

GLOUCESTER RUGBY



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AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY
vs. SALE SHARKS



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THE PRIDE ~ THE PASSION ~ THE HONOUR ~ THE HISTORY

AVIVA PREMIERSHIP RUGBY





CAPTAIN'S CORNER

TOM SAVAGE

I'd like to wish a very warm welcome to Kingsholm to everybody on what is a very proud occasion for me.

I've had the privilege of captaining Gloucester Rugby before, but this is the first time that I will lead the team out as the official club captain – and I couldn't be prouder of the fact.

As soon as you arrive at Gloucester, you become aware of the heritage and history that surrounds the whole club and

season. We won here at Kingsholm back in the Autumn but tasted defeat at the Salford City Stadium towards the end of the campaign.

It hints at a tight game with both sides looking to get their seasons off to the best possible start.

We come into the game feeling good about ourselves. We've had a really good preseason, putting in the hard work but also benefitting from the superb way we're managed by Paddy Anson and his team.

"IT HINTS AT A TIGHT GAME WITH BOTH SIDES LOOKING TO GET THEIR SEASONS OFF TO THE BEST POSSIBLE START."

appreciate how fortunate you are to be able to pull on the famous Cherry and White shirt.

I spent some time this week looking at the list of previous captains that is displayed in reception at Kingsholm, and it's a real honour to think that my

name is to be added to that illustrious group.

As proud as I am, it's important that I remain focused on the task in hand this afternoon as we kick off with a tough encounter against Sale Sharks.

Honours were even between the two teams last

We've also played some tough friendlies in recent weeks and that's been beneficial. We want to be considered one of the top teams in Europe, and playing at the likes of Toulon and Munster will help us to achieve that goal.

It was important though to finish off the preseason preparations on a high note and I feel that we did that last weekend against the Scarlets.

That performance combined the resilience that exists within the squad, with some quality rugby. And, of course, it was good to hear our supporters in full voice again!

It feels like it's been a long summer but, speaking on behalf of the boys, we can't wait for this afternoon's game and we'll be doing everything in our power to give you all something to shout about.

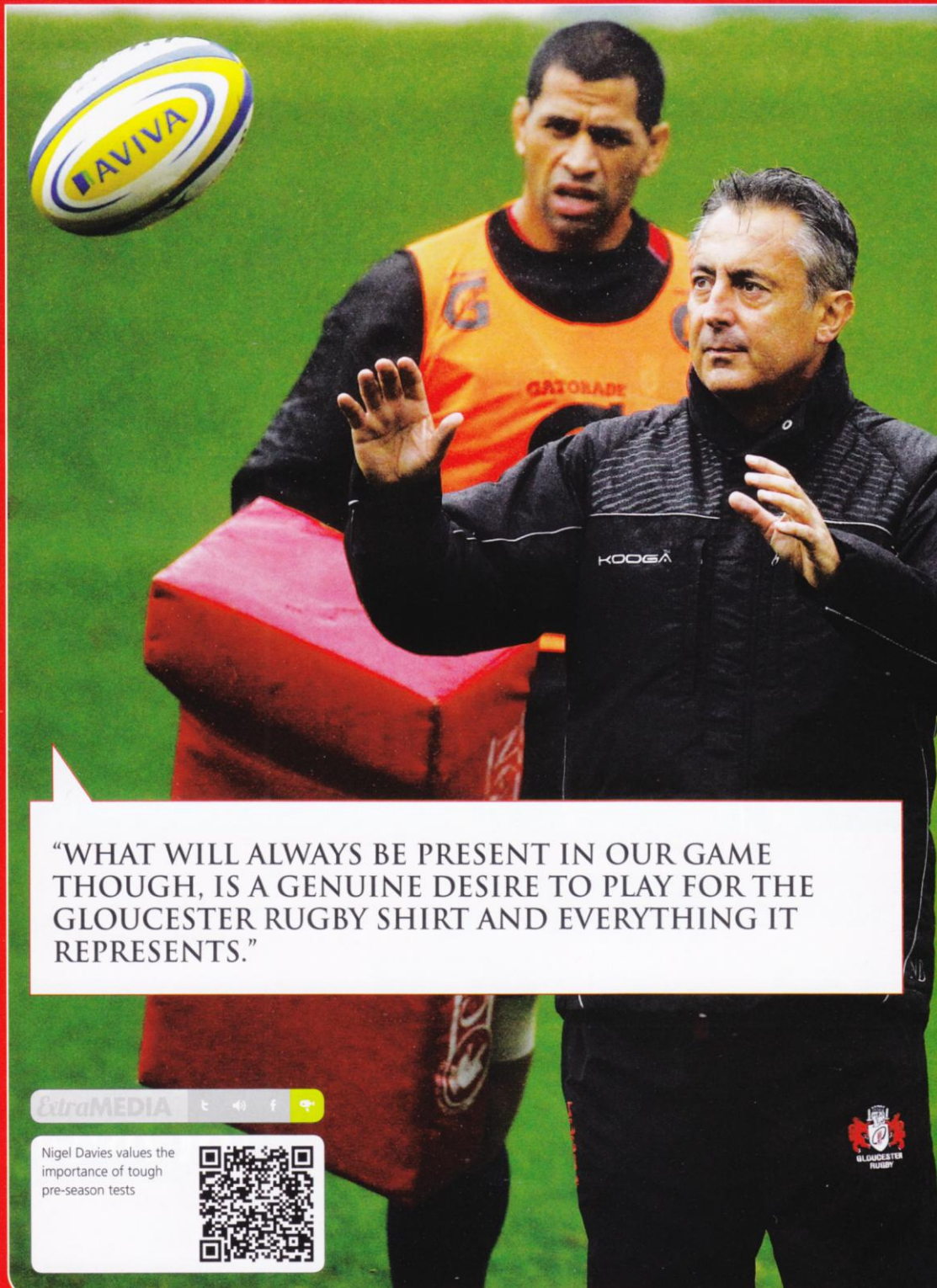
Enjoy the game,

Sav

Pre-season has been really good and allowed players to return to the team from injury.



NIGEL DAVIES DIRECTOR OF RUGBY



"WHAT WILL ALWAYS BE PRESENT IN OUR GAME
THOUGH, IS A GENUINE DESIRE TO PLAY FOR THE
GLOUCESTER RUGBY SHIRT AND EVERYTHING IT
REPRESENTS."

ExtraMEDIA

Nigel Davies values the
importance of tough
pre-season tests



COACH'S NOTES

On behalf of everyone at Gloucester Rugby, I'd like to wish the players, supporters and staff of the Sale Sharks a very warm welcome to Kingsholm this afternoon.

After all the hard work put in by the squad during preseason, we now get down to the real business – Aviva Premiership rugby at Kingsholm.

It's a funny thing. It feels like a long time since we played Saracens here in our last home league game. On the other hand, the summer months seem to have flown by.

It's been a good summer for Gloucester Rugby. We had a number of players on international tours, and had the honour of seeing Billy Twelvetrees called up to the British and Irish Lions tour of Australia.

As a coaching staff, we've also been able to prepare a preseason schedule designed to have the players in the best possible condition, mentally and physically, coming into the start of the season.

Compared to last season, when we all came together relatively late as a group, I'm very happy with how the past three months have gone.

It's a sign of that progress that we deliberately sought to test ourselves in our preseason schedule with testing fixtures away at the likes of Toulon and Munster.

They have been consistently ranked amongst the top European teams in recent seasons, and that's the level we aspire to. Playing in

challenging environments such as those is a valuable experience and shows us where we need to be.

It was good to get back to Kingsholm last weekend though. Playing two games on the same evening was a calculated risk, as we had to ensure we had enough players to fulfill the two fixtures.

However, it did provide an opportunity for as many players as possible to get some meaningful

upon what we achieved last season. Fifth place wasn't a bad outcome, but we were slightly disappointed as we felt that we could have done even better.

We've got some real talent in the squad and we know that we're capable of defeating anyone on the right day. However, to be able to challenge at the highest level, we do need to be more consistent.

What will always be present in

Pre-season has been excellent and each game has provided some really good competition



match action ahead of today's game.

Today will be a big challenge. Last season, Sale found themselves in a fight against relegation, a situation they wouldn't have contemplated coming into the season.

However, the way they turned things around after Christmas showed what they're capable of as a squad. They finished strongly and they'll be looking to maintain that improvement.

