

# GLOUCESTER RUGBY



£3 | 01.02.14

LV= CUP

vs. LONDON WASPS



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# GLOUCESTER'S WELSH DRAGON



THE PRIDE ~ THE PASSION ~ THE HONOUR ~ THE HISTORY



# CAPTAIN'S CORNER

**TOM SAVAGE**

**G**ood afternoon and welcome to Kingsholm for today's clash with London Wasps in the LV= Cup.

The last few weeks for the boys have been good, watching on I have been proud of the way that the boys have taken on everything that the coaches have told them and challenged them to do.

The Heineken Cup matches against Munster and Perpignan showed that the team can up their game against the best in Europe,

frustrating few weeks watching from the sidelines and being involved, even as water boy, makes me feel that little bit closer to the action.

On the night, I was impressed with the way that the really young squad stepped up and gave it everything against a fairly experienced Scarlets' side. It was a difficult fixture but, to a man, they stood up to be counted.

For me, the arm is out of the sling and I am starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. I owe a lot to

**"...I WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE WAY THAT THE REALLY YOUNG SQUAD STEPPED UP AND GAVE IT EVERYTHING AGAINST A FAIRLY EXPERIENCED SCARLETS' SIDE."**

**Experience** Our young squad put in a fine performance against Scarlets last week



and the challenge now is to keep up that intensity and passion to the end of the season.

I travelled with the squad to Scarlets on Friday evening. It's been a

the back room staff at the club for their hard work in the programme they've put together for me, and their efforts to ensure that I can return as soon as possible.

I'll raring to go when the time comes, but there are a number of boys that are playing well so I'll have to work really hard to get the shirt back!

We've put in some solid performances in recent weeks, and it's important to keep that going today. We're making use of the whole squad, and I believe that several of the young lads really have really made the most of their opportunities, and today's game is another chance for the whole squad to impress.

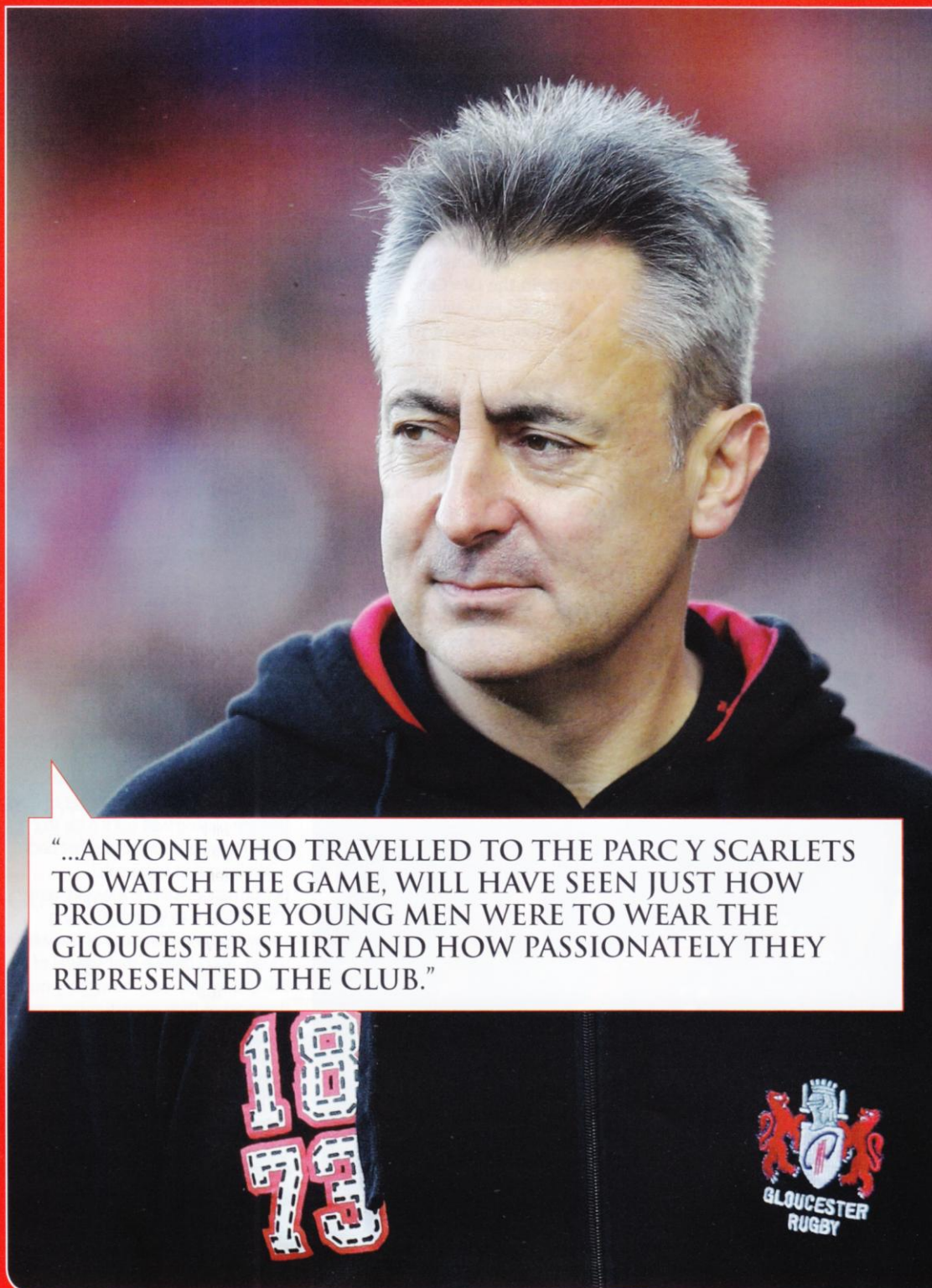
We have a really tough set of games when we return to Aviva Premiership action, so today's game is vitally important to maintain momentum again and push on into the business end of the campaign.

