim played both Tests and scored the crucial only try in the second game.

"It was a fantastic way to end the season with two wins away in the southern hemisphere against Argentina," Hamilton said. "It can often be tough at the end of a long season and to get two historic wins was a brilliant way to end."

Hamilton, 27, was widely linked with a move to Stade Francais before settling on Gloucester, his motivation the chance to return to the Premiership, where he last played with first club Leicester.

"I mentioned when I made the decision that I thought playing in the Premiership was the best league in terms of competition in the world," he said.

"Gloucester epitomise that in the history they have. It's a huge club, huge fan base, big stadium. That was big for me. I want to be playing for a big club in a big league and where better to do that than Gloucester?"



X,Y ZED!



Olivier Azam told the club matchday programme recently that the competitive fires burn as brightly as ever as the preparations continue for the 2010-11 season.

Talking at a grey and drizzly training ground at Hartpury College, in vivid contrast to the sweltering heat and sunshine of the past few weeks, Zed admitted that the cooler conditions were something of a relief.

"Yes, it's better for training this week because it was very, very hot when we were working last week which makes the training even harder."



"But, fair play to everyone, they got stuck in and got through a lot of hard work."

Entering his tenth season with the club and, having made over 200 appearances across all competitions, the French international hooker stresses that he's still as keen as ever as 2010-11 approaches.

"Definitely. When you get to a couple of weeks before the first game, everybody is ready to go. For me, it's all about the games and the competition and that's why I look forward to it."

Azam enjoys a cult status at Kingsholm, earned over the years through hard work and no little skill and he confesses that the place and the people mean a great deal to him.

"I'VE ALWAYS ENJOYED PLAYING FOR GLOUCESTER. FROM THE FIRST MOMENT WHEN I JOINED THE CLUB MANY YEARS AGO, I FELT IT WAS A SPECIAL PLACE AND I STILL FEEL THAT EVERY TIME I GET TO TAKE THE FIELD AT KINGSHOLM."

"It's true. I've always enjoyed playing for Gloucester. From the first moment when I joined the club many years ago, I felt it was a special place and I still feel that every time I get to take the field at Kingsholm."

"It's a brilliant place to play and I hope I can carry on for as long as possible."

"The support of the fans means a lot especially when the games are tough and you have to dig deep to win the game. When you have supporters like ours who are passionate and who chant your name, it's always a bonus."

"When we get to Kingsholm, we know we're going to get great support. People come in their masses with a lot of passion and

pride, pushing very hard behind us. That makes you feel great and you want to reward that support and passion."

2010-11 is a particularly significant campaign as Azam's sterling service sees him rewarded with a testimonial season, something he sees as a great honour.



"For me it's a great honour and shows how committed I've been to the club. I've been through a few coaches here and always managed to play most of the games."

"I'm not the sort of player who changes club a lot, I've played for three clubs in my whole career and I'm very happy with that."

"I have a very good committee who have been busy already. We're planning a few events – a golf day and a few dinners and also a nice friendly game at the end of the season. We will confirm more details very soon."

Dinners, of course, are something that mean a great deal to the 35 year old as, outside of rugby, he owns Armagnac restaurant in Cheltenham.

"Food is in my blood. I was born on a farm with all the best products available to me. I was taught from a very young age to appreciate good food."

"A lot of the recipes are inspired from my background back home in France but most of them are created by the very talented chef that I have

working at the restaurant."

That chef is Dan Richards who started his career in catering after a serious injury ended his career at Premiership Rugby Club, London Wasps. After leaving the club, Dan enrolled in the prestigious Westminster Catering College in Victoria, London.

Since graduating from Westminster College, Dan has worked in world famous London restaurants under Celebrity Chef, Marco Pierre White, as well as running 'award winning' kitchens in New York before settling down with his son, Zak, in the Cotswolds.

And Olivier and Dan were recently spreading the gastronomic gospel when they delighted guests with a cookery display at the premises of the club's floodlight sponsors, Gillman's.