For us, it's also about building

our game though, is a genuine desire to play for the Gloucester Rugby shirt and everything it represents.

We have an honest group of players who work hard, and who are proud to play for Gloucester Rugby. That's our commitment to you and we know that we'll receive terrific support in return.

Enjoy the game,

Nigel



VIEW FROM The Citizen

with **NICK PUREWAL**

Nick talks to Gloucester's new back row enforcer about his Kingsholm debut and the season ahead.

SCAVENGER PRINCE

The goose bumps flashed Matt Kvesic right back to a childhood spent marvelling and dreaming on The Shed.

As Gloucester warmed up for Friday's final pre-season clash against the Scarlets, the roar of the crowd caught Kvesic unprepared.

The 21-year-old will never forget fighting his way to the front of Gloucester's iconic terracing as a youngster, desperate to be as close

as possible to his heroes.

When the Cherry and Whites ran their customary warm-up lap on Friday night, Kingsholm erupted in mandatory 'Glawster, Glawster' refrain.

Kvesic was the other side of the fence, and he almost could not believe it.

"I've watched Gloucester as a kid, I've stood in The Shed as a kid," explained the summer recruit from Worcester Warriors.

"I've squeezed my way to the front and watched Ludovic Mercier banging over the goals, and guys like Andy Hazell out there fighting away. So coming here is something I'm really relishing.

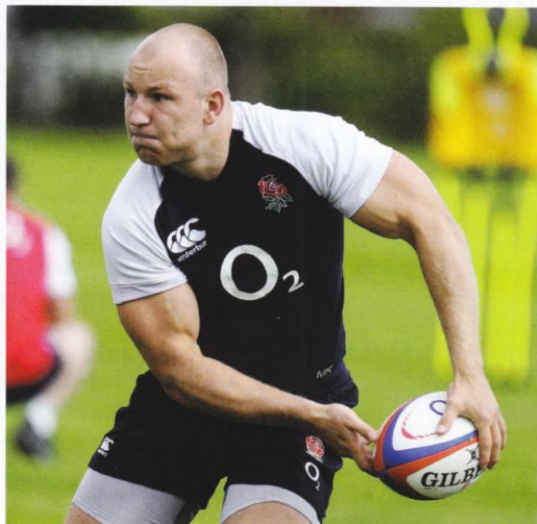
"Whoever I'm playing for, whether it was Worcester, or with England or now Gloucester, I'll give my heart for the shirt, because I'm that sort of guy. It's nice to think everyone will do the same here.

"But it is that little bit special, the crowd are brilliant: it makes the hairs stand up when you do that lap of the pitch before kick-off. And when a full house is there it's going to be a rocking place."

Kvesic claimed a try and was also slapped with a yellow card on his Kingsholm debut as Gloucester won out 31-17 over the West Wales regional outfit.

Stunned by the atmosphere, lifelong Gloucester fan Kvesic revealed his teammates have warned him he has not experienced anything yet.

Kvesic will be looking to establish himself in the back row for both Gloucester and England.





yellow card, I thought I had rights to the ball, but you've got to respect the referee's decision and try to learn from things like that.

"We'll look at that this week, but I thought we did well overall and it bodes well for the start of the season.

"I haven't had a yellow card for a while, and I've been doing

"THE CROWD GIVES YOU A LIFT WHEN THEY CHANT, AND CHEER BOYS DOING WELL, BIG HITS, TURNOVERS OR THE EYORE CALLS FOR DROPPED BALLS – ALL OF THAT REALLY KEEPS YOU GOING."

Gloucester open their Premiership season by hosting Sale Sharks at Kingsholm today – and England flanker Kvesic admits he would love to start, in front of a full house.

He continued: "Friday night was pretty awesome to be honest. To hear the crowd behind you, it's amazing. I really enjoyed it.

"The crowd gives you a lift when they chant, and cheer boys doing well, big hits, turnovers or the eyore calls for dropped balls – all of that really keeps you going.

"It genuinely does help you keep pushing to the limit. I said to the boys after the game that the atmosphere was brilliant.

"And they said wait until it's packed out, because you can't even hear yourself think or the boys around you calling.

"So fingers crossed I get the

opportunity to play in front of a full crowd, because that's something I'm really looking forward to."

From latching onto Henry Trinder's defence-turning chip to score, to being sin-binned for one breakdown transgression too many, Kvesic enjoyed a busy Gloucester start.

The natural successor to scavenger king Andy Hazell knows all too well that superior openside flanking is about balancing the sword's deadly double edge.

"It was a pretty eventful night for me!" he laughed.

"I was delighted to get a try, I didn't have to do too much really, it was just the product of Trinder's great kick.

"I thought he was outstanding all night, so all I had to do was get on his shoulder.

"I was a bit frustrated with the

alright on keeping on the right side of the yellow card, but you've always got to keep working hard at that.

"I'm not going to stop going hard at the breakdown, because that's my job, you've got to play on the edge – and as a result you have to expect the consequences every now and then.

"But I hope it doesn't happen too often, so hopefully we can get it right this week and beyond.

"We played rugby in the right areas, kept the pressure on them and that was important.

"We probably let a few chances slip by though, and we'll be keen to be more clinical this weekend. It's a big opportunity with our first game at home.

"We've got a lot to be proud of from Friday night – but now we want to take it to the next level."

GLoucester RUGBY
HERITAGE

www.gloucester rugbyheritage.org.uk

1931-32 SAXBY'S GLORIOUS YEAR

Les Saxby played 169 games for Gloucester between 1924 and 1932, scoring 30 tries. He had started his career as a centre but moved to the back row and became pack leader.

He was a hugely popular and influential captain of the club for four seasons (1927-30 and 1931-32) and was on the winning side in three successive County Championship Finals for Gloucestershire.

He will always be remembered though for his final season of

1931-32 in which he had a truly remarkable year.

In that season he captained Gloucester, captained Gloucestershire to their third successive County Championship, captained Gloucestershire and Somerset against South Africa, captained The Rest to victory against England in the final trial, made his international debut at the age of 31, leading the England pack against South Africa and Wales, and toured South Wales with the Barbarians.

Leslie Eric Saxby was born on May 19, 1900 at Bradfield, Berkshire. After leaving Reading College, he farmed on the Gloucestershire-Herefordshire border.

He played for Hereford from 1921-26, captaining the club and while with Hereford played county rugby for North Midlands in the centre.

He'd played occasionally for Gloucester in 1923-24 and 1924-25 and had taken part in the 1924 Easter tour, but it was in 1925-26 that he left Hereford and attempted unsuccessfully to break into the Gloucester side.

Finally, in November 1926 it was decided to try Saxby out in the back row. The Citizen said "Saxby

was introduced into the pack..... With a better knowledge of the finer points of forward play the old Hereford player should prove a useful acquisition."

The experiment was an immediate success and within four months Saxby made his debut for Gloucestershire against Monmouth.

Les Saxby captained Gloucester for the next three seasons, 1927-1930 and also played regularly



Les Saxby



Saxby's Gloucester cap for his first year of captaincy 1927-28, donated by his son John Saxby

for Gloucestershire, appearing in the victory over Lancashire at Blundellsands in the final of March 1930 and scoring the winning try in a nail-biting 10-9 victory over Warwickshire at Kingsholm the following season.

It was a period of success for both club and county. Saxby proved himself an outstanding leader and became an iconic figure in the club.

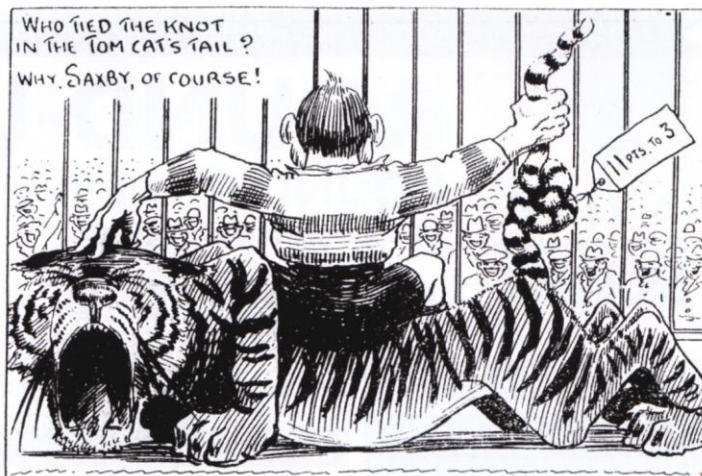
Although 1931-32 was to be Les Saxby's great season, it started badly. Chosen to captain both Gloucester and Gloucestershire, after stepping down from the club captaincy in 1930, he was unable to play in the opening South West group game at Exeter in October.

