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THE PRIDE ~ THE PASSION ~ THE HONOUR ~ THE HISTORY



















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MEDIA MANAGER: Duncan Wood

MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Dave Tandy **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Martin Bennett / getty images



PUBLISHING & MEDIA

W: opublishing.com T: 01736 335 999

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CAPTAIN'S CORNER

C TOM SAVAGE

t's fair to say that we haven't exactly had the start to the Aviva Premiership season that we would have wanted.

It's been a tough couple of opening fixtures, I won't make any bones about it. It's important that we take on board some of the lessons from those games, but we can't afford to get hung up about them. We have to look forward.

Those first two games, against Sale Sharks and Saracens, were vastly different in nature. We came into much we put into the game.

Nick Wood obviously felt terrible about what happened. I've not been involved in professional rugby that long, but Nick is one of the players that I most respect.

What happened was completely out of character, and he immediately went to apologise to Jacques Burger, who showed a great deal of class in the way he commented on Twitter after the game.

It's happened, it's behind us and the focus has now well and truly

"WE'RE BACK AT KINGSHOLM, BACK IN FRONT OF OUR MAGNIFICENT SUPPORTERS, AND WE'RE DETERMINED NOT TO LET YOU DOWN."

that Sale game, full of high hopes and expectations. But, on the day, we simply didn't perform, and that hurt.

We felt that we'd let ourselves down as individuals, and as a team. We were also acutely aware that we'd let our supporters down as well.

So, after a tough week in training, and a certain amount of tough talking, we went into the Saracens game last weekend in a very positive frame of mind.

Obviously, after the first couple of minutes, the game plan was pretty much redundant. It was then a question of character, of digging in and fighting for every inch of territory.

In that
respect, I was
genuinely
proud of the
effort that the
boys put in. The
final scoreline
wasn't pretty,
but I honestly
don't think that
it reflected how

turned to Northampton Saints and the challenge that they will pose today.

They've had a great start to the season, defeating Exeter Chiefs in some style, and then doing something that not many teams achieve – beating Harlequins at the Stoop.

Their tails will be up and they'll fancy their chances coming down here today. They're a good team and they're playing well.

I won't make any rash predictions but, what I can guarantee, is that they'll come up against a Gloucester side who will be fighting to the very last to get our season off and running.

We've been hurt by the events of the past couple of weeks and we'll be channeling that into our performance this afternoon.

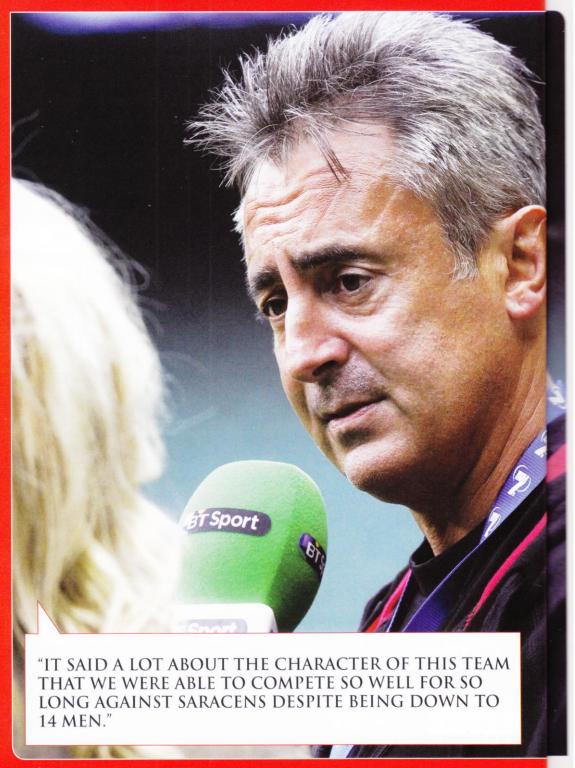
We're back at Kingsholm, back in front of our magnificent supporters, and we're determined not to let you down.

Sav

Last Sunday was tough but we will bounce back.



NIGEL DAVIES DIRECTOR OF RUGBY



COACH'S NOTES

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

Another week brings another challenge for us, and it will be another tough one for us this afternoon with the visit of Jim Mallinder and his side.

They've had a good start to the Aviva Premiership season. Victories over the likes of Exeter and Harlequins really have to be earned, and the Saints have done so whilst employing a game plan to suit the conditions in each game, which is impressive.

I think a lot of pundits looked at the turnover within the Northampton squad this summer and wondered how quickly all the new faces would settle in, as it

a changing of the guard.

really has been

The early signs are obviously that Jim has recruited cannily, and that we have a fight on our hands this afternoon.

For our part, we're understandably disappointed with our results so far. It certainly hasn't been the start we were looking for.

However, it's a long season with a lot of rugby yet to be played so there's no-one reaching for the panic button just yet.

We're not where we want to be at the moment, there's no denying that. But, one of the most pleasing aspects of the Saracens game last week for me, was the spirit and determination that we showed in adversity.

Despite the result, there were a lot more positives in the performance at Allianz Park than there were the previous week against Sale.

with Saracens. They're powerful up front, with a cutting edge behind the scrum.

It's a time to stay true to ourselves, however. We know what



It said a lot about the character of this team that we were able to compete so well for so long against Saracens despite being down to 14 men.

Coming into the game, we were determined to put in a big performance at Saracens because we knew that nothing less would do against a team of that calibre.

And we will have to approach today's game against Northampton with a similar attitude as Northampton have a lot in common we're about as a group and what we're trying to achieve. We'll stay true to that and not let a couple of poor results divert us from our long term goals.

We're looking forward to this afternoon's game. It should be a great encounter and, hopefully, we'll get our season off and running.

Enjoy the game,

Nigel

CLUB NEWS



GLOUCESTER RUGBY'S WAR HEROES RECOGNISED AT UNVEILING OF NEW PLAQUE

Visitors to Kingsholm over the past week or so will perhaps have noticed a new Memorial plaque outside reception.

The plaque lists the names of 40 of Gloucester's former players killed in action while serving their country.

Lieutenant General Tim Evans Commandant of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), and Gloucester Rugby CEO Stephen Vaughan were among those present at the unveiling last week. A minute's silence was held and a wreath was placed at its base.

At the same time, a new book entitled, 'They played for Gloucester and fought for their Country. Gloucester Rugby Football Club: A Place in Military History' was unveiled.

The book tells the stories of the Gloucester players who fought and died for their country during the Boer War, the Great War and the Second World War.

It has been produced as part of Gloucester's Community Heritage Project and also remembers veterans who survived in all three wars.

It was collated and written by Martin and Teresa Davies, who spent three years putting it together.