Enjoy the game,

**Sav**



**NIGEL DAVIES DIRECTOR OF RUGBY**



"...ANYONE WHO TRAVELLED TO THE PARC Y SCARLETS TO WATCH THE GAME, WILL HAVE SEEN JUST HOW PROUD THOSE YOUNG MEN WERE TO WEAR THE GLOUCESTER SHIRT AND HOW PASSIONATELY THEY REPRESENTED THE CLUB."



# COACH'S NOTES

**I'd like to wish everyone a very warm welcome to Kingsholm for this afternoon's LV= Cup fixture against London Wasps.**

After a couple of weeks on the road, when we've travelled from the South of France to West Wales, it's good to be back at home in

that I was very happy with. We showed character and passion, desire and intensity.

Ultimately, we lacked a little bit of accuracy, but we were up against a side that has a huge European pedigree. However, it's the sort of high profile match that we aspire to

travelled to Perpignan to round off the Heineken Cup pool stages.

We knew we had to win, and win well, to have any chance of remaining in Europe. We matched the intensity of the previous week and, crucially, we took our chances. It was a very important win for us.

It means we have a quarter final against today's opponents, London Wasps, to look forward to in April and that's quite significant in terms of our season as a whole. We still have plenty to play for in the Aviva Premiership, but staying alive in Europe will also focus the mind.

In terms of today, and the LV= Cup, Saracens' victory over Newcastle Falcons last weekend means that we can no longer qualify for the semi finals. It's disappointing but we still have plenty to play for.

With a number of players absent last weekend due to international call ups, we took the opportunity to field a number of our younger players against the Scarlets.

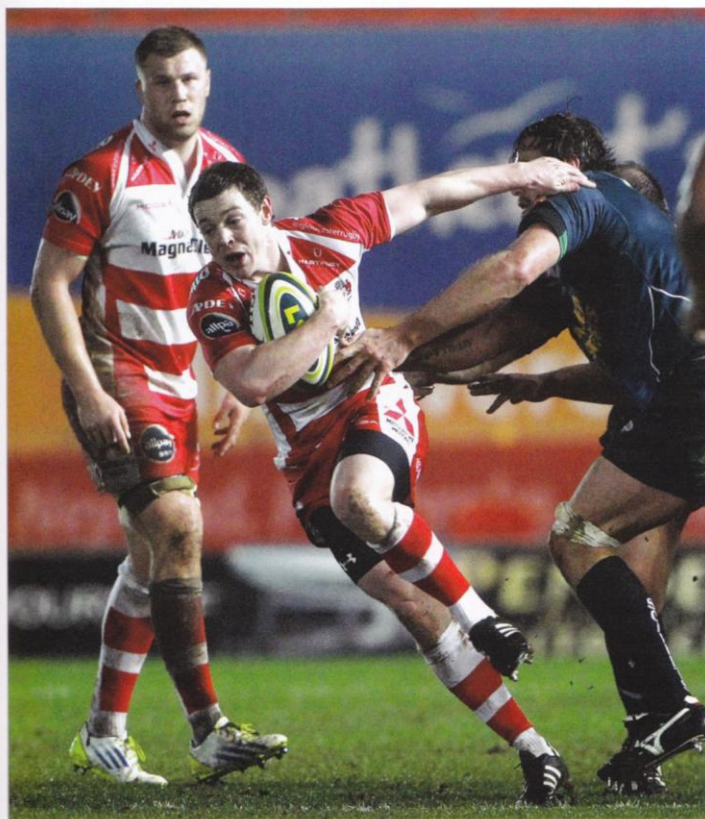
And, anyone who travelled to the Parc y Scarlets to watch the game, will have seen just how proud those young men were to wear the Gloucester shirt and how passionately they represented the club.

