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GLOUCESTER RUGBY

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

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SPECIAL FEATURE



WITH BARNEY 'IRONMAN' ALLEN

WORLD AND LOCAL RUGBY NEWS

REGULARS

MATCH ACTION,
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BOB FENTON,
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MATCHDAY NOTES

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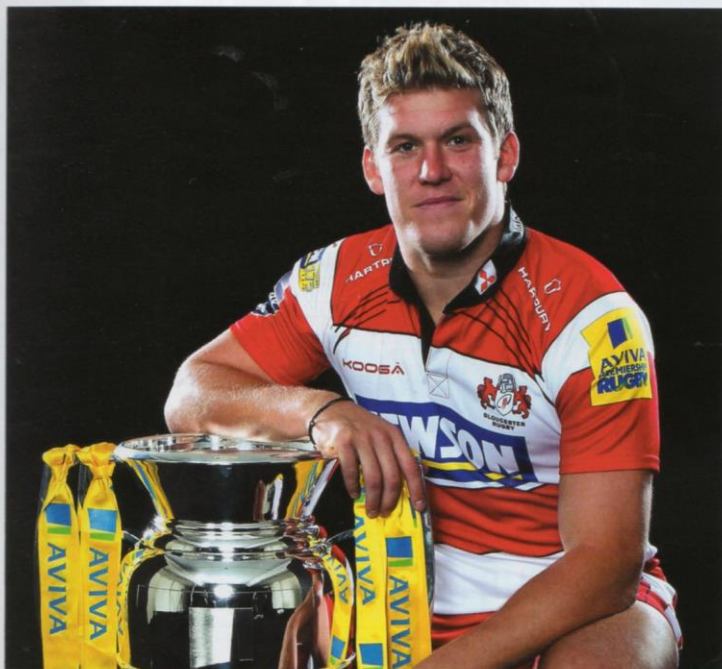
AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY
vs. LONDON IRISH
01 OCTOBER 2011, KO 1PM



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Captain's CORNER



"...as I write this column, I'm hoping to be in contention. I've been working so hard on my rehab and an atmosphere like last weekend only served to remind me of how much I miss it out there."

AT the risk of stating the blindingly obvious, it's always good to be writing these programme notes off the back of a decent win!

Actually, any win over Bath is more than decent, whether it's by one point or twenty. There's a great rivalry there and, although finishing second to your local rivals hurts a lot, beating them is very satisfying.

They would probably have fancied their chances as well. We'd obviously taken a bit of a beating up at Harlequins only the previous weekend. Meanwhile they came here in pretty decent nick having won at Newcastle, only lost to Saracens because of a last minute penalty and are the only team to beat Exeter this season.

And they certainly looked confident the way they dominated possession in the opening half hour. To be honest, we may have been mostly on the back foot during that period, but we probably won the game by only conceding two

penalties.

I was on and off the pitch quite a bit in my role as water carrier (a job that is getting me more and more stick as the weeks pass by!) and the message was simply to keep up the effort.

We knew that if we could weather the storm then we would eventually get some decent possession and knew that we had the weapons to hurt them.

So it proved. As soon as we got some attacking ball in and around their 22, the pack turned it on and Bath had no answer to our driving maul and we didn't look back.

That's the result of a lot of hard work on the training ground and it's only right to mention Hoggy at this point. He knew it was an area of our game where we had to improve following the Quins game and he made sure that we were 100% ready for Bath.

Those few minutes before half time were the turning point and we didn't look back after we took the lead for

the first time. We did come under some pressure towards the end but we had confidence in our defence and I think we were well worthy of the win.

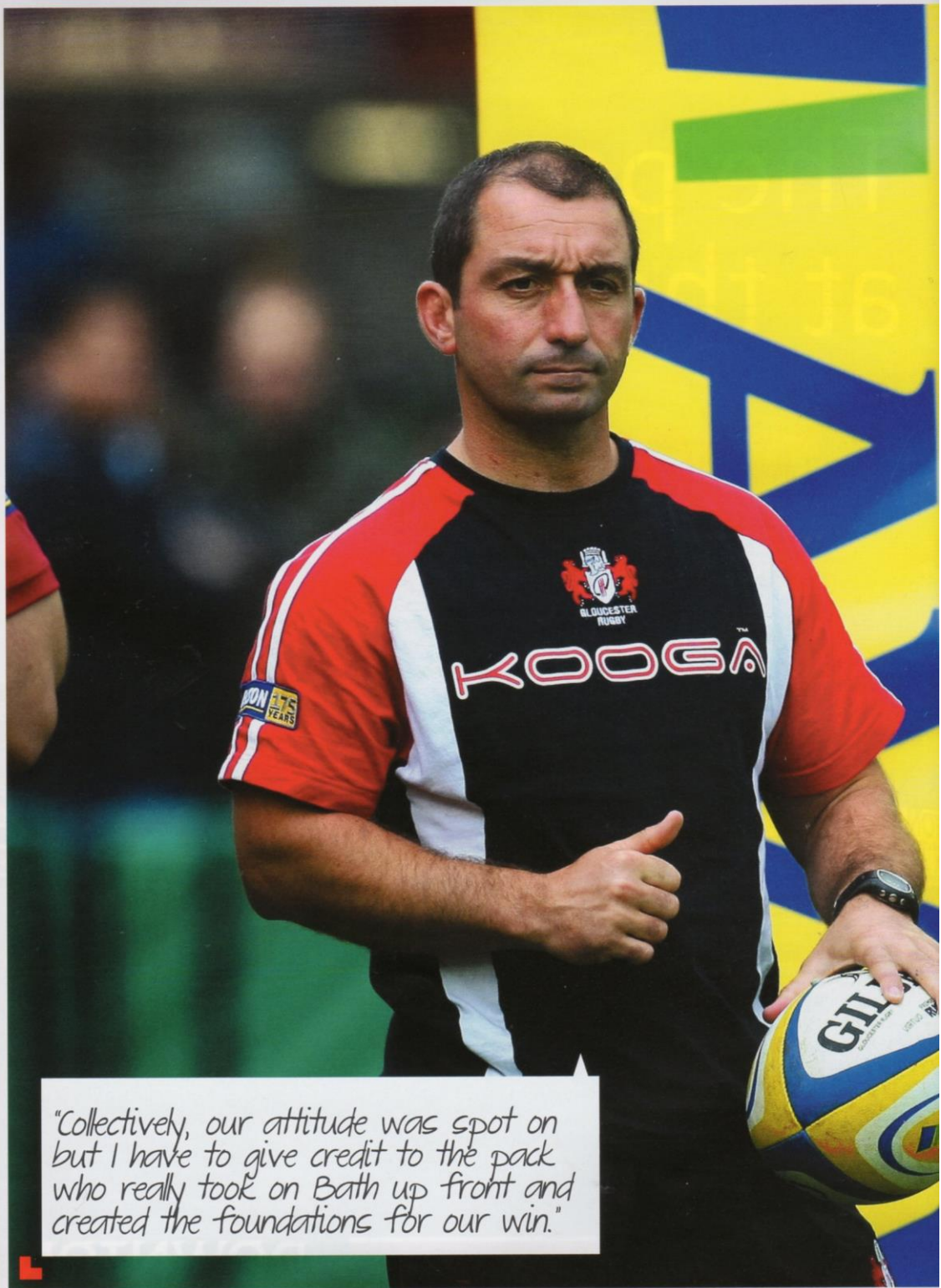
What's important now is to follow up that performance today against London Irish who are just above us in the table.