Martin, who has a masters in First World War studies, said: "It has become more than a project for me and my wife but something that has really inspired us. It's like sport — once you get stuck into it, it just takes over your life throughout."

Lieutenant-General Evans added: "It is an honour and privilege to be a part of this unveiling for these men, who played for Gloucester, fought for their country and gave the ultimate sacrifice."

The book is on sale now in the club shop, priced at £12.99.

1873

Gloucester Rugby kicked off their 2013-14 Aviva Premiership season with a disappointing 22-16 home defeat to Sale Sharks. Rob Cook was named Man of the Match by the 1873 Club members.

Cook was rock solid under the high ball, but also dangerous with ball in hand as he inspired several attacks from deep.

He came into the Abbey Business Lounge after the game to receive his award from Liz Barnwell of Marketing Gloucester and Michelle Fyrne of SoGlos.

Rob then took part in an informal Q&A, facilitated by former Gloucester back row forward Simon Devereux, alongside team mates Matt Kvesic and James Simpson-Daniel.







THE MITSUBISHI GOLDEN GAMBLE GETS OFF TO A GREAT START!

Congratulations to our first winner, John Slade from Tewkesbury who, following the launch of the Mitsubishi Golden Gamble at the Gloucester Rugby vs Sale Sharks match on Saturday, walked away with £245.50.

To be in with a chance of winning a cash prize then it's very simple!

Buy a ticket for £1 from one of the many sellers around Kingsholm on match day and, if your ticket is drawn out at half time, then you win half of the proceeds from sales of the Mitsubishi Golden Gamble ticket sales at that day's match.

The other 50% is donated to the Gloucester Rugby Community (CIC).

In addition to this, the winner of the Mitsubishi Golden Gamble cash pot also wins two tickets to a nominated Gloucester Rugby away fixture, including chauffeur driven return travel from Kingsholm Stadium courtesy of Mitsubishi Motors.







Keep an eye on our Social Media channels after today's game for your chance to vote for the ADEY Magnaclean Champagne Moment.

This was launched following the Sale Sharks game a fortnight ago. The winning image was Henry Trinder breaking clear to score against Sale.

Laura Rickaby was our very first winner, and her prize was a bottle of champagne and tickets to today's game.

We'll be posting images from three key moments in today's match on Twitter and Facebook. Vote for your favourite, and you could be coming to the Perpignan match at Kingsholm on October 12th to collect your bottle of champagne.

Follow us **@gloucesterrugby** or **facebook.com/gloucesterrugby** to see the images when they are posted

GLOUCESTER RUGBY REVEAL FIXTURE AGAINST JAPAN



Gloucester Rugby can proudly reveal that Japan will be coming to Kingsholm to play Nigel Davies' Gloucester side on Tuesday November 12th 2013 (kick off 7:45pm)

With Rugby World Cup 2015 just two years away, and Japan in pole position to qualify as Asia 1 and play two pool stage matches in Gloucester, it gives the Cherry and Whites and the Cherry Blossoms a chance to lock horns and, for the Japan squad, an opportunity to get to know Kingsholm.

Japan, who recently made history by beating Wales in a Test match for the first time, are an exciting and flourishing rugby nation and will be the latest rugby nation to play at Kingsholm following in the footsteps of Australia, Fiji, Ireland and Samoa in recent years.

Ranked 15th in the World, and coached by Eddie Jones, the Cherry Blossoms will host the 2019 Rugby World Cup, and have been involved in every tournament since it began in 1987.

Gloucester Rugby CEO
Stephen Vaughan spoke this
week of his delight of welcoming
Japan to Kingsholm, and of how
exciting it is to include them in
the first team calendar.

"The club is thrilled that Japan will be playing at Kingsholm. The game will add to the stadium's credentials for staging big matches featuring international sides.

"Japan are developing a proud rugby heritage with over 125,000 registered players. Their recent success over Wales shows the talent that they possess and how our squad will be challenged.

"We know that Gloucester supporters love to watch international talent grace the Kingsholm turf and, with Gloucester a likely destination on Japan's World Cup 2015 schedule, we hope that the Cherry Blossoms will become an adopted nation in the city."

Vaughan also confirmed that the match will be competitively priced in the hope that there will a big crowd on the night.

"It will be an all pay game but we'd love as many Gloucester fans as possible to be there on the night.

"So a seat for an adult will cost £19 and a standing place £14. U16s can watch for just £5.

"Gloucester Rugby Season Ticket Holders will get a £2 discount per ticket off those prices and there is an early bird discount of £4."



FIRST TEAM SQUAD 2013/14



ACHIEVEMENTS

ANGLO-WELSH CUP WINNERS: 1971–72, 1977–78, 1981–82 (SHARED), 2002–03, 2010–11

ENGLISH LEAGUE WINNERS: 2001-02

EUROPEAN CHALLENGE CUP WINNERS: 2005-06

ENGLISH CUP WINNERS: 1971-72 1977-78 1981-82 (SHARED) 2002-03

MIDDLESEX 7S WINNERS: 2005

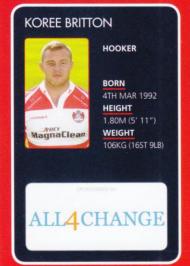
MOST APPEARANCES 274; PETER BUXTON

MOST POINTS 1,325; LUDOVIC MERCIER

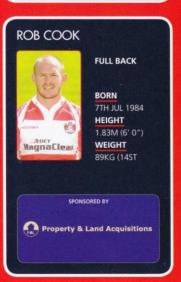
MOST TRIES 118; JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL





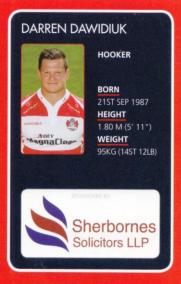








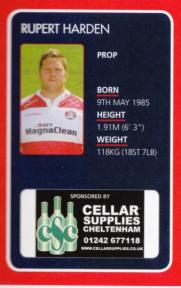










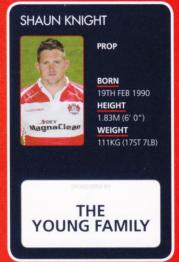




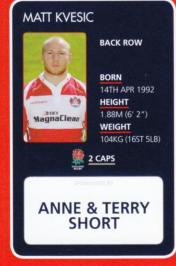


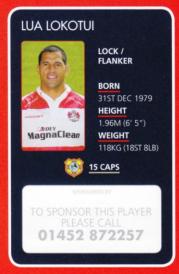


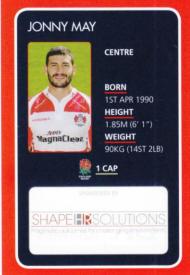


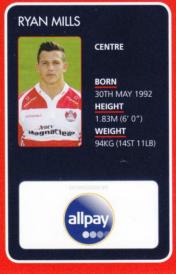


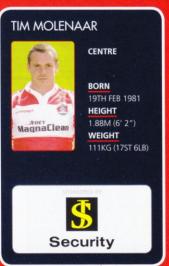










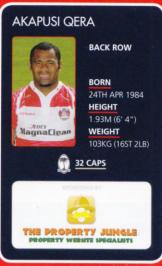




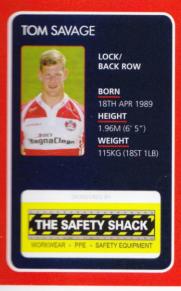




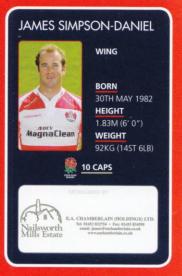


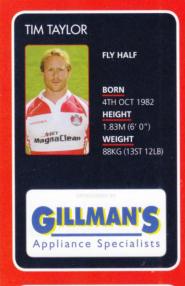






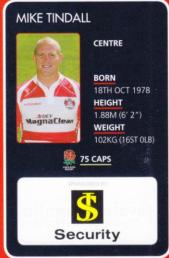












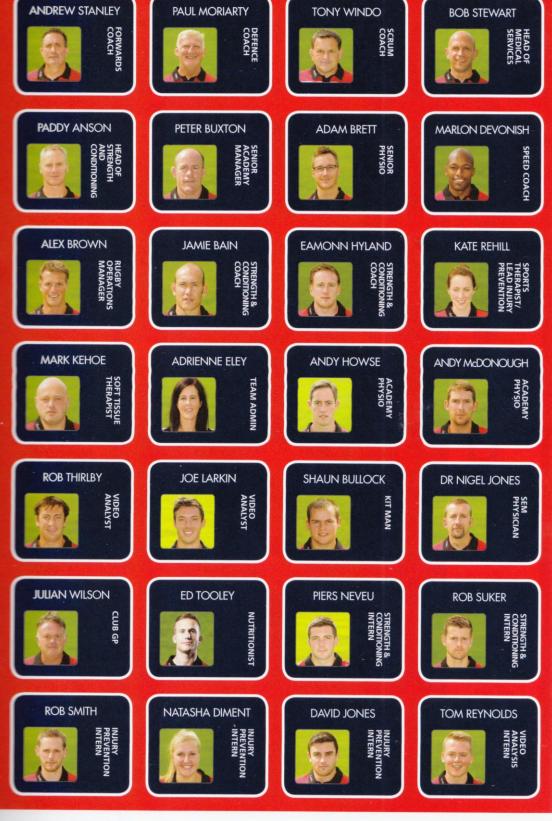














VIEW FROM The Citizen

with NICK PUREWAL

Nick talks to Sinbad about Gloucester's start to the season and why today's big game against high-flying Northampton Saints is so important.

A BIG REACTION

ometimes there is a time and a place for stating the obvious.

There's no point labouring the point where Nick Wood's red card at Saracens is concerned. Gloucester have to put that behind them, that's clear.

But this week, James Simpson-Daniel admits Gloucester keep coming back to the same theme.

Three games into the season,

the Cherry and Whites face a must win match.

That's how the evergreen wing calls today's now-pivotal Premiership clash with Northampton Saints.

The Kingsholm visitors have started the season in fine style, high-profile new recruits George North, Alex Corbisiero and Kahn Fotuali'i all bedding in seamlessly.

The polar opposite could be levelled against Gloucester, but Nigel Davies' men feel frustrated last weekend's Saracens clash wound up effectively a no-contest.

Simpson-Daniel knows all about Saints' power after their 13-6 victory over Harlequins at The Stoop last weekend.

But he has challenged the Cherry and Whites to pull off a big result – and a fine attacking performance too in this contest.

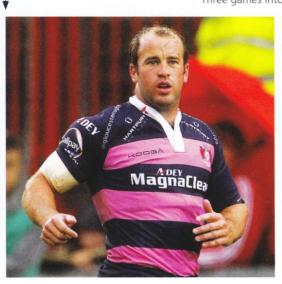
"We need an important four points," said the wily 31-yearold wing. "It's tough with Northampton flying high.

"They adapted to conditions to overturn Harlequins and that just shows their power."

Gloucester have not started a league season with two-straight defeats for 13 years – and no one at Kingsholm even wants to countenance the prospect of adding a third.

After galling 22-16 Sale defeat at Kingsholm on the season's opening day, Simpson-Daniel said

It may of been a bad start to the season but seeing **Sinbad** back in a Gloucester shirt is a welcome sight





weekend's action.

"We've got to let what happened at the weekend go. We've got to take what we had there for the first 40 minutes, take that to Kingsholm next week - then add our attacking game into that.

"We were seriously looking at Saracens for a reaction – we got the reaction, but the circumstances were extremely tough.

"We braved it out as long as we could,

"IT'S IMPORTANT TO GET A WIN - I DON'T THINK IT'S A CASE OF GETTING A WIN ANY WAY WE CAN - WE'VE GOT TO GO ABOUT IT THE RIGHT WAY AS WELL, AND GET OUR SEASON UP AND RUNNING."

the time for misfiring is well and

"We need a win: I know we're only two games in. It's important to get a win – I don't think it's a case of getting a win any way we can – we've got to go about it the right as well, and get our season up and running."

Gloucester travelled to Allianz Park last weekend, hoping to get their season off and running at Saracens, but paid the price for playing virtually the whole game with 14 men, following Nick Wood's early red card.

The Cherry and Whites wound up leaking five tries in their 44-12 defeat, despite leading 12-10 at half-time.

While Simpson-Daniel praised Gloucester's battling qualities in surrendering the numerical advantage for almost the entire contest, he said there is no point dwelling on much of last but it was unlikely to last. If we had pulled that off, it would have been one of the best results ever really.

"Because we know that if we went up against 14 men at Kingsholm, we would expect to grind them down eventually.

"So we can't be too surprised that the scoreline ended up how it was. But now all that's behind us – we've got to give a big reaction now, and get everything together."



WALTER TAYLOR - KINGSHOLM FAVOURITE

t 10st 9lbs and 5 ft 7 ½ ins, Walter was considered a useful size for a wing three-quarter in the 1890s. He also possessed breathtaking speed.

When he received the ball a buzz of excitement would ripple through the crowd, as they anticipated a try from one of those spectacular dazzling runs from his own half for which he was famous.

The Kingsholm faithful loved him too for his gentlemanly conduct, his unassuming manner, and the success he enjoyed as captain.

FRAMPTON BOY

Walter was born at Frampton in 1871, the son of a coachman, but the family moved to Gloucester when he was aged 2. He grew up to become a printer compositor.