It was a tough night, a long trip followed by testing weather conditions against a tough opponent. But they didn't shirk from the task in hand and could very easily have gone on to win the game.

It's important that we maintain standards over the next few weeks, particularly with the return to Premiership action next week. So, a similarly committed performance is called for this evening.

Enjoy your afternoon here at Kingsholm,

*Nigel*



familiar surroundings.

It seems quite a while ago now that we prepared to face Munster here in our last home game. I was looking for a reaction from the squad in that game – the team delivered and we've had a positive couple of weeks since.

Whilst it was disappointing to lose against Munster, there were many aspects of our performance

take part in more often, and we'll be better for that experience.

It was an absolutely fantastic atmosphere on the night, one of the best I've ever experienced and both sets of supporters deserve credit for the way they backed their respective sides.

What was also pleasing, was that we didn't suffer any sort of drop off the following week when we



# VIEW FROM The Citizen

with **MIKE BROWN**

Mike looks at Gloucester winger and England Rugby's latest international weapon, Jonny May. Discussing his great club form and his potential on the international stage.

## PREDATORY INSTINCTS

**J**onny May will hopefully wing his way into the England team to face France this afternoon, and it would be just reward.

The turbo-charged Gloucester win has been in red-hot form this season, touching down seven times including an eye-catching individual effort in the recent victory over Perpignan.

But May has been selected for far more than his predatory instincts. The Swindon-born pace man has fine-tuned and added finesse to his attacking game while adding muscle in defence.

Listen to those at Hartpury and you will quickly learn May is one of the most dedicated and professional players in the squad, always willing to listen and put in the extra hours.

Stuart Lancaster is expected to unleash the Cherry and Whites star with Exeter Chiefs' Jack Nowell on the other wing against Les Bleus, as Chris Ashton is omitted from Le Crunch.

Gloucester teammate James Simpson-Daniel has been there before, only to be left heartbroken

at yet another agonising international snub.

But he is confident May has the x-factor to blaze a trail in the Championship.

Simpson-Daniel said: "Jonny's playing well and it looks like he's going to be rewarded for his good form.

"Fingers crossed Stuart has the confidence to go with Jonny and give him a shot in the Six Nations.

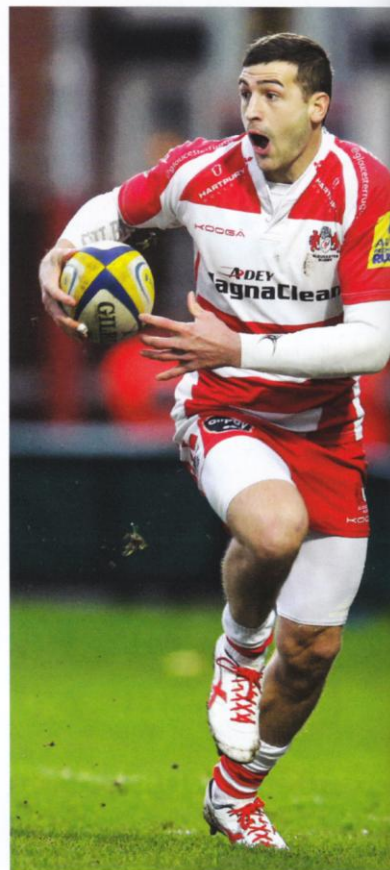
"He just has an abundance of pace. Chris (Ashton) is no slouch himself but, if there is half a gap, Jonny will be gone.