They didn't get off to the best of starts but nicked a win up at Franklin's Gardens against Northampton and then swept aside Newcastle last weekend.

They've brought in quite a few new faces this summer so it's perhaps taken them a little while to gel. One thing's for certain - Tom Homer's kicking means that we're going to have to be disciplined. He will punish any indiscretions.

Finally, on a personal note, as I write this column, I'm hoping to be in contention. I've been working so hard on my rehab and an atmosphere like last weekend only served to remind me of how much I miss it out there.

Enjoy the game!



"Collectively, our attitude was spot on but I have to give credit to the pack who really took on Bath up front and created the foundations for our win."

Coach's NOTES

with Head Coach, BRYAN REDPATH

ON BEHALF OF EVERYONE AT GLOUCESTER RUGBY, I'D LIKE TO WISH THE PLAYERS, SUPPORTERS AND STAFF OF LONDON IRISH A VERY WARM WELCOME TO KINGSHOLM THIS AFTERNOON.

It's another week and another tough challenge in the Aviva Premiership. It's a cliché I hear used on television every single week but there honestly aren't any easy games at the moment.

The Premiership is an incredibly competitive league at the best of times but the Rugby World Cup is a real curveball at the moment. How else, for example, would you explain Leicester Tigers shipping 50 points at home? It's unheard of!

At the end of the day, though, you can talk about the players away at the World Cup and the injury lists etc but, when all is said and done, you've just got to get on with it.

We were probably missing about 13 first team regulars last weekend against Bath but, I would estimate that they were missing just as many. As I say, it is what it is.

This afternoon will see us face a slightly different looking London Irish side. They've got players away like everybody else.

Toby Booth and Catty (Mike Catt) I respect massively. They will have been disappointed at the way their season tailed off last year after they had an amazingly good start and he'll be looking to get them back in the mix this time around.

They didn't have the best of starts. They lost in the double header at Twickenham and then up at Sale but they've won their last two, last week in fine style against Newcastle.

They've got a strong pack, they have try scoring threats in their back line with the likes of Ojo and Joseph and

Tom Homer is an incredibly consistent goal kicker for such a young man.

So, we'll need to match the commitment and the discipline that we showed last weekend against Bath.

It was a fascinating game. There may not have been a bunch of tries at both ends but you don't necessarily have to have that to make up an enthralling game of rugby.

Sometimes, a game will just fly by when it's captivating to watch and I thought that was certainly the case against Bath.

I was asked after the game if I was worried after half an hour and whether I'd had to change my team talk as a result of us taking the lead just before half time.

The answer to both questions was no – honestly!

We needed to bounce back after defeat at Harlequins. If we hadn't, then Bath could easily have run away with it.

But, despite being under a heck of a lot of pressure in the early stages, our commitment was spot on and we didn't give away any dull penalties. We derived massive confidence from that defensive effort.

We also knew that if we stayed patient and kept our shape in defence then eventually our chances would come when we got some decent possession.

And that's just the way it worked out. We kept it tight, made the most of our chances when they presented themselves and, overall, did a very professional job.

Collectively, our attitude was spot on but I have to give credit to the pack



who really took on Bath up front and created the foundations for our win.

The forwards did have their pride dented a bit at the Stoop where we conceded some scores from driving line outs but they well and truly put the record straight against Bath and I was delighted for them.

I was similarly pleased for our supporters. Attendances have been down across the Premiership in the opening weeks of the season but we had nearly 15,000 here last weekend which was a superb effort.

And they weren't just here to make up the numbers! The backing was superb throughout. They got behind us when we needed it when we were on the back foot in the first half and roared us on as the second half progressed.

When Kingsholm is alive like that, it's a very special place to play your rugby and our players draw real inspiration from the atmosphere.

Hopefully we'll get more of the same today. Passion on and off the pitch and a Gloucester win at the end of it!

Enjoy the game.

DreamTeam

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View from
The Citizen



WITH NICK PUREWAL

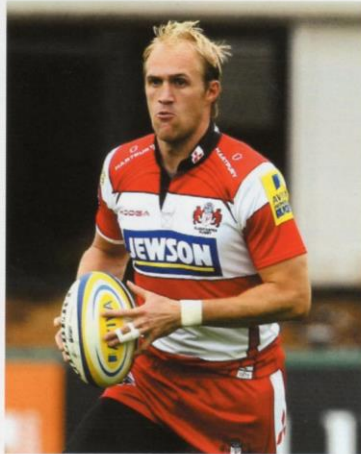
DRIVING FORWARDS

“ IF WE CAN GET ANOTHER COUPLE OF GOOD RESULTS THEN WE’LL PUT OURSELVES IN GOOD SHAPE FOR THE LV. ”

The pack can stay in overdrive all it likes – even if it limits attacking ball for the backs, hails Olly Morgan.

Gloucester’s last line of defence wants the Kingsholm forwards to keep driving opposition packs into the ground, picking up where they left off against Bath last week.

The Cherry and Whites bullied the men from The Rec in the maul and the scrum in last Saturday’s 23-6



Kingsholm victory.

Sir Ian McGeechan’s men had no answer to Gloucester’s supreme scrummaging and demolition driving lineout job.