On the evening, Dan and his sous chef Adam Davies prepared a host of delicious dishes in front of a fascinated audience with some help at times from Olivier and Gloucester Rugby team mate, Jordi Pasqualin.

John Robinson of Gillman's, who

helped to co-ordinate the event, was delighted with the way the evening progressed.

"It was a fantastic night and the cooking training room was totally packed out. The food was amazing and all the produce was locally sourced. We, being independent, realise the importance of buying locally."

"It was nice to be able to raise money for charity in the process. There was a nice, relaxed atmosphere and it was good to have the rugby players there."

However, Olivier's final words were for the Gloucester Rugby supporters as he pledged that the team will be pulling out all the stops this season.

"First of all, thank you for being behind us. We had a tough season but they still showed us how much they like us and the club."

"We're working very, very hard and making sure we'll be ready for the start of the season and I hope things will be a lot better and we can lift a bit of silverware at the end of the season."

VS. LLANELLI SCARLETS // 14.08.10

TODAY'S LINE-UPS

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

FREDDIE BURNS	15	FULLBACK
CHARLIE SHARPLES	14	WING
TIM MOLENAAR	13	CENTRE
ELIOTA FUIMAONO-SAPOLU	12	CENTRE
LESLEY VAINIKOLO	11	WING
TIM TAYLOR	10	FLY-HALF
JORDI PASQUALIN	9	SCRUM-HALF
NICK WOOD	1	PROP
DARREN DAWIDIUK	2	HOOKER
PIERRE CAPDEVIELLE	3	PROP
WILL JAMES	4	LOCK
ALEX BROWN	5	LOCK
PETER BUXTON (C)	6	FLANKER
AKAPUSI QERA	7	FLANKER
BRETT DEACON	8	NO.8

16 OLIVIER AZAM
17 RUPERT HARDEN
18 YANN THOMAS
19 ALASDAIR DICKINSON
20 DAVE ATTWOOD
21 ANDREW HAZELL
22 MATT COX
23 DAVE LEWIS
24 NICKY ROBINSON
25 JONNY MAY
26 RYAN MILLS

REPLACEMENTS

LLANELLI SCARLETS

DANIEL EVANS
GEORGE NORTH
GARETH MAULE
SCOTT WILLIAMS
ANDY FENBY
STEVEN SHINGLER
MARTIN ROBERTS
PHIL JOHN
EMYR PHILLIPS
SIMON GARDINER
LOU REED
DOMINIC DAY
DAMIAN WELCH
JONATHON EDWARDS
BEN MORGAN

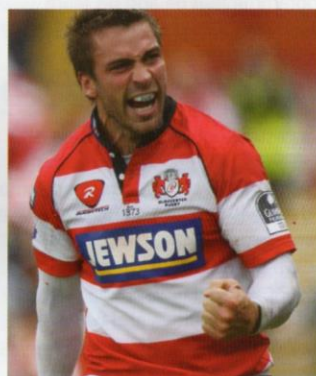
16. OWEN EVANS
17. RHODRI JONES
18. RHYS LAWRENCE
19. RHYS THOMAS
20. VERNON COOPER
21. RICHIE PUGH
22. NIC CUDD
23. GARETH DAVIES
24. NICK REYNOLDS
25. JOE AJUWA
26. DALE FORD

REFEREE: David Rose
ASST REFEREES: Andrew Pearce
and Luke Pearce

THE STATS THAT MATTER

GLOUCESTER LEAGUE POINTS SCORERS 2009/10

PLAYER	TOTAL
NICKY ROBINSON	202
JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL	40
FREDDIE BURNS	37
CHARLES SHARPLES	35
LESLEY VAINIKOLO	25



SCARLETS LEAGUE POINTS SCORERS 2009/10

PLAYER	TOTAL
RHYS PRIESTLAND	105
STEPHEN JONES	40
JON DAVIES	15
DANIEL EVANS	13
ANDREW FENBY	10