"In tournaments like the Six Nations you need to take your chances because they are very few and far between.

"He's a very different player to Ashton. Chris chases the ball and pops up all over the place, whereas Jonny is a bit more creative with the ball."

England are likely to select Luther Burrell to partner Billy Twelvetrees in the centre.

And Simpson-Daniel reckons Lancaster's impending selection is a major statement of intent ahead of the Stade de France encounter.





He added: "It's a real statement of intent from Stuart. If there is any turnover ball he will be saying to spread it quickly through the hands to guys like Jonny."

"If not kick long and behind their defence and let Jonny fly up in chase. There's simply no substitute for pace."

May has just one-cap to his name, making his debut during the summer tour of Argentina but he has earned plenty of plaudits for his eye-catching performances this season.

The 23-year-old, who has been utilised at outside centre for Gloucester in recent weeks, boasts Sir Clive Woodward among his advocates and has been given a royal seal approval by Mike Tindall.

May's ability to cover a number of positions is undoubtedly advantageous. Tindall has little doubt May will master his new role.

He said: "It will help his cause that he can cover centre and full-back. As a centre he has all the attacking attributes but the defensive role is very different for a wing, especially at international level."

"But he will get better and it will definitely become another string to his bow. It's just understanding different situations and being able to deal with them."

"It comes with experience – even I still struggle at times and I've played there all my life. Outside centre is the most exposed position on the pitch."

"But he's an absolute professional and works really hard to improve."

England scored just five tries in last season's Championship, not awful but the joint lowest of the campaign.

One thing is certain. Jonny May knows his way to the try-line with 36 touchdowns in his Cherry and White career.

Now Lancaster reckons he is ready for the next step and his young guns can fire in the Parisian caldron.

Lancaster said: "If I feel they are ready, I will pick them."

"You have to be sure that they

ability to change direction, which means that not many people know where he is going."

What more motivation do Gloucester's new generation need? Five years ago Jonny May



**"IT'S A REAL STATEMENT OF INTENT FROM STUART. IF THERE IS ANY TURNOVER BALL HE WILL BE SAYING TO SPREAD IT QUICKLY THROUGH THE HANDS TO GUYS LIKE JONNY."**

have the right temperament and I trust my instincts in that regard.

"Jack Nowell has had more involvements and beaten more defenders in our squad than anyone while Jonny May has unbelievable pace and has an

was making his first steps into the senior rugby predominantly in the LV= Cup.

Even better. Who was crowned last season's LV= Cup break through player of the year? May's wing partner Jack Nowell...

GLOUCESTER RUGBY  
HERITAGE

www.gloucester rugbyheritage.org.uk

## THE DIX DYNASTY

**T**he head of the Gloucester Rugby Dix family was John William, born in Gloucester in 1884, who enjoyed a long and successful career at scrum half, making 243 appearances between 1907 and 1922, and scoring 54 tries.

In subsequent generations, his son, Bill, and four grandsons, John, Stuart and Clive Dix and Gary Mace, all played for Gloucester.

**"FATHER" DIX**

Throughout his playing career John William was known as "Father" Dix, although he never explained how he came by this nickname, and even his closest friends claimed not to know. He was renowned for ranting at the Gloucester pack in rather colourful language, and for his reverse pass, which was regarded as a masterpiece.

He also had a reputation for stretching the rules – at one game in London, the home crowd shouted "Watch Dix!" to the referee at the first scrum, and as soon as "Father" put the ball in, the referee blew his whistle and shouted "free kick". But "Father" had not released the ball; he had sold a dummy. Dix was seen grinning broadly behind the ref, who insisted on the free kick being taken even though no offence had taken place.



John William "Father" Dix

"Father" played his first game for Gloucester at Exeter on 9th November 1907, and scored a try in a 13-6 victory, but he was competing for the scrum half berth with Dai Gent, an international player, so his place did not become permanent until 1910 when Gent moved to Plymouth.

In 1910-11, "Father" played in 36 of Gloucester's 40 fixtures, and made the trip to France for the Club's famous victory over Toulouse; two years later he played in the success in Paris against Stade Francais. His form attracted the judgement that, "...he

was quite up to International form".