Walter's football career commenced with a local club, the Beaufort, but word of his ability soon spread, and he was invited to play for the Gloucester 2nd XV in October 1890.

He scored 2 tries in his first game against Lydney, and 3 tries in his third game against Moseley, enough to earn him rapid promotion into the Gloucester 1stXV.

STARTLING DEBUTS

He marked his senior debut against Penarth with a sensational try from the half-way line to secure a 3-0 win (one point for Walter's try and two points for the conversion).

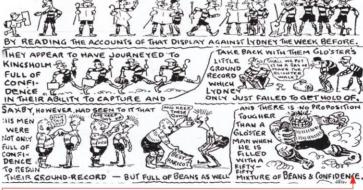
He scored again the following week against Birmingham Old Edwardians, and then ran in 4 tries against Exeter (the 14-0 result seems less decisive than the tally of 10 tries and 2 conversions).

During his 20 appearances that season he scored 11 tries, and became the Club's leading try scorer.

He also made his debut for the County, and went all the way with them to the County Championship Final at Manchester.

Walter also played in an international trial match for Western Counties versus the Midlands.

During this remarkable first season in senior rugby, Walter displayed the fortunate habit of scoring in his first match at every level - for the Beaufort, Gloucester 2nd XV, Gloucester 1st XV, Gloucestershire and Western Counties.



Extract from a Teek cartoon from Gloucester v. Northampton match, 24 Sep 1927

TOP TRY SCORER

His most successful season as regards try scoring came in 1892-



Walter Taylor

93, when he ran in 18 during 25 appearances. Indeed Walter went on to be top try scorer for Gloucester for seven of the ten seasons between 1890 and 1900.

When he finally hung up his boots in 1903, he had made 250 appearances, scoring 127 tries, 17 conversions, 1 penalty, and 7 dropped goals, totalling 399 points. He made 30 appearances for Gloucestershire.

CAPTAIN FANTASTIC

Walter captained the Club for four seasons, 1896-1900, during which they played 132 matches, winning 92, losing 26 and drawing 14; scoring 1291 points against 477. His team became known as the "record smashers".

The highlight of his first season as captain was against Llanelly (so spelt until 1965, when the name was officially changed to Llanelli). They arrived at Kingsholm unbeaten with only 3 fixtures to go in their

season, but Gloucester triumphed 5-3 in a very tight game.

The crowd were enthralled, gave the Gloucester team a rousing ovation as they left the field, and carried Walter off on their shoulders.

The highlight of his last season as captain was to lead the Club to a 13-0 win in their first encounter with the Barbarians.

AN ALL ROUND SPORTSMAN

On the running track, Walter's best performance was 12 seconds for the 120 yards. He won the 100 yards at the Midlands

"FIREWORKS IN THE STREETS"

Walter was interviewed in 1951 at the age of 80, and said:

"Perhaps my most outstanding memory did not take place on the field of play. It was in Northgate Street, Gloucester.

"We had just returned from beating Llanelly in 1898. What a welcome we were given – the first English club to beat all four Welsh teams (Cardiff, Swansea, Newport and Llanelly) in one season. There were thousands of people at the station.

"Somebody snatched my bag – it turned up next week at Kingsholm with all my kit washed and ironed –

'When he received the ball a buzz of excitement would ripple through the crowd, as they anticipated a try from one of those spectacular dazzling runs...'

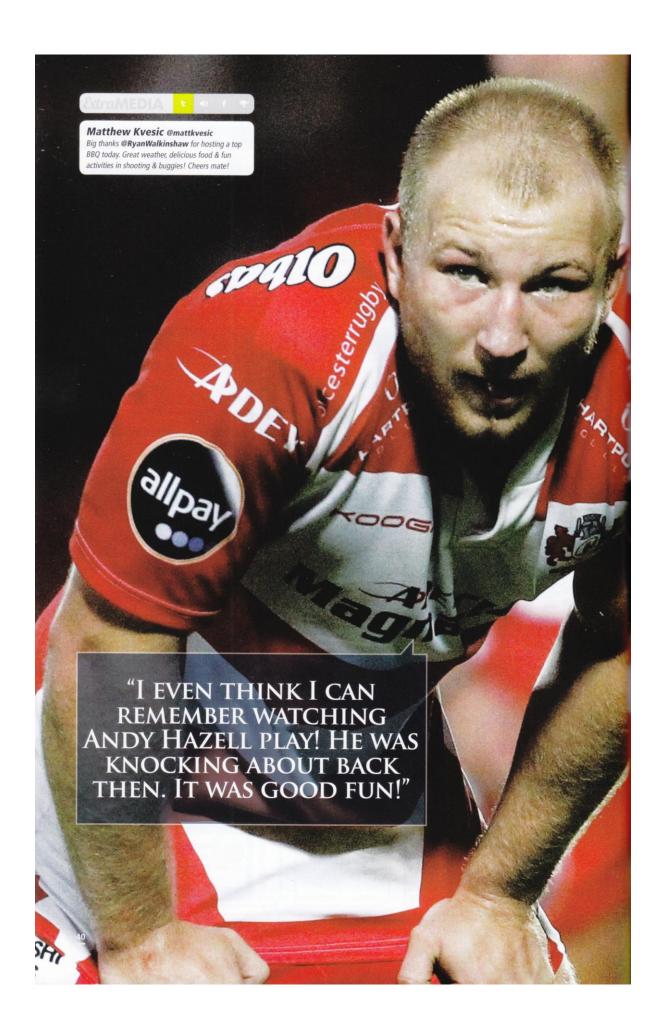
Counties championship, and competed in the Amateur Athletic Championships at Stamford Bridge (where he also played rugby for Gloucester against Old Merchant Taylors).

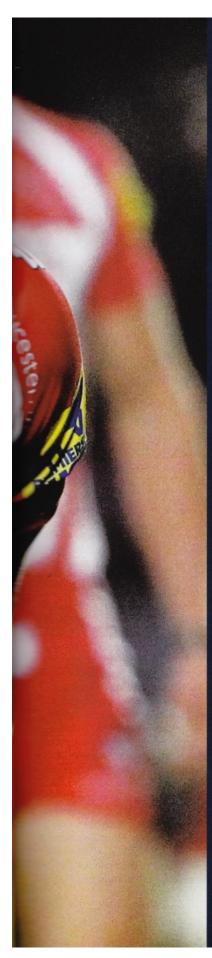
He was an excellent cricketer and shot; and he played a few games of football for Gloucester City. and they chaired us through the city. In all the big business houses they were showing coloured lights and letting off fireworks ... Those were wonderful days. I should like to see them all again."

This was a poignant remark, since Walter was by then blind. He died in 1955, a much-loved Gloucester hero to the end.