To the astonishment of press and public, the defending County Champions were soundly beaten by Devon who scored six tries in the process.

Under Saxby's captaincy the situation was turned round, however, and Gloucestershire went on to take the Championship for the third successive season, beating Durham at Blaydon in the final.

Saxby captained Gloucestershire and Somerset against the touring Springboks at Bristol in the first match of their 1931-32 tour. Although the Counties lost 14-3 the South Africans failed to score a try and were held by the Counties' pack for most of the game.

He impressed the England selectors who were looking for an experienced pack leader and they chose Saxby to captain the Rest



Teek cartoon of Gloucester v Leicester Tigers Kingsholm 12 January 1929

victory and, as a result, he was selected to make his international debut as pack leader against South Africa at Twickenham.

Saxby held his place against Wales at Swansea and went on to play for the Barbarians on their Easter tour of South Wales. He played in wins against Penarth and Swansea on the four match tour in which the Barbarians were undefeated. He retired at the end of his triumphant final season.

At the time of Les Saxby's selection The Times reported that





The England team meet the Prince of Wales at Twickenham, 2 January 1932

very end of his career..." and the rumour persists today that he was close to 40 when he made his debut although in fact he was not yet 32! Saxby enjoyed the joke.

At an end of season dinner to celebrate the County Championship victory, his teammates presented him with a beer tankard engraved with the signatures of the 1932 Gloucestershire Championship-winning team and affectionately inscribed "To Old Man Sax".

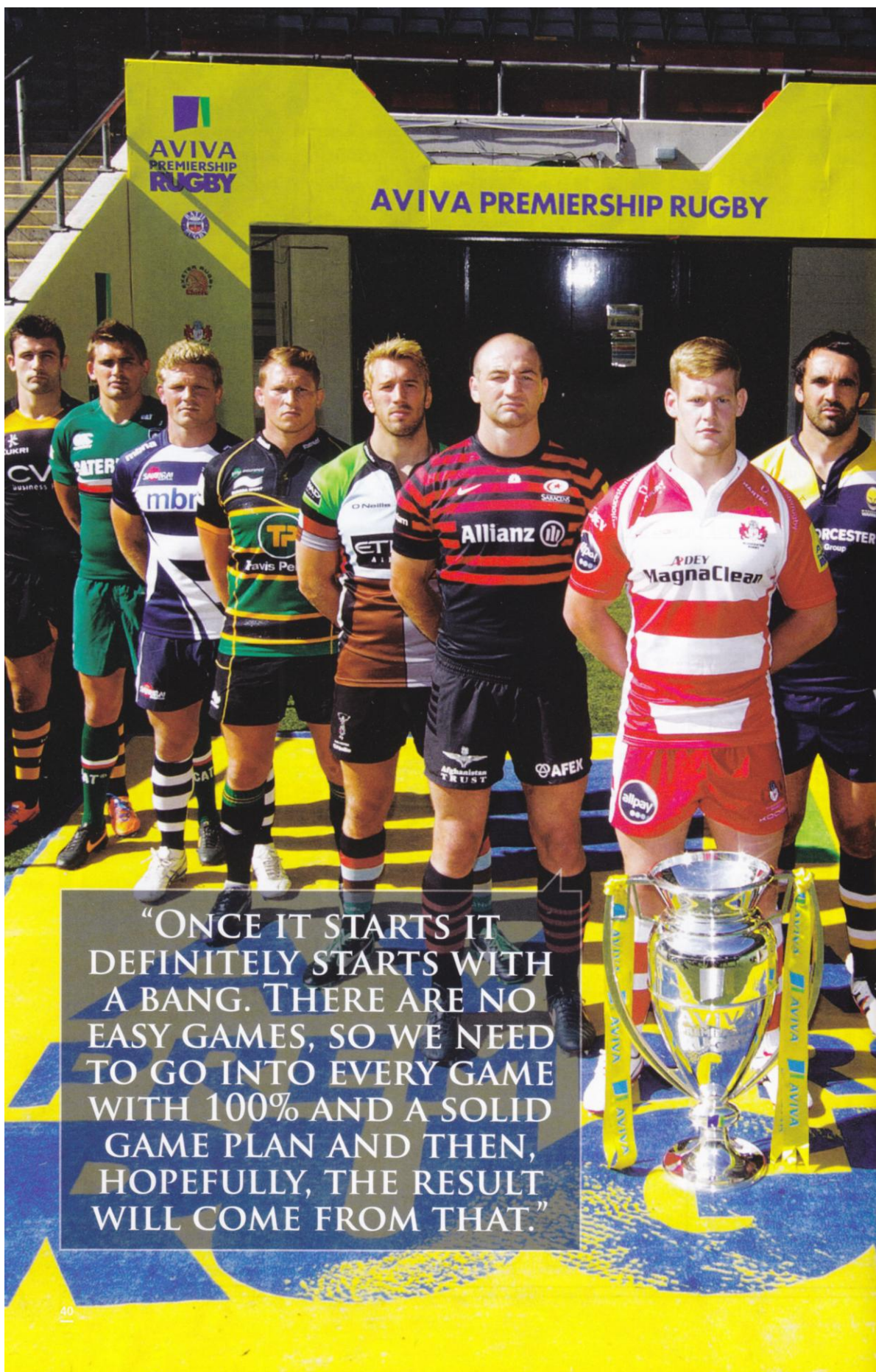
Les Saxby joined the RAF at the start of the 1939-45 war and was posted to South Africa, where he was attached to the South African Air Force.

He returned briefly to England before going back to make his home there. He died in Pietermaritzburg aged 58.

 <p>L. E. SAXBY (Captain of Gloucester and Somerset)</p>	<p>Referee: F. O. STEPHENS (Hillingdon). Linesman: W. H. BROWN (Somerset). Linesman: T. B. PIANZA.</p>	 <p>B. L. OSLER (Captain South Africa)</p>
<p>Gloucestershire and Somersetshire CHURCHILL-WYNN.</p>	<p>South Africans COLLINGS—Groom and Gold; Springbok on left knee.</p>	
<p>Full Back— (1) T. W. BROWN (Somerset)</p>	<p>Full Back— (29) G. BRAND (Western Province)</p>	
<p>Threequarters— (2) K. DOWLING (L. Wing) (Somerset)</p>	<p>Threequarters— (35) M. ZIMMERMAN (R.W.) (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(3) M. A. McCANLIS (L.C.) (Gloucester)</p>	<p>(32) J. C. V. & WESTHUIZEN (H. Centre) (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(4) IR. A. GERHARD (R.C.) (Bath)</p>	<p>(26) B. G. GRAY (L. Centre) (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(5) IA. V. TOWSE (R. Wing) (Somerset)</p>	<p>(5) F. D. VENTER (L. Wing) (Transvaal)</p>	
<p>Half Backs— (6) IT. J. M. BARRINGTON (Somerset)</p>	<p>Half Backs— (31) B. L. OSLER—Capt. (Fly Half) (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(7) C. B. CARTER (Scrum) (Somerset)</p>	<p>(30) P. DE VILLIERS (Scrum) (Western Province)</p>	
<p>Forwards— (8) F. WADLEY (Gloucester)</p>	<p>Forwards— (7) F. BERGH (South African)</p>	
<p>(9) IG. O. GREGORY (Bristol)</p>	<p>(3) J. BIERMAN (Transvaal)</p>	
<p>(10) A. CARPENTER (Gloucester)</p>	<p>(9) J. DOLD (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(11) K. SALMON (Gloucester)</p>	<p>(15) H. KIPLING (Gloucester)</p>	
<p>(12) IR. MATTHEWS (Bath)</p>	<p>(13) "BOY" LOUW (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(14) IT. MASTERS (Gloucester)</p>	<p>(16) A. MACDONALD (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(15) "L. E. SAXBY—Capt. (Gloucester)</p>	<p>(17) P. MORTYER (Western Province)</p>	
<p>(16) C. FRY (Gloucester)</p>	<p>(1) B. STRACHAN (Transvaal)</p>	

against England in the final trial.
The Rest had a convincing 16-6

"...he is one of the oldest forwards who ever received a cap towards the



"ONCE IT STARTS IT DEFINITELY STARTS WITH A BANG. THERE ARE NO EASY GAMES, SO WE NEED TO GO INTO EVERY GAME WITH 100% AND A SOLID GAME PLAN AND THEN, HOPEFULLY, THE RESULT WILL COME FROM THAT."