During the Great War, "Father" Dix joined the 8/Gloucesters and landed in France in 1915. He was taken prisoner in April 1918, but released near the Dutch border as the Germans retreated, and he was back in Gloucester in time to play in the Club's Christmas matches. He was soon playing better than ever, and was chosen as reserve for England in all their matches in 1919-20.

For one game at Twickenham, the first choice player, Kershaw, was doubtful because of injury, and 20 minutes before kick-off he had not turned up. "Father" was told to prepare to play. A few minutes later Kershaw arrived, reported himself fit to play,

"Father's" greatest ambition was shattered, and unfortunately that was the closest he ever came to representing England. He continued to be chosen as a travelling reserve, but by 1921 this had happened once too often and he declined to travel to Edinburgh, preferring to turn out for Gloucester against Llanelli.

He played his first game for the County in 1908, and scored two tries in their 39-0 defeat of Racing Club de France at Kingsholm. He was at the heart of the famous Gloucestershire side which won the County Championship in three successive



seasons – 1920, 1921 and 1922.

His 21st and last cap was won in the final at Villa Park in 1922, when North Midlands were defeated 19-0, including a try by "Father".

## "BILL" DIX

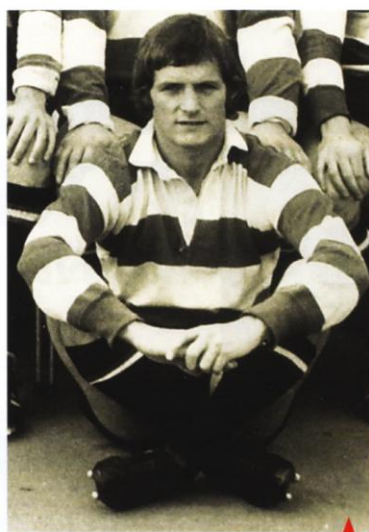
John William "Bill" Dix, the son of "Father", was born in 1923, and made his debut on the wing for Gloucester on 29th March 1947, when he scored a hat trick of tries in a 27-8 win over the RAF.

He played ten more games for the first team, and scored two more tries. He had three sons, who would all play for the Club.

## JOHN DIX

John was born in 1947, and followed his father on the wing for Gloucester. He scored a try on his debut in the Boxing Day match against Old Merchant Taylors (his cousin Gary Mace played centre), and made 217 first team appearances between 1966 and 78, scoring 88 tries.

Out of the team for the start of the 1971-72 season, he came into the side for the quarter-final of the inaugural Knockout Cup, with Eric Stephens going from left wing to full-



John Dix

leading try scorer with 18 tries in 33 games, and made his debut for the County when he deputised for his younger brother, Stuart, in the County Championship quarter-final against Herts. He scored five tries against Exeter in November 1975, and hat tricks against Clifton and Cheltenham.

## STUART DIX

Stuart was born in 1952, and

14 tries. Naturally gifted, he quickly impressed as an elusive runner, and in March 1974 he was called up for England Under-23 squad training at Bisham Abbey. He scored the only try in Gloucester's 7-3 victory over Bristol in the first Sunday game at Kingsholm in February 1974, and scored hat tricks against Roundhay and Northampton.

He played for Gloucestershire throughout the Championship winning season of 1974-75, missing only the quarter-final when his brother substituted for him, and scoring the winning try in the 13-9 victory over Eastern Counties in the final.

John Bayliss was Gloucestershire captain that season and played alongside Stuart for Gloucester and Gordon League. He thought him "... the most talented winger, certainly in the West Country... he scored tries for fun, would tackle, brave... in three or four years he would certainly have been an England international and probably been on the Legends Board because he was so talented". But he chose to go back to the Gordon League to play alongside his twin brother, Clive.

## CLIVE DIX

Clive Dix, Stuart's twin, played for Gloucester United, but most of his career was as a centre for the Gordon League, where he and Stuart enjoyed a two-year unbeaten run. The run was finally ended in February 1977 when they lost 4-9 away to Bill Beaumont's Fylde in the last 16 of the John Player Cup.

## GARY MACE

Gary Mace, a cousin of the Dix brothers who was born in 1941, was another grandson of "Father" Dix and the son of Bill Dix's daughter. He made his Gloucester debut in October 1958, aged 17, and played 14 games that season.