The Gloucester team which beat Llanelly on 3 April 1897





THATIS BALL

JUST OVER 12 MONTHS AGO, SELF CONFESSED GLOUCESTER RUGBY FAN BEN MORGAN, RAN OUT FOR HIS FIRST COMPETITIVE MATCH SPORTING THE COLOURS OF THE TEAM HE FOLLOWED AS A BOY.

TWO WEEKS AGO, MATT KVESIC DID LIKEWISE. WHEN HE TOOK THE FIELD AGAINST SALE SHARKS, HE DID SO ON THE VERY SAME PITCH WHERE HE'D WATCHED HIS GLOUCESTER IDOLS PLAY.

T'S a great story and memory for me. I used to come over with my Dad, sit in the Shed and watch the games. It was great fun and the atmosphere was special.

"I've played here against Gloucester and it's really intimidating. But, playing with it on your side, it definitely gives you an extra buzz".

With a heritage like the one Gloucester possesses, legends are created. One only has to look at the portraits hanging around the famous stadium.

Before Kvesic starts writing his own history at Kingsholm, he looks back on those he watched as a young fan. Some of whom he now competes with for a Gloucester jersey.

"I can remember the years of Philippe Saint-Andre, and players like Olivier Azam and Ludovic Mercier were the stars and I enjoyed watching greatly.

"I even think I can remember watching Andy Hazell play! He was knocking about back then. It was good fun!"

However, it's now all about the present and future for the newly capped England international, and the 21 year old has settled in quickly.

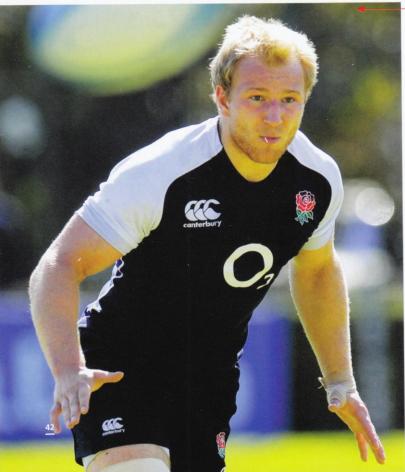
"It's been really, really good. I've really enjoyed the start I've had, coming in pre-season late on. The boys have been really good, got a good trip to Tignes and it seemed like we got a really good start in our preparations.

"We had some tough but great pre-season games with Toulon, Munster and the Scarlets, so it was a good start to that and I was really happy to be here.

"Obviously the first game was a disappointment but it's a long season but I'm looking forward to getting my head down and working hard to get the results".

When Nigel Davies acted fast to secure the services of





Kvesic will be looking to wear the number 7 shirt for England during the Autumn Internationals

one of English rugby's brightest talents, Kvesic confirms that his experiences in The Shed as a fan were a factor which saw him put pen to paper at Kingsholm.

"Things like that make decisions a little easier, it means you can lead with your head as well as your heart so you're not swayed too much on decisions.

"It's the lifestyle as well. I still currently live in Worcester but I'm looking to move down. It's not much of a journey or move for me. It all just seemed to fit really well.

"I like the squad, I love the club and it's all seemed to move and fit in really well. So, it was a no-brainer for me moving here."

Kvesic has gone on record to praise his working relationship with current Gloucester Forwards Coach Andrew Stanley, after he honed his flanker skills under Stan's tutelage during his time in the Worcester Warriors academy. For



to Argentina.

The tour was Kvesic's international baptism and, with a huge tackle count of twenty-nine in Salta, it was not a bad way to start a career on the world stage.

"It was great to get the wins out there and also nice to get the first cap out of the way. It was lingering around for a while so it was great to get the first appearance under my belt.

"It was a really good experience, I learnt loads with a great bunch of lads in a great country. Hopefully there will plenty more experiences like that to come.

"Being with those boys on tour meant that when I came to Gloucester I felt comfortable, and made the move easy for me as I got to know them. They gave me a heads up with what was coming my way in terms of training and what to expect."

Possession is

nine tenths of

currently has

the England

of the new

the World

Cup in 2015

peering over

the horizon,

hands on

Kvesic, linking back up with Stanley is a great step.

Hearnt a lot from him, being a flanker too, and I learnt a lot in that Academy and it's helped my development greatly.

"Now at Gloucester, his role heading up the forwards has been good. I feel really comfortable and I feel like we've got a good rapport and I'm learning a lot"

Going into the new 2013/14 season, Kvesic was amongst the quintet that made a big impact on the international stage. He joined Billy Twelvetrees, Ben Morgan, Freddie Burns and Jonny May in an England shirt in the victorious tour

"IT WAS A NO-BRAINER and, ahead international year and with

FOR ME

MOVING

HERE!

Kvesic is determined to show it's his shirt for keeps.

"I always said when I came to Gloucester I had competition just for the 7 shirt so, if I can be playing regularly and finding some form, then hopefully I'll open up some opportunities with England.

"Right now, I want to play well here, I'm still new and I'm still finding my feet discovering what it means to be a Gloucester player."

International or not, when Kvesic linked up with his new team mates and set off to Tignes on tour, awaiting him were Henry Trinder and Andy Hazell with a pair of hair clippers.

The pre-season ritual of headshaving for the new players was heading the way of the new recruit, and gone were the blonde locks. Kvesic insists the hair is growing back!

"It's been knocking on six weeks now, I'll fire out a picture on Twitter if people want to know how the growth is going on. But I hope it'll be back to something presentable soon."



"It's good. Obviously now he's doing a slightly different role from when I knew him as Academy Manager at Worcester.



With BOB FENTON

I can't think of any sport anywhere that tinkers with the laws as much as ours, and this latest version is proving to be a real pain for everyone.

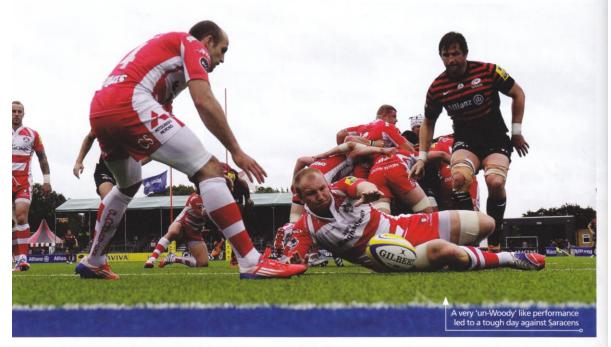
've got this song that keeps going around my head at the moment. It goes, 'Things can only get better...'. I won't try singing it – we've suffered enough over the past two weeks.

It's been a rough start though – going down at home against Sale,

arrived on the morning of the game... Errr...The pitch looked very good... Oh and Mr and Mrs Whispering John were there too, that was nice. OK, maybe a bit harsh – a few players had decent performances but, much like me, most will want to forget it and move on.