Until Charlie Sharples ran from 22 to 22 to gather Freddie Burns kick downfield and swan dive home to close the match, Gloucester’s backs had enjoyed precious little openings.

Gloucester boss Bryan Redpath has told his backline to sharpen up their attacking impetus today – but 25 year old full back Morgan is comfortable with letting the pack bludgeon away.

He explained: “If the forwards are driving and gaining ground through that, that’s the way it should be. We just want clean set-piece, good ball, and hopefully we’ll strike and score off that.

“It wasn’t the prettiest game; we had to defend for 35 minutes of the first half. The work ethic, the discipline and the defence pretty much won us the game.

“The backs didn’t get much ball, but the chances we made, we took, so that’s very pleasing.



"But in the first half we were defending for 35 minutes, so you'd hope it would open up in the second half and it did a little bit with Charlie scoring."

The World Cup has impacted the Premiership every bit as much as expected, and more so.

Few could have predicted Saracens would hammer Leicester at Welford Road, and Gloucester clearly never anticipated a second straight Harlequins humiliation.

Irish will arrive this afternoon with two wins and two defeats so

far – the same as Gloucester – but they have only ever won once at Kingsholm in the Premiership.

Morgan said the stats are meaningless though, and called on Gloucester to complete their opening six game league sequence with two more wins, against Irish today and then at Sale next weekend.

He continued:

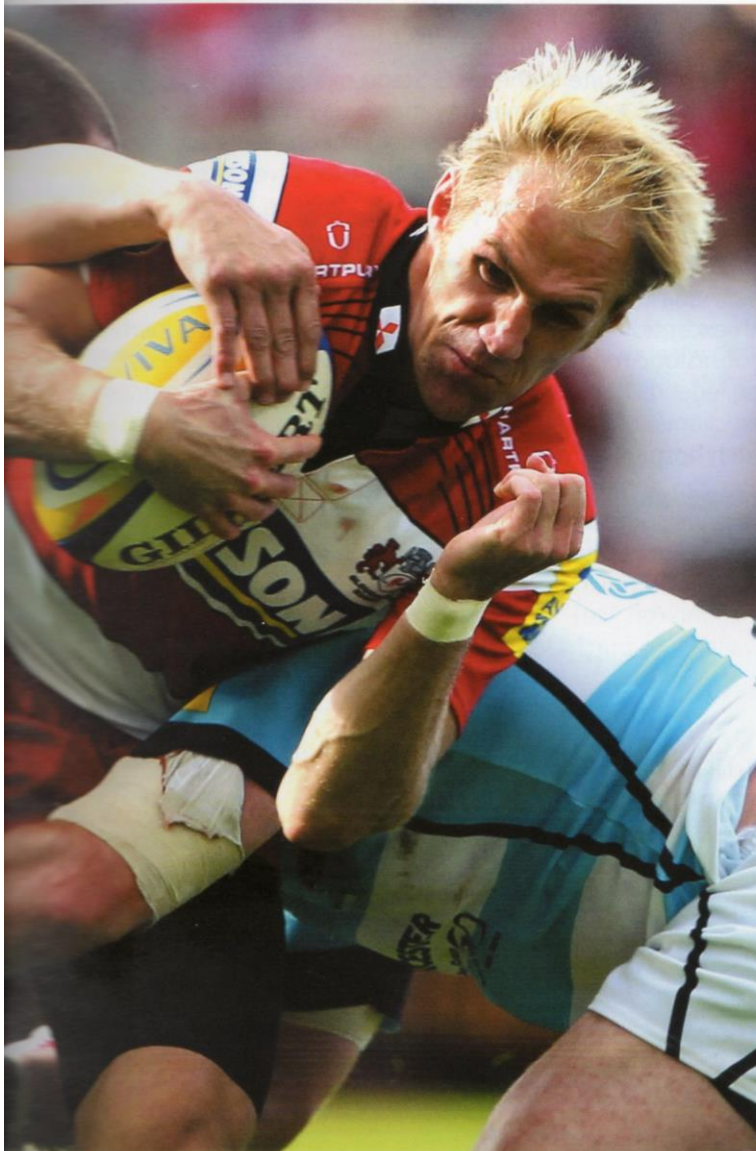
"Four games in, it's shown the league is very open to anyone winning, Worcester almost beat Harlequins.

"Irish have had a good start to the season despite missing a few players, so we've got to get our preparation right again.

"We've targeted these six games ahead of going into the LV for good performances and good results.

"If we can get another couple of good results then we'll put ourselves in good shape for the LV and for guys coming back from the World Cup too. We're a tight-knit group, so we've got to stick together."

Morgan said Lesley Vainikolo continues to show his unending



“ IF THE FORWARDS ARE DRIVING AND GAINING GROUND THROUGH THAT, THAT’S THE WAY IT SHOULD BE... ”

commitment to Gloucester by battling to make a success of his midfield switch, to plug the Cherry and Whites' injury gap.

He added:

"Les will do anything for the team, and playing at 12, I know he was very nervous about it right at the start of the season. But he has shown in the last three games how dangerous he is.

"And he does draw a lot of players into him, especially in defence, so it allows us to get a lot more space out wide.

"He's been a good addition and he'll happily continue there, so I think that's great for us."



DAVE KING'S WORLD OF RUGBY

THE PROFESSIONAL ERA

The introduction of professional rugby union has witnessed notable highlights in the fortunes of Gloucester Rugby. Some have been welcome, others not so! In our first season in the paid ranks we encountered those emotions in abundance.

Mike Lloyd scored our first try at Harlequins on August 31st in a match where we conceded 75 points!

The former Bristol wing three quarter scored our first hat trick in a 37-10 victory against West Hartlepool at Kingsholm on January 18th.

We conceded 71 points at Bath on April 30th late that season. It was a season where we encountered our first drawn match, 20 points apiece with Bristol on April 26th 1997.

Andy Deacon scored our first try in the professional era here at Kingsholm in a 49-25 defeat to Bath on September 21st.

The following season, 1997-1998, saw the indefatigable Mark Mapletoft register a point in every single league fixture – 22 matches! We also scored a try in every league match except at Bath on February 11th in a 47-3 defeat. Mark Mapletoft ended up with 275 league points.

In the season 1999-2000 we



Terry Fanolua

witnessed a scrum half scoring four tries in a match. Elton Moncrieff scored four tries versus Bedford at Kingsholm on May 6th in a comprehensive rout by 60 points to 17.