LEADER OF THE PACK

REPLACING JIM HAMILTON WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE A TALL ORDER.

HOWEVER, IN TOM SAVAGE, THE HUGELY TALENTED, HARD-HITTING AND VERSATILE FORWARD, GLOUCESTER RUGBY ARE CONFIDENT THAT THEY HAVE THE PERFECT MAN TO LEAD THE CHERRY AND WHITES IN 2013/14.

When Director of Rugby Nigel Davies selected Savage to be his new 'leader-of-men', it capped a meteoric rise for Shrewsbury-born 'Sav', whose star has been in the ascendant ever since he arrived at Hartpury College and asked the Gloucester Rugby staff for a trial to show what he could do.

Now in his third full season at Kingsholm, Savage took a moment to ponder the new campaign during a break from interviews at the Aviva Premiership launch at

Twickenham recently.

"I've been really looking forward to the season now, there's only so much fitness training and pre-season that you can do and it's all building up to the start now"

"You look at some of the boys here leading the other teams and the experience that they all have. They've all said hello and been great so, as a new kid on the block really, it's been good to meet them and get involved and it's really sunk in that I'm the skipper!"

"Now, I'm just itching for the first whistle to blow and getting the

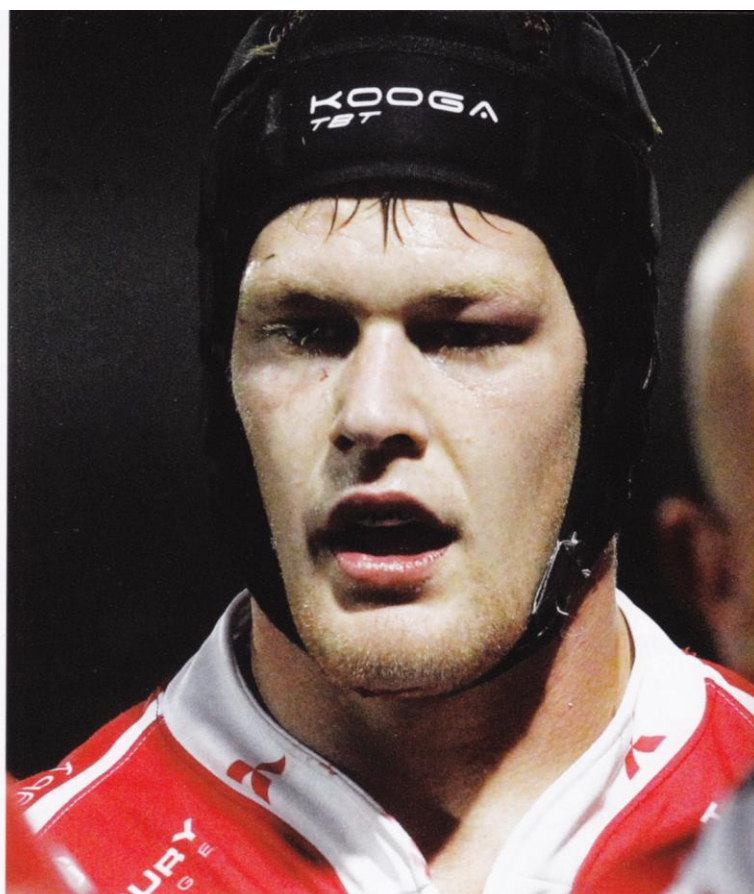
season underway."

After meeting all his contemporaries at the annual Aviva Premiership season launch, Savage was able to eye up the competition at Twickenham ahead of the new campaign. It all seems a long way from the days of captaining Hartpury College to the National South West Three title.

"Those days seem a long time ago now. Turning out for Hartpury was a great time for me, and I look back on those times with really fond memories and it's helped me get to where I am today."

With the fixtures computer throwing up Sale Sharks as Gloucester's first opponents at Kingsholm this season, Savage recognises the test they will pose today and how his side will have to be on top form.

"Sale are a really tough side, they showed their resilience last



Tom looks to break through the Munster defence in the pre-season friendly played in August.

year when they stayed up, fighting hard to put right their start from last year and managing to stay in the Premiership.

"We're going to have to be on our game to get the win but we're confident. It'll be a really tough match."

Nigel Davies also revealed recent British and Irish Lion Billy Twelvetrees as Savage's vice-captain, and the new skipper says that a solid relationship with the centre will help form a great partnership.

"I get on with Billy really well, we spend a lot of time together, both in and out of the club. I think it's someone who is really well suited to the role."

"He's a perfect guy to work with now thanks to the experience he's gained over the last year and throughout the summer with the Lions, and I'm really excited to start working with Billy and forming a strong partnership on and off the pitch."



Ahead of the new season, with plenty of promise and excitement within the squad, ambitions will be high but Savage insists there are simple ways of achieving these.

"We know that we have to make Kingsholm a fortress again and back to how it was.

Building week in week out on performances, and building solid momentum and getting the crowd behind us, as we know how good they are and the impact they have on us as players."

After Sale depart from Kingsholm, the Cherry and Whites travel to Allianz Park to take on Saracens, host Northampton Saints and then

**"...I'M JUST
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every game with a solid game plan, give 100% and then, hopefully, the result will come from that.

"It's good to have a good test to start off with so we'll know exactly what we need to do and build some solid momentum.

"As for kick off on Saturday afternoon, I really cannot wait to get started."

travel to newly promoted Newcastle Falcons. A tough start but the Gloucester squad are aware of what they need to do.

"It's a tricky start for us. Once it starts, it definitely starts with a bang. There are no easy games, so we need to go into



Hopefully this will not be the first time Savage has his hands on the Premiership trophy this season.



KINGSHOLM NEWS with BOB FENTON

I made it 1 minute and 13 seconds before the Shed was offering the referee a few tips on the offside and other laws - that must be a season record! It's great to be back and to see nothing's changed.

After a long summer away, it's finally back. You hear the earthy 'singing', the despairing shouts and the raucous cheers.

Yes it's that time again, yes it's back – X Factor! Oops, shome mishtake shurely... I mean it's the

has meant that there has been plenty of rugby on offer to pass the time. The Lion tour was particularly exciting viewing, three really good test matches to enjoy and some decent affairs in midweek if you could get to a TV.

England in Argentina proved a bit

May next year.

The Lions tours seem to inject the 'Wimbledon Effect' into a lot of people – i.e. they suddenly become experts on tennis for two weeks – who decide to show off their huge levels of rugby knowledge. During one midweek match I was in London and had arranged to meet a colleague in The Sports Café in Haymarket.

The place was packed with people watching the rugby. I had the 'pleasure' of sitting just behind a guy who was clearly one such expert, hearing him trying to explain the difference between a scrum and a maul provided a good ten minutes of amusement. Mind you, I reckon that there is more than one Premiership referee who suffers from similar confusion every now and then...

But good though those games are, there is nothing that compares to the buzz you feel when you walk back into Kingsholm after a few months away.

As ever there are changes, we seem to have borrowed an old kit from Wigan RFC, we have a bunch of new sponsors (at least now we know what'll be in those smelling salts) and a few new players too.

For the first few weeks we can all enjoy the usual pre-match 'who's that then' conversations and confusion, but it'll all become clear soon enough.

The 'double header' last week was a bit of fun too. I arrived in time to watch the last quarter of



start of the rugby season.

Oddly the two coincide, I hear that awful theme music start on a Saturday night and I know it is time to run off and start to think about some words of wisdom to impart in this column.