Sarries 'money back' marketing ploy for travelling Gloucester fans was a great idea though, maybe other clubs will try it.

Thinking about it, if Sarries tried it for home fans they may get a few more through the turnstiles – for the first home game of the season the



then being hammered out of site at the Plastic Stadium. So things really can only get better, can't they?

Being a generally positive kind of person, let's start with the positives from that first match against Sale, then.

Umm.... My season ticket finally

Then last weekend, up to the plastic palace in north London. My trip there will have to wait until next season as work has conspired to dispatch me to the furthest flung corner of its empire – or Suffolk as it is sometimes known – so hacking up to London was not an option.

crowd looked pretty sparce. Maybe they are just as fed up with that terrible 'stand up' song, the stupid camel mascot or the mind-numbingly dull announcer so voted with their feet and opted to stay at home.

But what of the game though? Well in all reality it ceased to be a contest after a couple of minutes when Woody got his marching orders.

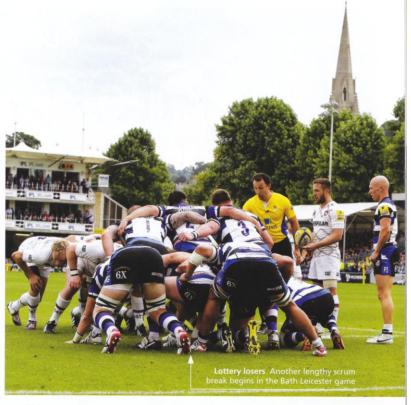
The rights and wrongs – well there were no wrongs – of the red card decision will have been debated endlessly by now, so I don't intend to add to it. Apart from saying that it was probably the un-Woody like action possible. There isn't anyone who knows anything about the game who would say he is a dirty player, a very out of character moment. Enough said.

But in the face of adversity I thought the boys stood up and were counted. Billy and Henry had excellent first halves, as did Freddie.

The rest really did themselves proud but, in the end, numbers and conditions always were going to result in Saracens streaking away. The fact that they only really did that in the last quarter though was testament to the efforts of the men in Cherry and White.

It's not going to get any easier today though, Northampton Saints are, as ever, a formidable bunch to take on. No doubt we will have been written off by pundits and some down in the mouth fans, but I reckon this is as good an opportunity as any to get the show back on the road.





We have too strong a squad to have become a bad team in the space of a couple of weeks, we'll bounce back – and up the table – wait and see.

One of the things that we do seem to have been struggling with is the latest instalment of 'let's make scrum time even more of a lottery than usual', or the law changes as they are known in other parts. I can't think of any sport anywhere that tinkers with the laws as much as ours, and this latest version is proving to be a real pain for everyone.

Watching a bit of the Bath – Leicester game on Saturday, one scrum took a total of 2 minutes and 12 seconds to complete. Multiply that by, say, ten scrums and that's a full quarter of the game gone. Somebody explain how that is speeding things up! And more of them seem to be resulting in free kicks or penalties – the very thing the changes were supposed to stop.

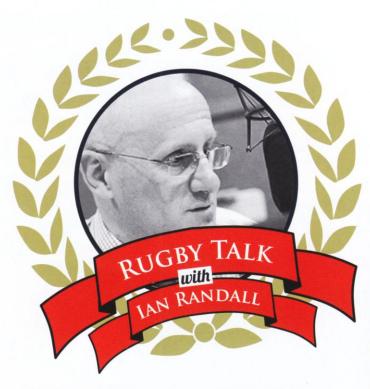
I have real sympathy with the front three here. It seems to take an age (see the Sale game) for the referees to call the 'Yes Nine' instruction after the scrum has been set. Surely it has got to be an almost instantaneous call as, for the life of me, I can't see how the packs are supposed to keep still for that length of time after coming together.

I can't see what was wrong with the old, old system – i.e. bring the front rows together, then second and then back row and play from there – no pushing before the ball and get the feed straight. Kind of like what happens in under 10s!

Too many of these changes seem to be made because the Australians can't compete in a particular facet of the game (sorry H) or to satisfy this strange idea that every game must include about fifty tries for it to have been any good. I couldn't agree less!

For me, the best game I have ever witnessed was a 9 – 3 win over Saracens a few years ago – it kept us in the top flight as I recall – an utterly enthralling contest.

So stop tinkering, take it back to the basics and let's get on with the game. The scrum contest used to be one of the great moments of the game – it'll be hugely sad if our rule makers were to tinker to the point that it became an irrelevance.



I REMEMBER ONCE ASKING FORMER GLOUCESTER CAPTAIN IAN SMITH ABOUT THE EXPECTATION OF THE AVERAGE GLOUCESTER SUPPORTER.

FIGURED he ought to have a good idea since he made over 300 appearances for the club, and his father Dick made over 500.

His reply was surprisingly straight forward. It didn't include conquering Europe, being domestic champions or even beating Bath twice a season.

He merely said that supporters who worked hard all week expected you to put in everything you had, for them, on a match day.

Down the years you can probably think of the odd one or two who haven't, but they have been the exception.

Adam Balding, when he wasn't injured, was in the majority, and Balding will become an increasingly familiar figure as the build-up to the 2015 Rugby World Cup gathers momentum.

The former Gloucester captain has hung up his boots at 33 to become co-ordinator for the tournament at the City Council. When I went to see him, he looked ready for another season

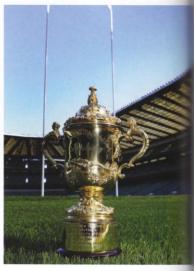


on the field, but confessed that "another" season wasn't

as exciting as the job he had taken on.

"Being a former Gloucester player and captain obviously was a help to my application", he said.

"I understand the relationship the city has with the club and the passion that exists here. But I think I also got the job



because of the transferable skills I can bring - leadership. drive, resilience and being able to connect with the public.

"I've been part of the work that community departments at clubs like Gloucester do, and it's fantastic going into schools and raising awareness of rugby and sport in general.

"That's why I thought this job ticked a lot of boxes for me, it gives me the ability to give something back, but also the ability to step from professional sport into the corporate world and work with some fantastic people."

Balding came to Gloucester in 2004 and the supporters voted him Player of the Year by a landslide at the end of his first season.

His remaining three

years at the club were dogged by fitness issues. He fractured a cheekbone in three places and damaged an Achilles badly enough that the surgeon's knife was needed to put it right. Both meant lengthy spells watching rather than playing, but Balding didn't waste that time.

"I anticipated playing again this season so I've come here straight off the field, if you like, but over the years just like all the players, I was encouraged to network either by going to functions or by meeting people after games.

"I sat down and wrote out a contact list not only from the rugby side but also including business people and I actually thought it was quite a distinguished list so I'll certainly try and use it.