A scrum half with a long pass, who also played at outside half or in the centre, he made 103 appearances for Gloucester between 1958 and 1972. His outstanding season was 1960-61 when, as a 19 year old, he played 34 games in a successful half back partnership with Terry Hopson.

SUNDAY EXPRESS best for all GLOUCESTER Rugby reports			
GLOUCESTER (Red and White)		Referee: K. Hutton (Gloucestershire Society)	OLD MERCHANT TAYLORS
THE FIRST XV SERVICE ON THIS GROUND IS VOLUNTARILY PROVIDED BY THE CITY OF GLOUCESTER DIVISION ST. JOHN AMBULANCE BRIGADE			
<b>FULL BACK</b> <b>1 D. Alinge (C)</b> <b>THREEQUARTERS</b> <b>2 J. Dix</b> R.W. <b>3 M. Dawson</b> R.C. <b>4 G. Mace</b> L.C. <b>5 J. Groves (C)</b> L.W. <b>HALF BACKS</b> <b>6 T. Hopson (C)</b> O.H. <b>7 M. Booth (C)</b> S.H.		<b>FIRST XV FIXTURES</b> Sept. 1 Clifton — H 15-6 3 Northampton — H 16-9 5 Bristol — A 1-6 10 County — A 11-9 15 Gloucester "B" — A 24-12 17 Moseley — H 19-23 22 Wulfford — H 16-6 24 Bristol — A 3-15 28 Cardiff — A 3-27 10 Oct. 1 Bedford — H 9-3 6 Cheltenham — H 9-0 9 Hereford — A 0-0 10 Elbow Vale — A 0-13 11 Ash Club of Wellington, N.Z. — H 9-6 13 Newport — A 0-31 25 Old Blues — H 8-3 29 Oxford Univ. — A 3-9 Nov. 3 Leicester — H 0-3 12 Moseley — A 14-34 19 Aberystwyth — H 9-8 26 Newbridge — A 3-37 Dec. 3 North — H 6-9 10 Bath — A 16-11 17 Coventry — H 0-0 26 O.M.T.'s — H 28 Loughborough — H 27 Pontypool — H 31 Elbow Vale — H	<b>FULL BACK</b> <b>14 D. Cameron</b> <b>THREEQUARTERS</b> <b>14 T. Cameron</b> R.W. <b>13 J. Welch</b> R.C. <b>12 D. I. Brasier</b> L.C. <b>11 A. Ducat</b> R.W. <b>HALF BACKS</b> <b>10 N. Griffin</b> O.H. <b>9 R. H. Pellham</b> S.H.
<b>FORWARDS</b> <b>8 J. Fowke (C)</b> <b>9 P. Keith-Roch</b> <b>10 C. Teague</b> <b>11 A. Brinn (C)</b> <b>12 N. Jackson</b> <b>13 G. Redding</b> <b>14 T. Davis</b> <b>15 R. Smith (C)</b>		<b>FIRST XV FIXTURES</b> Jan. 7 Lond. Scottish — H 14 Leicester — A 21 Wasps — A 28 Cambridge Univ. — H Feb. 4 Bristol — H 11 Bath — H 18 Swans — A 23 Arns — H 25 Aberystwyth — A 4 Mar. 4 Northampton — A 11 R.A.F. — H 16 Pontypool — A 18 Gipsy Hospital — H 23 Sale — H 30 Clifton — A 25 New Brighton — H 27 Sale — H 31 Cardiff — H Apr. 1 Cardiff — H 3 Redruth — H 5 Cheltenham — A 8 South — A 10 Newport — H 15 Harlequins — H 19 Stroud — H 22 Penryn — A 26 Exeter — A 27 Newbridge — H	<b>FORWARDS</b> <b>1 A. Bell</b> <b>2 J. Fernyhough</b> <b>3 G. Shilling</b> <b>4 M. Christie</b> <b>5 J. Filmer</b> <b>6 J. Birch</b> <b>8 G. Brown</b> <b>7 P. Kitchen</b>
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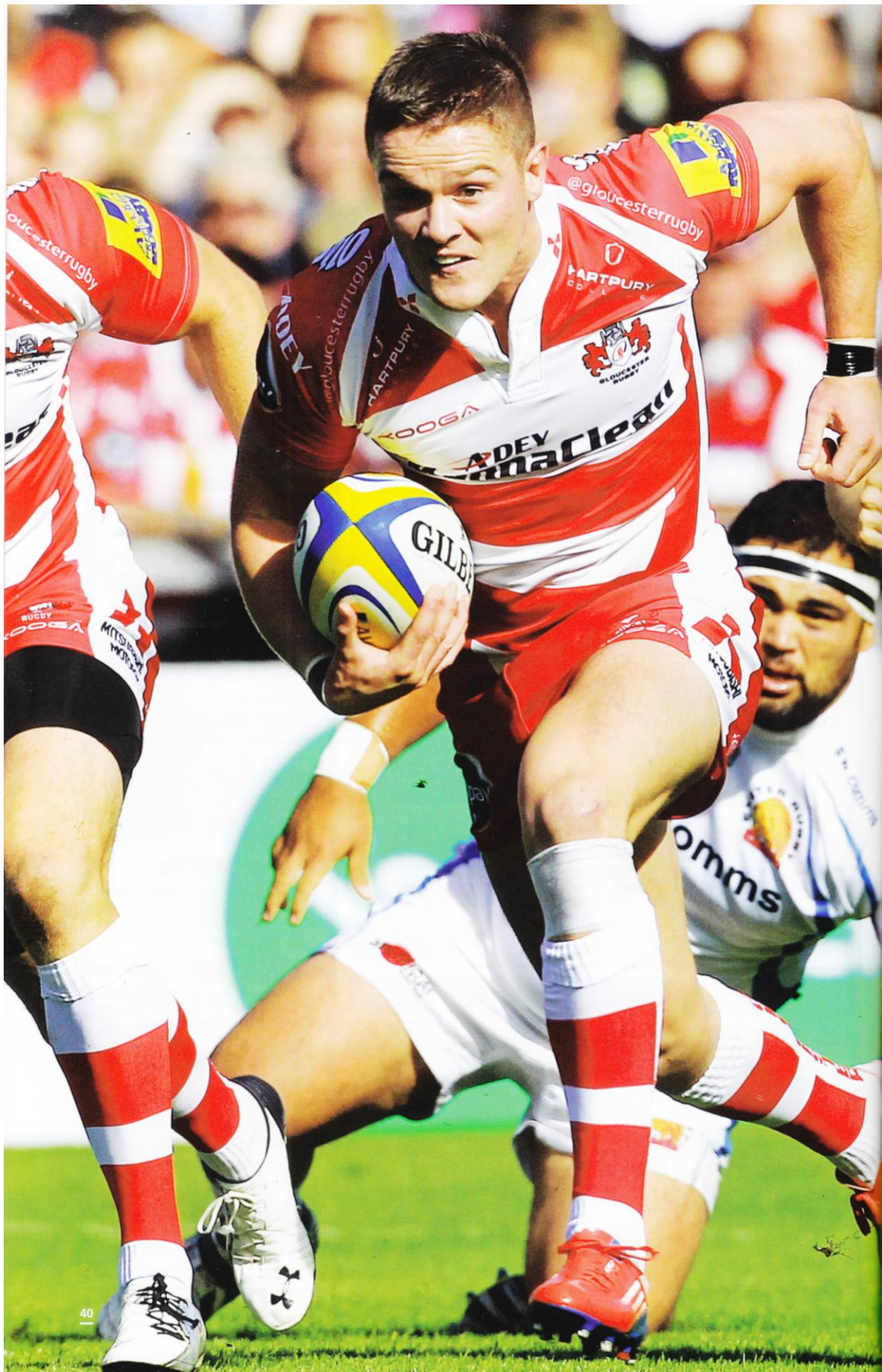
Gloucester v OMT Boxing Day 1966 programme