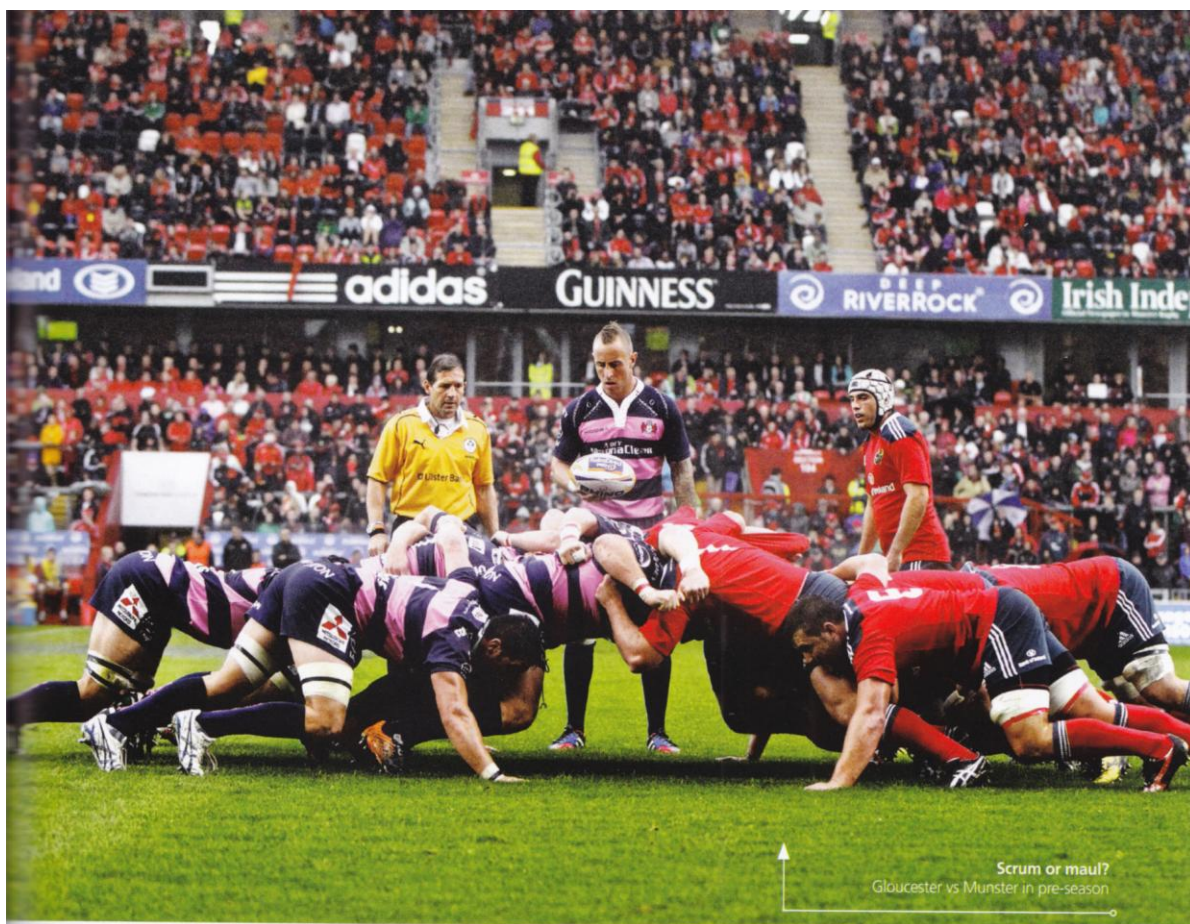
So here I am, hunched over the computer, large glass of Italian red parked next to me and time to reflect on what has been another great summer of sport.

Having the Lions tour down south and England in Argentina

harder to keep up to date with, and then we had the JP Doyle, sorry JP Morgan, Sevens.

Work kept me away from the Kingsholm round – but then Marseilles is not a bad place to be stuck – so I missed out on that, and the final too.

I know Sevens is not everyone's cup of tea but it's entertaining enough – and we won! So that's one trophy on offer so far this season and it's in our cabinet. Let's hope it isn't feeling lonely come



Scrum or maul?
Gloucester vs Munster in pre-season

the Plymouth game and it seemed that most of the steam had gone out of it.

The second match was a much better affair, I made it 1 minute and

13 seconds before the Shed was offering the referee a few tips on the offside and other laws - that must be a season record! It's great to be back and to see nothing's changed. Good news...

Actually the first half of the Scarlets game was a bit dull, in the second half they played like a Welsh team of old - i.e. the ball became optional as the main target seemed to be our players. It worked for them though, and they knocked us out of our stride for a bit. That was until Rob Cook scored the try of the season to put the match beyond doubt.

So what can we look forward to this season? I really do think that this one is going to be a close run affair with any one of about six teams in with a shout.

Our first few games should give us a good idea of where we are going. Sale today, and a chance to 'reacquaint' ourselves with the old boss, will be tough enough - remember how tight it was at the end of last season?

Then a visit to the plastic team

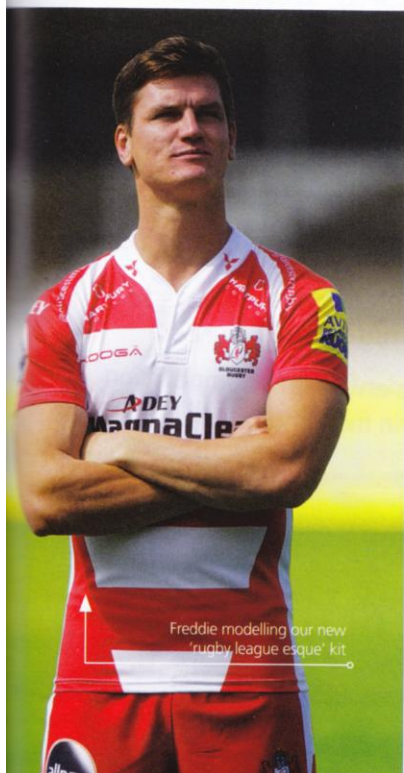
on the plastic pitch in north London before we welcome Northampton. As the baldy bloke on Masterchef may shout, 'Rugby doesn't get any tougher than this!!!' Bring it on, can't wait.

Finally, as we get towards the start of the season, it's hard not to reflect on the passing of another true rugby great Cliff Morgan.

A great player in his own right - though well before my time - his commentaries made the game come to light in front of you.

An awesome commentator, those guys who play at doing it now should go and sit in a dark room and listen to tapes of Cliff - and the late Bill McLaren - until they learn how to do it right.

Until they do, the phrase he came up with after 'that' try had been scored - "If the greatest writer of the written word would have written that story, you'd never have believed it", should be writ large in front of every commentary desk to show them what it really means to paint pictures with words.



Freddie modelling our new
'rugby league esque' kit



NIGEL MELVILLE ONCE BEAUTIFULLY DESCRIBED PETER BUXTON'S APPROACH TO TRAINING AS THAT OF "A ONE MAN WRECKING CREW."

INJURIES would often involve collisions with the versatile forward, who was one of the Premiership's most honest and enthusiastic performers for more than a decade.

He walked off the field at Exeter in May expecting his playing career to resume next weekend in the Championship with Bristol, but instead he's back at Gloucester, having called time on playing in favour of a new role as Academy Manager at Kingsholm.

"I had to be honest with myself and think whether I could play up the standards I had done in the past" he told me.

"I had gone to Bristol to train and to play, and I'd enjoyed the training and there is a really good bunch of people there but I could see it was going to take a lot of time to get ready for games because I'm 35 now."

"I saw the job and applied without really thinking what I

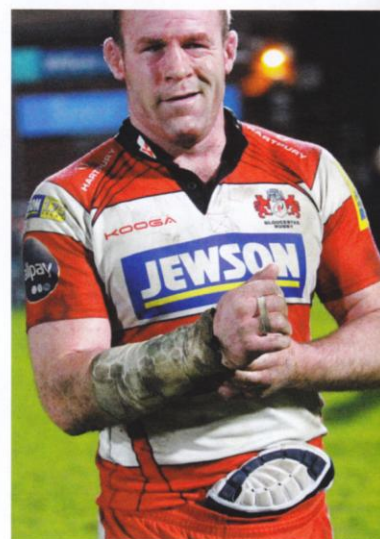
would do if I got it. I only starting contemplating that when I was offered it.



"It was then a really difficult 7-10 days and being able to stay

here was a big part in that decision process. I wasn't convinced that if I played somewhere else I could find that same level of intensity."

Buxton has already done his level 3 coaching badge and, for the last two seasons, been involved two nights a week with local clubs in Cheltenham.



He had first played in the Cheltenham under 10's and progressed all the way through to the Colts side. Several of that group are still close friends today, and it's that same age bracket which Buxton is now responsible for.

"I've always wanted to coach in some capacity, and I wondered when the next opportunity might come along if I didn't take this one.