Six players scored tries in our festive win against London Irish at Kingsholm on Boxing Day in a 40 points to 15 victory. They were Chris

Catling, Terry Fanolua, Ian Jones, Steve Ojomoh, Ed Pearce and Simon Mannix. It was also a season in which we scored a try in all 22 league matches.

Frank Schisano, our former French three quarter became the club's first player to score a hat trick of tries in an away league fixture in the professional era. Frank did so in a

29 points to 23 victory at Rotherham on September 2nd in the 2000-2001 season!

Simon Mannix kicked nine penalties scoring all of the club's points in a narrow 27-23 win over Harlequins at Kingsholm on September 23rd. This was the first season since professional rugby union was introduced that we lost more matches than we won, winning ten and losing twelve.

The highlight of the 2001-2002 season was a record 68 points to 12 win over Bath at Kingsholm in the penultimate game of the season on May 4th.

This was a match in which James Simpson-Daniel became the fifth player to score a hat trick for the 'Cherry & Whites' in the professional era and a season where we recorded a record number of penalties – 70.

As well as kicking 48 of those penalties, our French fly half Ludovic Mercier also scored 12 drop goals. Our season was completed with 50-17 win over Leeds at Headingley where we had six try scorers -

Simpson-Daniel, Forrester, Paramore, Woodman, O'Leary and Sewabu!

We were unbeaten at Kingsholm in the 2002-2003 season when Alex Brown was ever present. We also recorded two hat tricks. Marcel Garvey did so against our South West rivals Bristol here at Kingsholm on September 21st in a 45 points to 18 win.

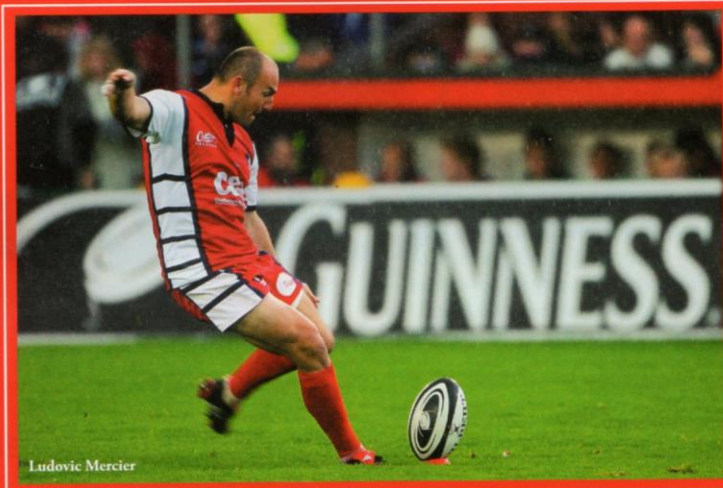
At the Memorial Ground, again against Bristol, it was James Forrester to the fore in a 38 points to 21 win. James became the seventh player to record three tries in a match.

The eleven match unbeaten run this season added to the last nine of the previous season stretched the winning run at Castle Grim.

The season of 2003-2004 witnessed four more matches added to that unbeaten run to extend the winning run to 22 matches.

It was bitter rivals Bath who ended that sequence with a 20 points to 14 win here at Kingsholm on November 8th.

We only had one match attendance of less than five figures in home matches. That was the 9,832 who attended the Leeds match at Kingsholm on October 25th.



Jon Goodridge was ever present in 2004-2005, a season where we lost more league matches than we won, the second season this had occurred since the 1996-1997 season, winning ten and losing eleven.

It was a season that saw the departure of Director of Rugby – Nigel Melville. There were six capacity attendances in the eleven games played at Kingsholm. It was also the first season of professional rugby union where no penalty try was awarded to the 'Cherry & Whites'!

The following season of 2005-2006 was a complete contrast where we had five penalty tries awarded to us. Ryan Lamb with five penalty kicks scored all of our points in the customary Edgeley Park defeat against Sale in an 18-15 defeat.

We recorded our highest home attendance to date in the 2006-2007 season albeit not at Kingsholm.

A 35-13 victory at Ashton Gate home of Bristol City Football Club, was scant consolation given the fact that James Forrester sustained a career ending knee injury.

It was the final match of the season. We were unbeaten in ten matches at Kingsholm, a season where we drew 27 points apiece at Leicester and 21 points apiece at Bath - heady days indeed.

The season of 2007-2008 was greeted by an astounding performance from new signing Lesley Vainikolo, the most recent convert from Rugby League. Five tries on his debut! The 49 points to 24 win at

Leeds almost incidental.

It was the 8th hat trick in the professional era and Akapusi Qera made it nine with luckless Leeds again the recipient at Kingsholm in a 39-16 victory.

When Bristol were defeated 27-0 at Kingsholm they became the first club to fail to register a point versus Gloucester in the paid era!

A full house for Willie Walker was crucial in our 21 points to 17 win at Bath on September 13th, one try, a conversion, two penalties and a drop goal in our first away match of 2008-2009.