"This is a massive learning curve for me but although I've only been here a couple of weeks it feels very natural and as if I've been here for quite a while already. Of course I will find things that I need help with but don't we all."

I sensed Balding liked the fact he had taken control of his own career. Sometimes players move because they can see little opportunity in front of them. They may not want to uproot their family but they can sense if they are being squeezed out.

Balding's playing career post Gloucester took him to Newcastle (twice), Worcester and London Welsh, where he finished last season. At the end of it he was a free agent, but after a two day assessment

Balding landed a very different job, albeit one which covers a typical time span for a player's contract, through until the 2015 tournament.

"I know Paul James (City Council Leader) has described it as a big job, and it is, but the resources in the department are amazing.

"It is the first job like this I have had and there is a sense of the unknown about it, but help and a structure is in place and I'm not shy of asking questions.

"The 2015 Rugby World Cup is a vehicle for us to reach out into the community - we want to make everyone feel a part of it.

"Will it happen overnight? Absolutely not. It's a slow burner and there will always be certain Gloucester fans respect for putting the needs of the team before any thought of self preservation.

He's also got through that



"BEING A FORMER GLOUCESTER PLAYER AND CAPTAIN OBVIOUSLY WAS A HELP TO MY APPLICATION"

people who are oblivious to what is going on and those are the ones we want to try and grasp and get them involved either with the rugby or with the other events that go with it."

Adam Balding the player was uncomplicated. He was a strong, ball carrying rather than ball playing number eight. His injury log will tell you he was one of those players

emotional moment of realising that his playing career is over, and is, in his typically head-on fashion, tackling something new.

He deserves our good wishes to make a success of it.



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

GLOUCESTER RUGBY			
#	POS	NAME	
15	FB	Rob Cook	
14	W	Charlie Sharples	
13	C	Henry Trinder	
12	C	Billy Twelvetrees	
11	W	James Simpson-Danie	
10	FH	Freddie Burns	
9	SH	Dan Robson	
1	P	Nick Wood	
2	Н	Darren Dawidiuk	
3	P	Rupert Harden	
4	L	Tom Savage	
5	L	Lua Lokotui	
6	F	Sione Kalamafoni	
7	F	Matt Kvesic	
8	N8	Ben Morgan	
16	R	Dan George	
17	R	Dan Murphy	
18	R	Yann Thomas	
19	R	Elliot Stooke	
20	R	Akapusi Qera	
21	R	Tavis Knoyle	
22		Mike Tindall	
23		Martyn Thomas	

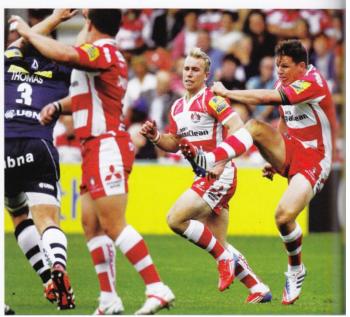


#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Tom Arscott
14	W	Phil MacKenzie
13	C	Andy Forsyth
12	C	Johnny Leota
11	W	Mark Cueto
10	FH	Nick Macleod
9	SH	Dwayne Peel
1	P	Eifion Lewis-Roberts
2	H	Marc Jones
3	P	Henry Thomas
4	L	Jonathan Mills
5	L	Michael Paterson
6	F	Dan Braid
7	F	David Seymour
8	N8	James Gaskell
16	R	Tommy Taylor
17	R	Ross Harrison
18	R	Vadim Cobilas
19	R	Kirill Kulemin
20		Josh Beaumont
21	R	Will Cliff
22	R	Joe Ford
23		Rob Miller









GLOUCESTER RUGBY

TRY: Trinder (58) CON: Burns (59) PENS: Burns (18, 63, 66)

SALE SHARKS

TRIES: Cueto (11), Forsyth (51) PENS: Macleod (7), Arscott (34, 37) DROPS: Ford (68)

16

22

GLOUCESTER'S 2013/14 AVIVA PREMIERSHIP CAMPAIGN STARTED ON A DISAPPOINTING NOTE, AS SALE SHARKS LANDED AT KINGSHOLM AND LEFT WITH THE FOUR POINTS, LEAVING THE KINGSHOLM CROWD STUNNED.

wo tries either side of half time killed off the Cherry and Whites, as Sale executed their game plan with precision with Nigel Davies' side struggling to find their stride.

Hotly debated decisions from TMO Geoff Warren rocked Kingsholm, while referee Andrew Small strictly stewarded the breakdown and the set-piece.

It all contributed to Sale having the edge, which resulted in points and territory at crucial times.

Sale went into half-time leading 14-3 thanks to Mark Cueto extending his all time Premiership try scoring record. TMO Warren and referee Small combined to award the try despite a suspect forward pass in the build up.

Gloucester were trying in vain to muster momentum and territory, but the Sharks were ferocious and getting away with a lot of breakdown skullduggery much to the frustration of the home side.

A solitary Freddie Burns penalty, on his 99th Gloucester appearance was Gloucester's sole score at the mid way point, as Nick MacLeod and Tom Arscott kicked the Sharks into a surprise lead with two kicks each.

The scrum was a mess, with all

the focus on the new laws, the interpretations were confusing for the watching crowd. Nick Wood was sent to the bin as Small's frustration with the front row

Henry Trinder scuttled over and Freddie Burns knocked over two quick fire penalties. With 3 points the deficit and 10 minutes remaining, the comeback was

Champagne Moment:

Henry Trinder took things into his own hands, taking the ball at first receiver with a clever change of balance and neat footwork taking him past the defender for an impressive score that kick-started a potential comeback.

boiled over

The Cherry and Whites had to come up with a famous comeback, but the Sharks kept control and delivered another sucker-punch via the man in the van.

A Cueto grubber was touched down by Andy Forsyth. With everyone expecting the try to be ruled out for a marginal offside, the try was awarded.

Moments later, with Billy Twelvetrees sent to the sinbin, everything was going against the home side.

As the frustration throughout the stands grew, the mood suddenly changed to one of hope as the team rallied.

clearly on.

The Sharks duly dug deep for their victory, and replacement Joe Ford dropped a goal to give a bit more breathing space to the visitors.

With the clock ticking down and Sharks in no hurry to keep playing, frustration grew and when Ross Harrison was sin-binned as the Sharks flew off their feet again, Gloucester opted for a 5 metre scrum with Sale a man light.

The Sharks, choosing to replace James Gaskell swiftly changed their mind to go a back light, shoved the Gloucester pack off the ball and Small finished the game with another penalty call.

"IT'S NOT THE WAY WE WANTED TO KICK THE SEASON OFF AT ALL, LOSING AT HOME. WE LET OURSELVES DOWN AND WE KNOW WE NEED TO PUT THAT RIGHT IN FRONT OF OUR HOME FANS."