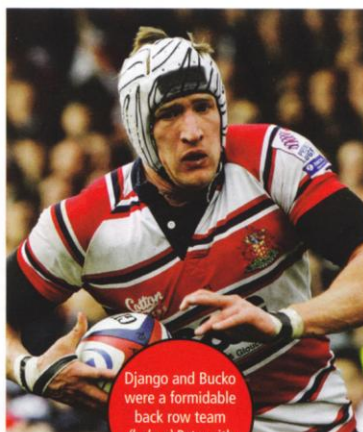
"I don't mind admitting my IT skills are being put under pressure, and the guys are having to be patient with me, but I try and coach in a practical way, a way I would understand.

"We've got an outstanding crop of under 18's and the 17's are a good group of kids who show enthusiasm and passion whenever they play. That's a great start point.

"My main goal is to get local players into a Gloucester shirt at first team level if I can, and

give them the best possible support. I've had that experience of being a local player coming through the system and it's special. We're also starting a scheme for under 13's and 14's to get talented boys in as early as possible."

Buxton's body has had, as well as caused, a fair few injuries. He cites the thumb he dislocated in a Premiership final against Leicester and a stress fracture in his heel as

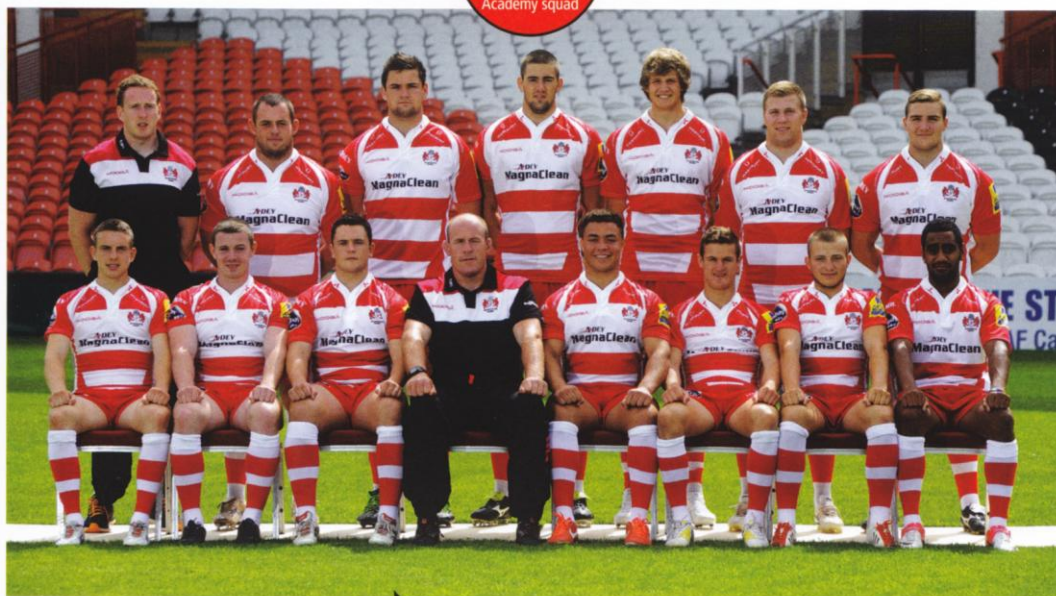


Django and Bucko were a formidable back row team (below) Pete with Academy squad

So what of the future?

"The Academy boys have to understand how mentally and physically demanding being a top player is. The Academy is there to develop talent with as big a skill set as possible, and for them to be able to step up to senior level.

"Part of that is about results. We want a group of kids that are used to winning in a Gloucester shirt - a talented group, but also a



the worst, but he enjoyed some high points too, like the first League win at Bath after so many near things.

He also appreciates the game is about a blend of skills, and in any fantasy team Buxton would select James Forrester and James Simpson Daniel.

"Django had the ability to play the situation as he saw it in front of him. He was good enough defensively but he was an amazing attacker, and Sinbad's the same. He can do things on the field that make the younger players look up to him."

Spend any length of time in Buxton's company and you realise what a no-frills man he is. He doesn't do fancy, but from Nigel Melville, who signed him, through

"I'VE HAD THAT EXPERIENCE OF BEING A LOCAL PLAYER COMING THROUGH THE SYSTEM AND IT'S SPECIAL."

to Nigel Davies, all the coaches would know Buxton would never let them down.

His own view is that he played his best rugby under Dean Ryan and Bryan Redpath and that, surprisingly to me, he enjoyed his rugby more in the second row at 4 than in the back row. It was an opinion delivered with typical frankness.

group of winners."

No-one, technically challenged or not, will try harder than Peter Buxton to see that through.

ExtraMEDIA   

Follow Ian on Twitter: @ian_randall1



SEVENS GOES FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH AS GLOUCESTER ENJOY SUCCESSFUL SUMMER

Speed, agility, fitness and an eye for a gap - just a few necessary attributes for a Sevens star, and throughout the summer, Gloucester Rugby have unveiled a fair few of those.

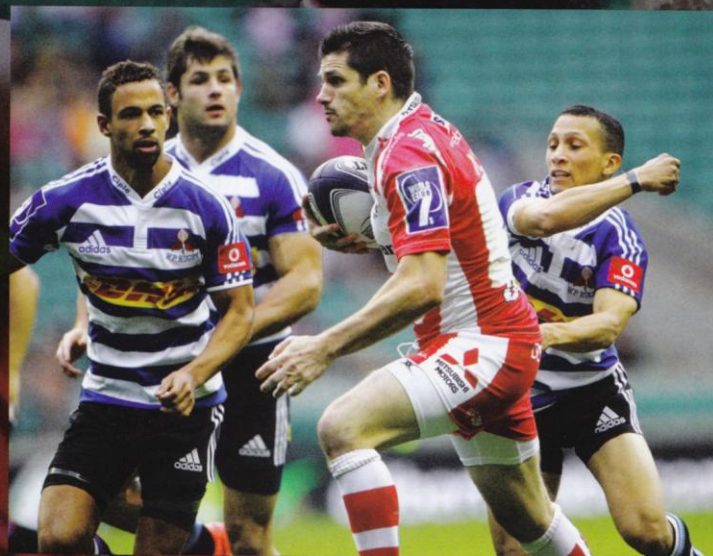
The JP Morgan Sevens provided huge hits, desperate tackles, turnovers and fantastic tries with cheerleaders and even a Bongo Cam thrown in.

A near full house at Kingsholm was treated to an exciting night of rugby that saw the Cherry and Whites qualify for the final after two wins out of three.

It also marked the first broadcast for new channel BT Sport, and Kingsholm played a perfect host to launch the coverage.

The night started superbly for Rob Thirlby's charges. Steph Reynolds announced himself onto the Sevens scene with a double as the Cherry and Whites beat local rivals Bath





Rugby 29-19.

Despite Worcester Warriors defeating the hosts 19-31, Gloucester qualified after an impressive 28-19 win over a youthful Exeter Chiefs side thanks to doubles from both Reynolds and Gareth Evans.

With the first team squad on pre-season camp in Tignes, Thirlby utilised the club's fine links with local rugby, to call on players such as Tom Ailes and new Senior Academy winger Drew Cheshire from Luctonians to supplement his exciting squad.

Experienced first teamers in the form of captain Martyn Thomas, Akapusi Qera and Matt Cox were joined by a plethora of exciting talents from within the Kingsholm ranks eager to make an impact.

Thirlby jetted off to join the first team squad in Tignes, so Olly Morgan stepped in to coach the side, aiming to go one better than in 2012 when Gloucester were pipped by London Irish in the final, having led comfortably.

With a few injuries and knocks picked up, Morgan called on ex-Gloucester and Fiji Sevens expert Apo Satala. Cinderford winger Nevaro Codlin and Hartpury College students, Andrew Bulumakau and Will Hayward, were also drafted in as Gloucester went in search of silverware.

Morgan's men firstly overcame

the Falcons 21-0 thanks to Steph Reynolds, Gareth Evans and a blockbuster from Bulumakau.

It looked however that Gloucester's involvement in the tournament would be ending with Saracens leading by two points as the hooter sounded.

But it was Bulumakau who dramatically trotted down the line to add to Thomas and Reynolds scores, to send Gloucester into the final against Leicester Tigers.

With a place in the World Club 7s and JP Morgan 7s glory at stake, Gloucester flew out of the blocks against a youthful Tigers side through a Reynolds double and clever finish from McAtee.