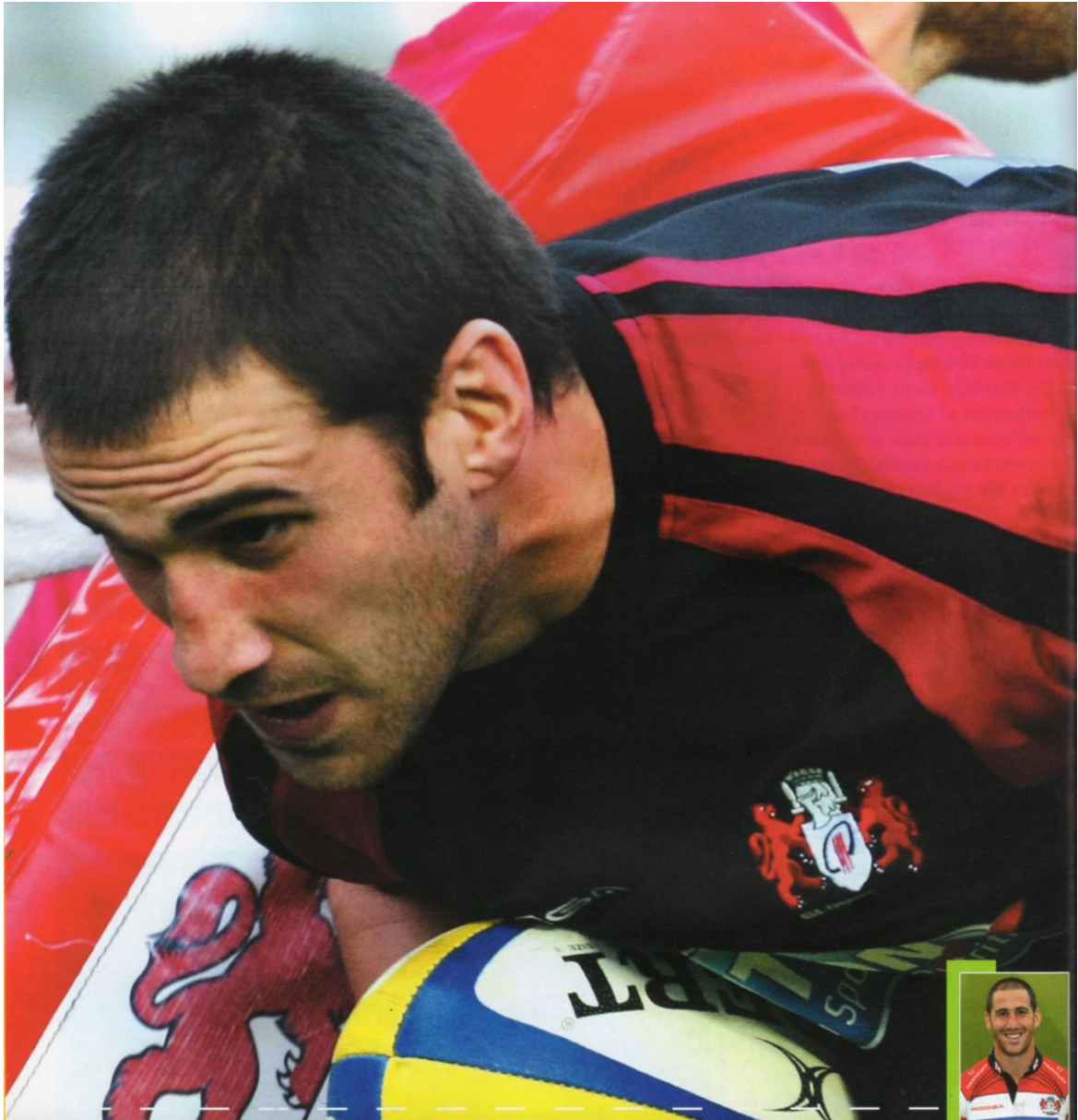
A hat trick of tries by Ian Balshaw in our 39 points to 23 win on September 30th ensured his was the tenth trio of tries since the inception of the professional game. A historic season with a double against Bath!

Bryan Redpath's first season in charge of playing matters was heralded with more defeats than victories. Ten wins, eleven losses and a drawn match.

James Simpson-Daniel recorded his second hat trick in League encounters and the eleventh for the club in professional Rugby Union in 2009-2010.

Last season of 2010-2011 was the first in league matches where we failed to register a drop goal!

Charlie Sharples with a hat trick of tries in our final match of the season was the 12th since the innovation of professionalism. Charlie's spree came against hapless Sale in a 68-17 rout on May 7th.



MAKING AN IMPACT

MATT COX

At the start of the 2011-12 season, Gloucester Rugby Head Coach Bryan Redpath laid down a challenge to his players.

With several regulars set to miss the first few weeks of the Aviva Premiership season due to World Cup duty or injury, the opportunity was there for other players to step up to the plate and prove themselves worthy of a first team shirt week in and week out.

Darren Dawidiuk is one obvious example and his recent contributions were highlighted by his Man of the Match performance against Bath Rugby last weekend.

However, similarly impressive has been all action back row forward Matt Cox. Perhaps even more so because he's rolled up his sleeves and got stuck into covering two different positions – number eight and blindside flanker.

You won't hear him complaining though, not for a second. The former Worcester Warriors and England Sevens player is simply relishing a prolonged spell of first team action and he's quick to pay tribute to his team mates for assisting his development.

"I'm a 23 year old who wants to play every week! But I've got great players around me like Andy Hazell, Peter Buxton and Luke Narryway, players with great experience and I'm loving learning from them."

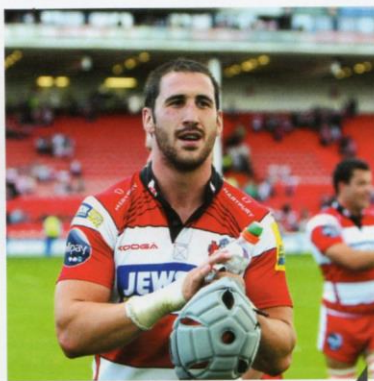
"I sat down with Bucko in the week leading up to the Bath match and we went through my game and what we could do to make my contribution better. People like him have got years more experience than me and it'd be stupid not to take advantage of it."

"The perspective of the coaches is also crucial. In the past, I've been so keen to get into the game that I've had a tendency to go ruck chasing for example. However, Bucko and Hoggy (Carl Hogg) will sit me down and tell me to bide my time, perhaps miss the next ruck but make a positive impact at the next one."

And, despite the back row being

one of the most competitive areas of the squad when everyone is healthy and available, Cox praised the willingness to share information for the greater good of the team.

"It's what I like about this place. The more experienced players know where you're coming from and are happy to help you out. There's a great



"I'm 23 and I'm playing massive games against rivals like Worcester and Bath in front of near sell outs at Kingsholm. It's just good to be part of it and even better to be on the winning side!"

buy in from everybody to do what's necessary to make the team more successful."

"We're all in the same cause, we're all fighting the same fight and, for me as a youngster, that's vital."

Cox's first season at Kingsholm saw him have to remain patient as the

form of the likes of Andy Hazell and Akapusi Qera meant that first team chances were difficult to come by.

The latter part of the season was a different story altogether and the Redditch born player found himself taking part in a couple of Gloucester's more memorable displays and even found time to unveil some slick handling skills as he helped create tries in the LV= Cup final and 41-41 draw at the Leicester Tigers.

"I was very happy to play in those games, especially the LV= Cup Final, and Leicester at Welford Road was a great experience. To have featured in games like that and feel you've played your part gives you confidence."