TOM SAVAGE, GLOUCESTER CAPTAIN

GLOUCESTER RUGBY				
# POS		NAME		
15	FB	Rob Cook		
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3	P	Rupert Harden		
4	L	Tom Savage (C)		
5	L	Lua Lokotui		
6	F	Matt Kvesic		
7	F	Akapusi Qera		
8	N8	Sione Kalamafoni		

H Koree Britton
P Dan Murphy
P Yann Thomas
L Elliott Stooke
N8 Ben Morgan
SH Jimmy Cowan
C Mike Tindall
FB Martyn Thomas

SARACENS				
POS	NAME			
FB	Chris Wyles			
W	Chris Ashton			
C	Joel Tomkins			
C	Duncan Taylor			
W	David Strettle			
FH	Owen Farrell			
SH	Richard Wigglesworth			
P	Rhys Gill			
Н	Jamie George			
P	Matt Stevens			
L	Steve Borthwick (C)			
L	Alistair Hargreaves			
F	Billy Vunipola			
F	Jacques Burger			
N8	Ernst Joubert			
13	Schalk Brits			
10000	Mako Vunipola			
	James Johnston			
0.00	Mouritz Botha			
100				
100	Jackson Wray			
10.00	Ben Spencer			
TH	Nils Mordt			
	FB W C C W FH SH P H P L L F F			









SARACENS

44

TRIES: Tomkins (20), Strettle (48, 80), Brits (57), B Vunipola (76) CONS: Farrell (21, 50, 58, 78), Spencer (80) PEN: Farrell (31, 42, 53)

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

PENS: Burns (11, 27, 37, 39)

12

GLOUCESTER TRAVELLED TO ALLIANZ PARK, HOPING TO SECURE THEIR FIRST WIN OF THE AVIVA PREMIERSHIP SEASON AGAINST A STRONG SARACENS SIDE, BUT SAW THEIR HOPES SHATTERED WITHIN TWO MINUTES.

s Nick Wood departed the field, red carded by referee Wayne Barnes, for illegal use of the boot at a ruck, Gloucester's hopes effectively went with him.

But his team mates certainly put up a heck of a fight. Making light of the fact that they were a man short, they fought like demons and actually went into half time leading by 12 points to 10.

The battle of the rivals for the England number ten shirt, between Owen Farrell and Freddie Burns, was being edged by the Gloucester fly half at this stage. Burns had slotted four excellent penalties to keep his side in the hunt.

However, the nagging feeling persisted that Gloucester were having to work so hard in defence and in the tight to keep the Men in Black out that, sooner or later, they were going to run out of steam.

Credit to the home team, they got their tactics absolutely spot on in the circumstances and slowly ground Gloucester down.

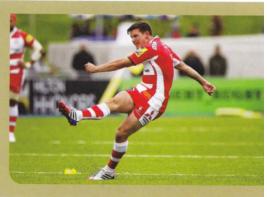
They edged their way back into the lead right at the start

of the second half and, in truth, didn't really look back. Gloucester continued to fight doggedly but, once they'd slipped more than two scores behind, it was a case of kick ran dead at the Gloucester end, but referee Barnes ruled that a Gloucester hand had touched the ball in flight.

Instead of an attacking scrum

Champagne Moment:

On a difficult day, the main plaudits must go to fly half Freddie Burns who made his 100th competitive appearance for the club at the tender age of 23.



damage limitation.

The tenacity and team spirit was such that Nigel Davies side probably deserved to deny their opponents the try scoring bonus point, and they very nearly did so.

The Gloucester defence held until the 77th minute, when they were pinned back in bizarre circumstances. A Saracens clearance deep in the home half, the seven man Gloucester pack were defending a five metre scrum, and the fourth try duly followed.

The final outcome was a tough day at the office for Gloucester, but their followers could take heart from the fact their team never threw in the towel in trying circumstances.

"IN A BIZARRE WAY I'M A LOT HAPPIER ABOUT THE WAY WE WENT ABOUT OUR BUSINESS WITH 14 PLAYERS THIS WEEKEND THAN WE DID WITH 15 LAST WEEKEND.

"IT WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE A TOUGH ASK TO COME HERE AND WE WERE IN THE RIGHT FRAME OF MIND AND THE BOYS SHOWED THAT TO CARRY ON THE WAY THEY DID."

NIGEL DAVIES, DIRECTOR OF RUGBY



TEAMS



GLOUCESTER RUGBY

010001111111		
ROB COOK	FULLBACK	15
CHARLIE SHARPLES	RIGHT WING	14
HENRY TRINDER	CENTRE	13
BILLY TWELVETREES	CENTRE	12
JAMES SIMPSON-DANIEL	LEFT WING	11
FREDDIE BURNS	FLY HALF	10
TAVIS KNOYLE	SCRUM HALF	9
DAN MURPHY	PROP	1
DARREN DAWIDIUK	HOOKER	2
RUPERT HARDEN	PROP	3
TOM SAVAGE (C)	LOCK	4
LUA LOKOTUI	LOCK	5
SIONE KALAMAFONI	FLANKER	6
MATT KVESIC	FLANKER	7
BEN MORGAN	NO.8	8
KOREE BRITTON	REPLACEMENT	16
YANN THOMAS	REPLACEMENT	17
SHAUN KNIGHT	REPLACEMENT	18
ELLIOTT STOOKE	REPLACEMENT	19
AKAPUSI QERA	REPLACEMENT	20
DAN ROBSON	REPLACEMENT	21
MIKE TINDALL	REPLACEMENT	22
JONNY MAY	REPLACEMENT	23

NORTHAMPTON SAINTS

FULLBACK	BEN FODEN
RIGHT WING	KEN PISI
CENTRE	JAMES WILSON
CENTRE	LUTHER BURRELL
LEFT WING	GEORGE NORTH
FLY HALF	STEPHEN MYLER
SCRUM HALF	KAHN FOTUALI'I
PROP	ALEX CORBISIERO
HOOKER	DYLAN HARTLEY (C)
PROP	TOM MERCEY
LOCK	COURTNEY LAWES
LOCK	CHRISTIAN DAY
FLANKER	TOM WOOD
FLANKER	CALUM CLARK
NO.8	SAMU MANOA
REPLACEMENT	MIKE HAYWOOD
REPLACEMENT	ALEX WALLER
REPLACEMENT	GARETH DENMAN
REPLACEMENT	SAM DICKINSON
REPLACEMENT	PHIL DOWSON
REPLACEMENT	LEE DICKSON
REPLACEMENT	GEORGE PISI
REPLACEMENT	JAMIE ELLIOTT

Referee: Greg Garner Assistant Referees: Paul Burton and Ashley Rowden