The Tigers began to fight back and got back within a score with plenty of time remaining. But Gloucester hit back in style and quashed memories of the previous year, as Cheshire put Codlin in for the vital try.

Martyn Thomas lifted the JP Morgan Premiership 7s trophy and Gloucester had secured their first piece of silverware in the Nigel Davies era.

The home of English rugby hosted the first World Club 7s as Sevens' specialists from around the globe descended on Twickenham to take part in a weekend of Sevens rugby.

The Cherry and Whites, as the only team to actually qualify for the

tournament, were paired with VVA Moscow Region, New York City 7s and DHL Western Province in their pool on Day 1.

With the advantage of having already played several weeks of Sevens, Rob Thirlby's charges came up against a strong and supremely organised Moscow side who provided a much sterner test than those faced in the domestic Sevens competition.

A 19-12 defeat to the Russians in Saracens' kit was not the ideal start, but provided the knowledge of how to get through organised Sevens defences.

In the second game, Gloucester's young talent began to shine through on a scorching afternoon in South West London.

Trailing by twelve points going into the final minute against an exciting New York City 7s side thanks to a Jaryd Robinson hat trick, it appeared as if Gloucester's hopes of Cup silverware on Day 2 would be slim.

A super Dan Robson score, coupled with a dramatic last play score from Nevaro Codlin, meant the Cherry and Whites had turned the game around for a 26-24 victory.

The final group game against Western Province presented a straightforward challenge for the Cherry and Whites. Win the game with a bonus point and qualify as pool winners.

A five-try win was a perfect return to put Gloucester in a strong position as second seeds. Perhaps the only downside to the result being an injury to Bulumakau who was on the end of a nasty late hit whilst finishing off a fine move.

The quarter final saw Gloucester take on fellow English side, Harlequins. A spirited effort came up just short though and Gloucester dropped into the Plate competition.

San Francisco were swept aside to send Gloucester into a rematch with New York in the Plate Final. However, by now, injuries and fatigue were taking their toll and it was a game too far with the American side running out 33-14 winners.

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Cowan thrilled to be back in the action after Plymouth Albion victory

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Martyn Thomas
14	W	Steph Reynolds
13	C	Tim Molenaar
12	C	Mike Tindall
11	W	Drew Cheshire
10	FH	Jonny Bentley
9	SH	Jimmy Cowan
1	P	Dan Murphy
2	H	Dan George
3	P	Tom Heard
4	L	Elliott Stooke
5	L	Will James
6	F	Matt Cox
7	F	Andy Hazell (c)
8	N8	Gareth Evans

Replacements:

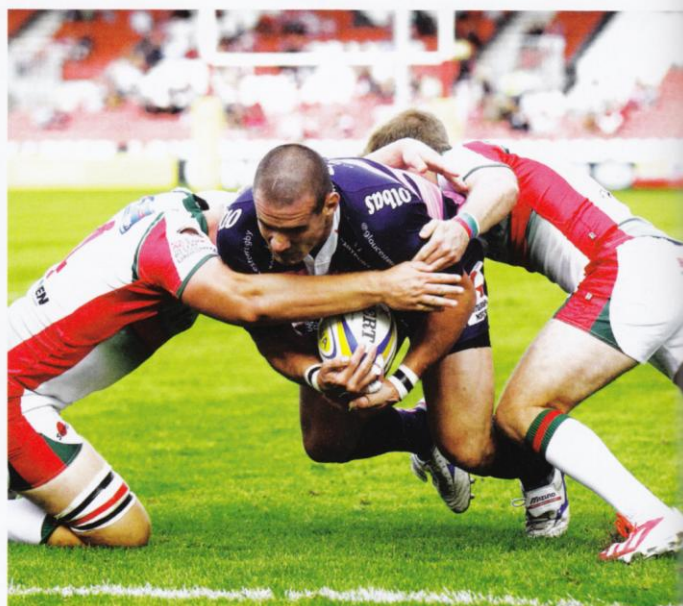
Koree Britton, James Gibbons, Yann Thomas, Tom Hicks, Lewis Ludlow, Reece Boughton, Billy Burns, Jaryd Robinson, Charlie Norman, Jonny Hill, Seb Rodwell

PLYMOUTH ALBION

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Chris Elder
14	W	Jack Arnott
13	C	Toby Howley-Berridge
12	C	Pale Nonu
11	W	Jamie Davies
10	FH	Dan Mugford
9	SH	Ruairi Cushion
1	P	Dave Morton
2	H	Davy McGregor
3	P	Matt Shields
4	L	Ian Ascroft-Leigh
5	L	Brett Beukeboom
6	F	Herbie Stuppel
7	F	Eoghan Grace
8	N8	Rhys Oakley (c)

Replacements:

Gareth Evans, Ben Rogers, Tom Harrison, Sean-Michael Stephen, Sam Matavesi, Paul Rowley, Rob Langley, Heath Stevens, Lewis Warner, James Shanahan



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

22

TRIES: Murphy, Cowan, M Thomas CONS: Bentley (2) PENS: Bentley

PLYMOUTH ALBION

13

TRY: Stevens CON: Elder PENS: Mugford (2)

DIRECTOR OF RUGBY NIGEL DAVIES HAD A FINE OPPORTUNITY TO CAST HIS EYE OVER HIS WHOLE SQUAD WITH THE VISIT OF RFU CHAMPIONSHIP SIDE PLYMOUTH ALBION TO KINGSHOLM LAST WEEKEND.

The Championship side were physical, combative at the breakdown and made the home side work for every point.

It was a vital workout for some of Gloucester's rising stars, and those members of the squad returning from injury, and also kicked off the pre-season double header with Scarlets the opposition later that same evening.

Gloucester's sharper finishing was the difference and, even then, several guilt-edge chances were squandered, which kept Albion well in the game right up until the final whistle.

An experienced backline containing Jimmy Cowan, Jonny Bentley and Mike Tindall, combined with the exciting talents of Steph Reynolds and Drew Cheshire, always looked dangerous with ball in hand. However, the Devon defences stood firm and limited the home side to just the three tries.

Dan Murphy was the first to score, rumbling powerfully over from close range. When Cowan gratefully touched down after fine work from the rolling maul, it appeared as if Gloucester would run away with the game.

But Plymouth, to their upmost credit, rallied and fashioned periods

of several phases of possession to keep the home defence honest, and made Gloucester work hard for possession and territory.

In a period of prolonged pressure

were appearing and it was only mistakes and poor execution that prevented further scores for the home side.

When trialist Seb Rodwell burst

Champagne Moment:

Back to full fitness, Jimmy Cowan finished off a superb rolling maul from the pack, to dive over and touch down with ease. The scrum half deserved a score after a typically smooth display, and is huge reward for the efforts put in by himself and Gloucester's medical staff to get the World Cup winner back to full fitness after last season's knee ligament injury.

the Devonians were held up over the line thanks to a fine Bentley cover tackle and, after a series of 5 metre scrums, the home side were relieved just to clear the ball from danger.

When both territory and possession finally arrived, Gloucester struck clinically thanks to a neat passing move and fine finish by Martyn Thomas who slalomed his way to line at pace to score.

Plymouth then crossed for a score that their efforts merited, with Heath Stevens crossing from short range.

With both teams then pushing for scores in the closing stages, gaps

clear and a clever cross kick was hunted down by Cheshire, a hugely unfortunate bounce of the ball allowed defenders to regather and prevent a jog home for the Academy winger.

A second chance went begging too, trialist Jaryd Robinson, impressive in his second half appearance failed to gather a long miss pass from Billy Burns.

The game served well to give Nigel Davies a vital chance to see his squad in action against competitive opposition and also secure a good confidence boost to those players returning to action.

"IT WAS A NOVEL IDEA WITH THE TWO GAMES AND A REAL CHALLENGE TO PREPARE AND MANAGE TWO SQUADS. PLYMOUTH TESTED US AND THEY PLAYED WITH A GOOD SHAPE AND PATTERN."