And a mention of the quick hands that featured in the build up to the afore mentioned tries from Fuimaono-Sapolu and Hazell respectively provoke a burst of laughter.

"I can try it ten times in training and not get it right! But, to be fair, I've got that Sevens background and the grounding I received at the Worcester Academy was very skills based thanks to Gary Meakin."

"So, a lot of my formative time was spent with ball and hand and developing my skills and I think that was shown in those two games."

If last season was about patience, then 2011-12 has been all about playing his part. Cox has started all the Aviva Premiership games to date and to use what has become a Gloucester Rugby catchphrase, he's 'loving life'.

"It's been good. I took a bit of a knock against Bath but you expect that when you're playing regularly and Bob Stewart and the medical staff take great care of us."

"I'm 23 and I'm playing massive games against rivals like Worcester and Bath in front of near sell outs at Kingsholm. It's just good to be part of it and even better to be on the winning side!"

Long may it continue!

KINGSHOLM NEWS WITH BOB FENTON

TWO HOME GAMES IN A ROW, THIS EARLY? I SHOULD HAVE MADE MORE OF AN EFFORT AND DONE A BIT OF PRE-SEASON TYPING, THIS IS STRENUOUS STUFF...

At the time of writing I am still buzzing from last Saturday's derby encounter with Bath. I confess to being one of the doubters who feared the worst as world cup call-ups and injuries depleted our squad.

And after the battering we took for the first 20 minutes or so, I did think it was only a matter of time before the dam burst.

Games turn on little things though, and for us I think it turned on the half hour mark when we mauled the Bath pack onto their own goal line from outside the 22. This seemed to lift the team and the crowd, and our forwards in particular squeezed the life out of their opposite numbers.

In fact I reckon that the Bath forwards are still picking bits of grass out of their teeth, so often were their faces pushed down into it.

Fantastic stuff, and the icing on the cake being Charlie's try in the last minute of the game. Such was his pace after the kick down field that it looked like Nick Scott was going backwards. We all knew Charlie would beat him – tortoise and hare doesn't even come close.

It was also the first game back at Kingsholm for the first of the three 'big name' summer departures, one 'Big' Dave Attwood. So what do we



make of his return then and did we miss him?

Well 'quiet' is the word I would use, but as the rest of his colleagues in the Bath pack were being so comprehensively stuffed it is, perhaps, a bit hard to judge.

What we do know, though, is that our pair of locks seemed to have the edge on Dave Attwood and his mate throughout the 80 minutes.

Will James we all know about, but this young man Tom Savage is proving to be a bit of a revelation. It was only a couple of years ago he was running out for Hartpury seconds trying to convince anyone who would listen that he was worth a punt. And now – a few months later – he doesn't look at all out of place in the Premiership. He has worked his socks off since he got a chance and all credit to him for that.

Matt Cox, too, has stepped up to the plate. He deserves

extra plaudit points for the way he helped himself back to his feet during the Bath game by using the back of the unfortunate Tom Biggs' head as a prop for his big meaty paw. I swear there is a dent in the turf, just alongside the halfway line in the shape of Biggs' face.

I'm absolutely positive it was an accident though; no way would he have done something like that on purpose!!!

I know I bleated on about the World Cup and whether league games should be contested by sides that were hampered by the number of missing players, but these two show that we have hidden depths in the squad, and that has to be good news for the rest of a very long season.

As I've said before, I think it is far more exciting to see young guys coming through the ranks and into the first team than popping down to

“ TALKING OF STRANGE PEOPLE WHO SHOULD GET OUT A BIT MORE HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT ALL THOSE BLOKES ARE DOING LOOKING AT LAPTOPS DURING THE GAMES. ”

'Cheap Southern Hemisphere Imports 'R' Us' and dragging in a few guys who want to top up their pensions.

Anyway, back to the real world... So, four games into the season and we are two from four and one losing bonus point from the away game at Northampton, not so shabby really considering the number of players we have lost.

Our visitors today are two from four also. London Irish got off to a bit of a shaky start losing their first two games but got their show on the

road in round three, and last weekend rattled in four tries past Newcastle.

In Tom Homer they seem to have unearthed a bit of a gem, not to mention a veritable kicking machine. So far this season he has banged over 68 points – or just a few less than Newcastle's total points tally. So, no penalties today, boys.

I was looking at the mind boggling array of statistics that are available on the Aviva Premiership web site just before writing this. Apart from becoming slightly worried about the people

who compile all these things (have they no life, are they not allowed out???) it does show some interesting things.

For example we've scored more tries and conversions than them in our head to head matches, but conceded a lot more penalties. So I repeat – no penalties today!

Talking of strange people who should get out a bit more, have you ever wondered what all those blokes are doing looking at laptops during the games?

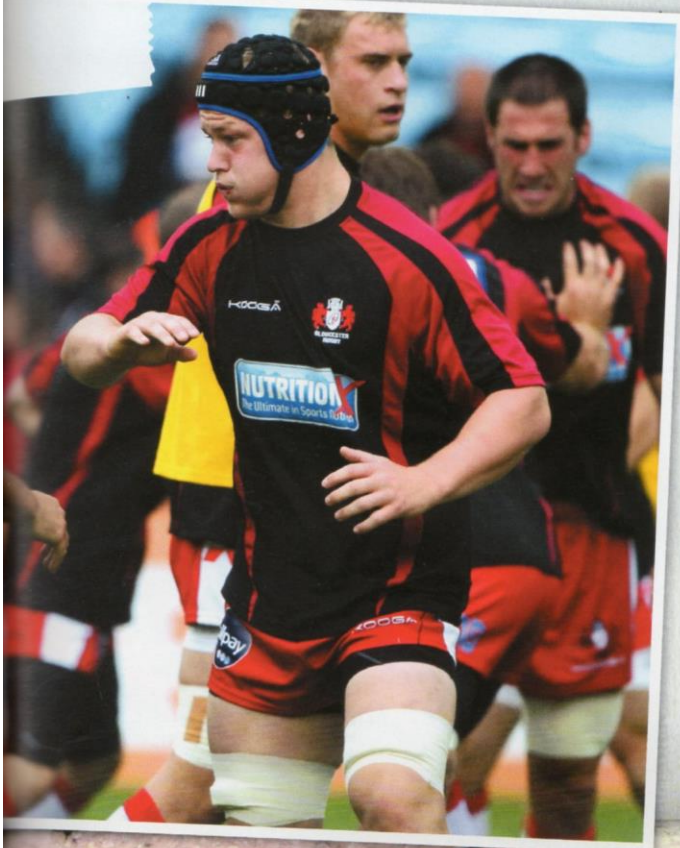
I'm not talking about the hacks and club press guys – a necessary evil for them – I mean this new invention of 'video analysts'.