NIGEL DAVIES, DIRECTOR OF RUGBY



Kvesic astonished by Kingsholm atmosphere on home debut

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Rob Cook
14	W	Charlie Sharples
13	C	Henry Trinder
12	C	Billy Twelvetrees
11	W	James Simpson-Daniel
10	FH	Freddie Burns
9	SH	Tavis Knoyle
1	P	Nick Wood
2	H	Darren Dawidiuk
3	P	Rupert Harden
4	L	Tom Savage (c)
5	L	James Hudson
6	F	Sione Kalamafoni
7	F	Matt Kvesic
8	N8	Ben Morgan

Replacements:

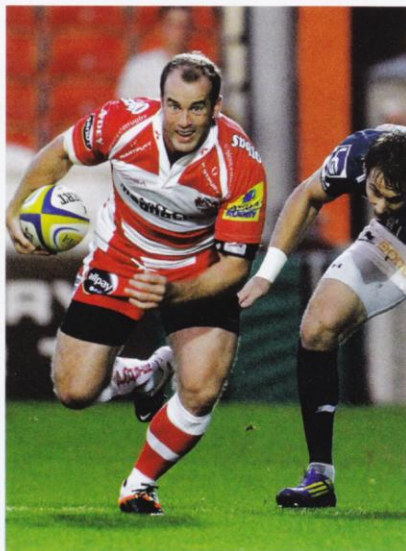
Koree Britton, Dan Murphy, Yann Thomas, Lua Lokotui, Akapusi Qera, Dan Robson, Mike Tindall, Steph Reynolds

THE SCARLETS

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Gareth Owen
14	W	Liam Williams
13	C	Gareth Maule
12	C	Scott Williams
11	W	Kristian Phillips
10	FH	Steve Shingler
9	SH	Gareth Davies
1	P	Phil John
2	H	Ken Owens
3	P	Samson Lee
4	L	George Earle
5	L	Jo Snyman
6	F	Aaron Shingler
7	F	Josh Turnbull
8	N8	Rob McCusker (c)

Replacements:

Emyr Phillips, Rob Evans, Jacobie Adriaanse, Jake Ball, Sione Timani, Rhodri Williams, Rhys Priestland, Jordan Williams, Adam Warren, Richard Kelly, Craig Price



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

TRIES: Simpson-Daniel, Twelvetrees, Kvesic, Cook CONS: Burns (4) PEN: Burns

SCARLETS

TRIES: Penalty Try, Owens, R Williams CON: Priestland

31

17

GLOUCESTER ENDED THEIR PRE-SEASON PREPARATIONS WITH AN IMPRESSIVE VICTORY OVER SCARLETS AT KINGSHOLM IN A GAME THAT WILL BE REMEMBERED FOR A RAUCOUS ATMOSPHERE AND SOME BLOCKBUSTER TRIES

It was far from a friendly match as the West Walians matched the home side for intensity and displayed no little skill.

As a result, the game served as a perfect test for Nigel Davies' men ahead of the Aviva Premiership kick off against Sale Sharks.

The Scarlets may have trailed at half time, but put in a much improved second half performance to really test the Cherry and Whites' resolve only for Rob Cook's superb score to settle the contest.

The returning James Simpson-Daniel got the crowd going with an early try, which was quickly followed by a score for Billy Twelvetrees.

Gloucester had controlled the opening period, and perhaps going in 14 points to the good was scant reward for their dominance.

In the second period, the Scarlets bounced back and in some style, referee Greg Garner awarding a penalty try following a collapsed maul.

Gloucester then had to repel a series of attacks before Matt Kvesic latched on to a kick through from

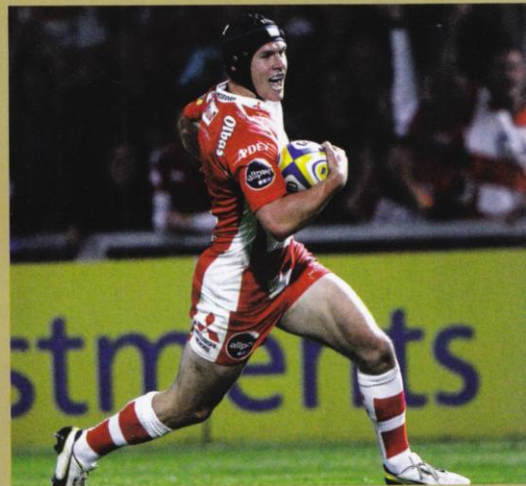
Henry Trinder to mark his Kingsholm bow with a try.

A front of the lineout move sent Scarlets hooker Ken Owens scuttling over to make the game interesting

The full back broke from deep and kicked ahead of the defence, gathered well and pinned his ears back. Roared on by a vociferous Kingsholm crowd, Cook touched

Champagne Moment:

Rob Cook's try was special enough to win any game let alone a pre-season friendly. The full back impressed hugely last season, and this score looks like he's set to carry on in that vein.



and Gloucester lost both Kvesic and Dan Robson to the sin bin.

As the visitors pushed to get back on terms, a crucial turnover recycled the ball into the hands of Rob Cook.

down for a memorable score.

Despite Rhodri Williams' last play consolation try, the Scarlets were beaten to bring a pulsating encounter to a close.

"IT WAS GREAT TO BE BACK PLAYING. IT HAD BEEN A WHILE, BUT TO BE BACK AT KINGSHOLM WITH THAT ATMOSPHERE WAS FANTASTIC".

"COOKY'S TRY WAS SOMETHING SPECIAL AND IT WAS GREAT TO SEE. I WAS BLOWING RATHER A LOT FROM DEFENCE AND JUST SAW HIM RUN AWAY WITH IT. SO I JUST STOOD SHOUTING INSTEAD OF CATCHING UP WITH HIM IN SUPPORT. THE CROWD ROARED HIM HOME."

JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL, GLOUCESTER WINGER

Teams correct at time of print: 5th September 2013



TODAY'S TEAMS



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

<u>ROB COOK</u>	FULLBACK	15
<u>CHARLIE SHARPLES</u>	RIGHT WING	14
<u>HENRY TRINDER</u>	CENTRE	13
<u>BILLY TWELVETREES</u>	CENTRE	12
<u>JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL</u>	LEFT WING	11
<u>FREDDIE BURNS</u>	FLY HALF	10
<u>DAN ROBSON</u>	SCRUM HALF	9
<u>NICK WOOD</u>	PROP	1
<u>DARREN DAWIDIUK</u>	HOOKER	2
<u>RUPERT HARDEN</u>	PROP	3
<u>TOM SAVAGE (C)</u>	LOCK	4
<u>LUA LOKOTUI</u>	LOCK	5
<u>SIONE KALAMAFONI</u>	FLANKER	6
<u>MATT KVESIC</u>	FLANKER	7
<u>BEN MORGAN</u>	NO.8	8
<u>DAN GEORGE</u>	REPLACEMENT	16
<u>DAN MURPHY</u>	REPLACEMENT	17
<u>YANN THOMAS</u>	REPLACEMENT	18
<u>ELLIOTT STOOKE</u>	REPLACEMENT	19
<u>AKAPUSI QERA</u>	REPLACEMENT	20
<u>TAVIS KNOYLE</u>	REPLACEMENT	21
<u>MIKE TINDALL</u>	REPLACEMENT	22
<u>MARTYN THOMAS</u>	REPLACEMENT	23

SALE SHARKS

<u>TOM ARSCOTT</u>	FULLBACK	
<u>TOM BRADY</u>	RIGHT WING	
<u>JOHNNY LEOTA</u>	CENTRE	
<u>NICK MACLEOD</u>	CENTRE	
<u>MARK CUETO</u>	LEFT WING	
<u>DANNY CIPRIANI</u>	FLY HALF	
<u>DWAYNE PEEL</u>	SCRUM HALF	
<u>ROSS HARRISON</u>	PROP	
<u>MARC JONES</u>	HOOKER	
<u>HENRY THOMAS</u>	PROP	
<u>ANDREI OSTIKOV</u>	LOCK	
<u>JONATHAN MILLS</u>	LOCK	
<u>MICHAEL PATERSON</u>	FLANKER	
<u>DAN BRAID (C)</u>	FLANKER	
<u>JAMES GASKELL</u>	NO.8	
<u>TOMMY TAYLOR</u>	REPLACEMENT	
<u>ASTON CROALL</u>	REPLACEMENT	
<u>VADIM COBILAS</u>	REPLACEMENT	
<u>DAVE SEYMOUR</u>	REPLACEMENT	
<u>MARK EASTER</u>	REPLACEMENT	
<u>WILL CLIFF</u>	REPLACEMENT	
<u>ROB MILLER</u>	REPLACEMENT	
<u>JOE FORD</u>	REPLACEMENT	

IN CHARGE TODAY:

Referee: Andrew Small
Assistant Referees: Kevin Stewart and Nigel Carrick