I kind of get it after the game, sit down with a beer and watch the tapes to see what you can spot, but during the game – can they really spot that little nugget that can change things around? Assuming that is the case, what about half an hour after the game has ended?

I sat in the grandstand having a pint with a mate after last Saturday's game and we were musing what the five guys from Bath were doing peering at a battery of laptops in front of them.

Perhaps they were looking for scrummaging tips from our guys... Or maybe they were searching for a highlight for Bath Rugby TV - good luck to them with that, needles in haystacks are easier to spot!

Maybe a programme article with Rob Thirlby would help... What do you do all day, Rob???





LAST OF THE EXILES

TIME was that matches against the three Exiles clubs, Irish, Welsh and Scottish, were among the more important fixtures in any top flight rugby club's list.

Now, of course, London Irish are the last one left at anywhere near Premiership level.

Scottish have had to make a long climb back up the various leagues and, while Welsh seem to be having something of a revival, they have an awful long way to go before they regain the status they used to have.

We usually seemed to play London Scottish at around New Year time, and with Hogmanay around, it could be quite an occasion.

I recall one match particularly, here at Kingsholm. It was cold enough to freeze the ballcocks off a brass cistern, but that didn't deter a good crowd which included a fair proportion of Scottish supporters. And we all saw a highly exciting game, with no quarter rugby at both ends of the pitch.

Yet it ended with a result which I don't think I've ever seen since. It was a nil-nil draw. Now there's a rarity.

As far as London Welsh is concerned, one game above all others has passed into Gloucester

mythology.

It was that epic cup tie when the Exiles put out the strongest side they could, and it was awesome. They included seven or eight British Lions, who had all been part of the previous summer's victorious tour of New Zealand.

I don't think anyone outside Gloucester gave us a prayer. Yet we won the day, thanks to a stellar performance by the pack, culminating in the most important try number eight Mike Potter, ever scored. The Exiles weren't happy, with their captain, John Dawes, muttering sulkily about 'ten man rugby'.

Well, of course it was. We weren't going to let their star-studded backs get a sniff if we could help it.

London Irish were never sulky, win or lose. The away trip to their old ground at Sunbury was one of the most pleasant of the season.

The locals were always cheerful and friendly, and you didn't even have to leave the bar to watch the match, because one wall overlooked the pitch and seemed to consist entirely of window.

Mind you, there were dangers in that, because the Irish used to import their Guinness directly from Dublin,

and that tippie is distinctly moreish.

We can't offer that today, but I'm sure the travelling support will thoroughly enjoy their visit.



BLAST FROM THE PAST



THERE was one point in the Bath game when I had a most gratifying blast of déjà vu.

Let's face it, we were pretty well outplayed in the first quarter, and needed to make a statement of some sort.

It duly arrived in the form of a classic rolling maul which politely escorted the visiting eight all the way back from the 22 to the Bath line, with young Mr Dawidiuk looking after the ball like a hen with only one chick.

It didn't half take me back. It was precisely the performance which had become Gloucester's trademark in times gone by.

Many a side were undone by it across the length and breadth of the land, but it was here at Kingsholm, in front of a highly vociferous Shed where the move grew into its full flowering, and so it was last Saturday.

It wasn't an isolated incident,

either. A similar ploy led to Gloucester's first try a little while later.

It's always pleasing to put one across Bath, of course, but to do so by reverting to the old forward virtues is gratifying in the extreme.

There were other notable moments too. Our defecting Old Boy, Dave Attwood, very nearly undid us and was only stopped within diving distance of the line.

Stopped he was, but it's worth pointing out that he learned those skills right here at Kingsholm to a large extent, and you could argue that he shouldn't have been playing at all. He should have been plying his trade in New Zealand.

Another bloke who has a right to feel slightly miffed on missing out on England's World Cup squad also distinguished himself right at the end of the local derby.

Charlie Sharples scored his try by

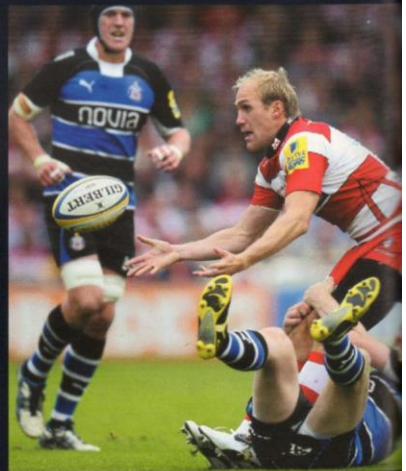
giving the Bath defender a good fifteen yards start, beating him to the ball, accurately kicking ahead and turning on the afterburners to touch down with nobody else in sight.

A fair few excellent wingers have graced the Kingsholm turf over the years, up to and including Philippe Saint-Andre, but I'd be hard put to remember a faster one, which is odd when we are told that Jonny May is even quicker than he is.

There are a lot of skills involved in being a winger, of course, but there is no substitute for sheer, blinding speed. Charlie has that by the bucket load!

It's good for Gloucester that he didn't get picked for England, of course, but I suspect that it might also be good for Charlie himself.

Perhaps he's a bit young and green to be thrust into that atmosphere just at the moment. But surely his time will come.



GLOUCESTER RUGBY	23
BATH RUGBY	06

Aviva Premiership Rugby, Kingsholm, 24 September 2011, 14:00 KO



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

- TRIES** Dawidiuk (37), Sharples (79)
CONS Taylor (38), Burns (80)
PENS Taylor (32, 41, 57)

BATH RUGBY

- PENS** Vesty (20, 25)

DESPITE Gloucester's superb home record in recent seasons, many pundits were predicting that Bath would emerge triumphant at Kingsholm last weekend.

After all, Bath were going well whereas the Cherry and Whites were missing a host of players due to World Cup duty and injury and were coming into the game off the pack of a bad defeat at Harlequins.

However, said pundits still fall into the trap of underestimating the Gloucester 'dog', the difficult to quantify element that sees Gloucester players raise their game in front of their own supporters.

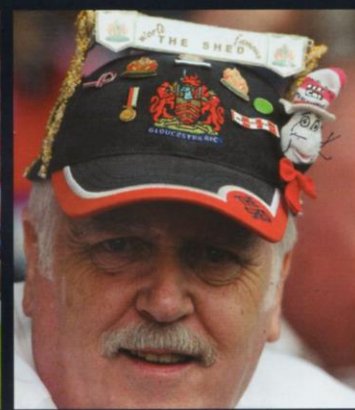
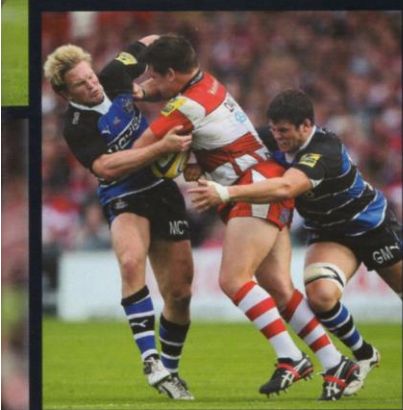
To be fair, however, a Bath win looked like the most likely outcome after half an hour's play.

The visitors simply denied Gloucester any possession at all. Bath didn't look particularly threatening but they patiently hung on to the ball for phase after phase and waited for Gloucester to crack.

However, as much as Gloucester bent, they steadfastly refused to break. Two penalties from Sam Vesty, one bouncing over via the crossbar, were the only reward.

Then the Gloucester pack took over. One rolling maul hinted at greater rewards as Bath hauled it down illegally at the expense of a Tim Taylor penalty but, minutes later, Gloucester went one better and Darren Dawidiuk touched down.

Gloucester didn't look back. Taylor kept the scoreboard ticking with a



couple of penalties and passionate work in defence did the rest.

But credit to Bath, they certainly made Gloucester work hard defensively in the final quarter. However, as hard as they tried, they simply couldn't force their way over the line. They came close a couple of times but not close enough.

And the final word went to a couple of Gloucester's young tyros. A turnover in the home 22 gave Freddie Burns the chance to kick downfield and Charlie Sharples simply turned on the afterburners to outpace Nick Scott, despite giving him several yards head start, to gather and score the clincher.



CHAMPAGNE MOMENT

The Gloucester pack had already laid down a marker when, on 37 minutes, they went back to the catch and drive and bullied the Bath forwards back over their own line. The try signalled a huge sway in momentum and Gloucester didn't look back.

KEY QUOTE

"I thought our pack were outstanding. There were some great performances across the board and that set a platform. Today we played as a team, defended as a team and got our rewards as a team."

Bryan Redpath

GLoucester RUGBY

- 15 FB Olly Morgan
- 14 W Charlie Sharples
- 13 C Jonny May
- 12 C **Lesley Vainikolo**
- 11 W Tom Voyce
- 10 FH Tim Taylor
- 9 SH Nick Runciman
- 1 P Nick Wood
- 2 H Darren Dawidiuk
- 3 P Rupert Harden
- 4 L Tom Savage
- 5 L Will James
- 6 F Peter Buxton (c)
- 7 F Matt Cox
- 8 N8 Brett Deacon

REPLACEMENTS

- 16 H Matias Cortese
- 17 Dan Murphy
- 18 P Dario Chistolini
- 19 David Lyons
- 20 Gareth Evans
- 21 Dan Robson
- 22 FH Freddie Burns
- 23 Henry Trinder

BATH RUGBY

- 15 FB Nick Abendanon
- 14 W Jack Cuthbert
- 13 C Matt Carraro
- 12 C Dan Hipkiss
- 11 W Tom Biggs
- 10 FH Sam Vesty
- 9 SH Michael Claassens (c)
- 1 P Nathan Catt
- 2 H Ross Batty
- 3 P Duncan Bell
- 4 L Dave Attwood
- 5 L Ryan Caldwell
- 6 F Carl Fearn
- 7 F Guy Mercer
- 8 N8 Ben Skirving

REPLACEMENTS

- 16 Mark Lilley
- 17 P Charlie Beech
- 18 P Kane Palma-Newport
- 19 Will Spencer
- 20 F Andy Beattie
- 21 SH Mark McMillan
- 22 FH Tom Heathcote
- 23 C Nick Scott

TODAY'S Line-UPS



- 15 OLLY MORGAN
- 14 CHARLIE SHARPLES
- 13 HENRY TRINDER
- 12 JONNY MAY
- 11 TOM VOYCE
- 10 TIM TAYLOR
- 09 NICK RUNCIMAN
- 01 NICK WOOD
- 02 DARREN DAWIDIUK
- 03 RUPERT HARDEN
- 04 TOM SAVAGE
- 05 WILL JAMES
- 06 PETER BUXTON (C)
- 07 LUKE NARRAWAY
- 08 BRETT DEACON
- 16 MATIAS CORTESE
- 17 DAN MURPHY
- 18 DARIO CHISTOLINI
- 19 DAVID LYONS
- 20 MATT COX
- 21 DAVE LEWIS
- 22 FREDDIE BURNS
- 23 JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL

- 15 TOM HOMER
- 14 TOPSY OJO
- 13 JONATHAN JOSEPH
- 12 STEVEN SHINGLER
- 11 ADAM THOMPSTONE
- 10 DAN BOWDEN
- 09 DARREN ALLINSON
- 01 CLARKE DERMODY (C)
- 02 DAVID PAICE
- 03 LEO HALAVATAU
- 04 NICK KENNEDY
- 05 JAMES SANDFORD
- 06 BRYN EVANS
- 07 ALEX GRAY
- 08 CHRIS HALA'UFIA
- 16 JAMES BUCKLAND
- 17 MAX LAHIFF
- 18 MARK GEORGE
- 19 TOM ALEXANDER
- 20 DAVID SISI
- 21 GUY ARMITAGE
- 22 ANTHONY WATSON
- 23 PAUL HODGSON

THE OFFICIALS



REFEREE: Greg Garner
ASST REFS: Robin Goodliffe and Nigel Carrick

TOP SCORERS 2011/12



68 Tom Homer

61 Billy Twelvetrees

55 Nick Macleod

54 Nick Evans

50 Sam Vesty

47 Ignacio Mieres



WHAT ARE THESE ALL ABOUT?

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