back. John kept his place for the semi, and rounded it off with a try in the final against Moseley at Twickenham.

In 1974-75, John was the Club's

kept up the family tradition on the wing. Although he only played two seasons for Gloucester, 1973-75, he made 33 appearances, and scored









# KNOYLE READY TO ROAR

IT'S BEEN A ROLLERCOASTER FEW WEEKS FOR **TAVIS KNOYLE** - AN APPEARANCE IN THE RED HOT ATMOSPHERE AGAINST MUNSTER, AND A RETURN TO HIS OLD STOMPING GROUND AT THE PARC Y SCARLETS.

**I**t's been a ding dong battle for game time in the number nine shirt at Gloucester, but Knoyle is simply determined to push on and impress on the pitch.

"I am enjoying things. I can't

the pitch."

It was clear in the early weeks of the season, that the scrum half trio at Kingsholm of Knoyle, Jimmy Cowan and Dan Robson would all be vying to get vital game time

**"I'M A HAPPY GUY SO I NEED TO MAKE AN IMPACT BOTH ON AND OFF THE PITCH."**

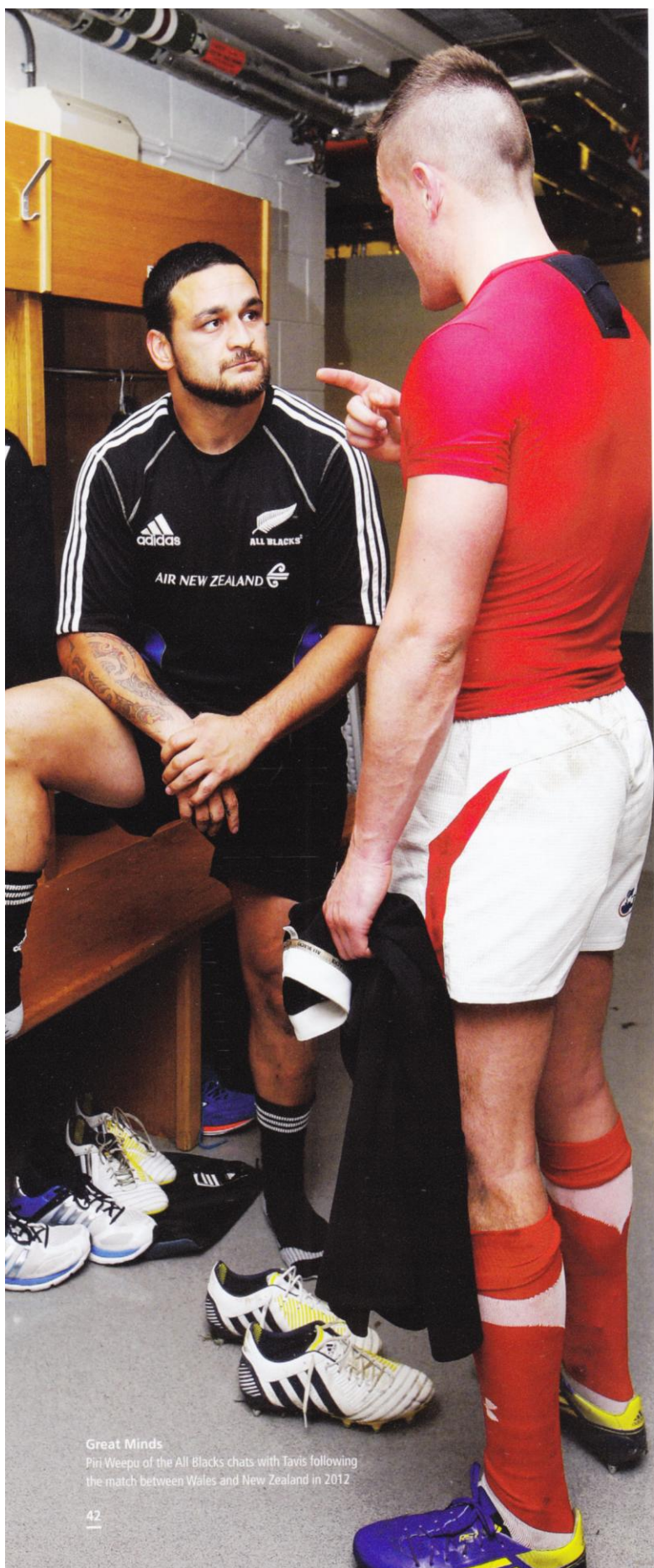
get my head down and sulk about lack of game time, but I'm doing everything I can to improve and impress. It's about being professional and giving off a positive vibe for the youngsters.

"I'm a happy guy so I need to make an impact both on and off

and to keep match fit. For Knoyle, the LV= Cup has proved a perfect chance to show his skills.

"It's just game time. I'll take any game, but in the LV= Cup at Scarlets, it was good to play with the young players. I remember when I was 18, 19 and that feeling





**Great Minds**  
Pin Weepu of the All Blacks chats with Tavis following the match between Wales and New Zealand in 2012

of nerves before you go out to play.

"For those younger lads, it was good for them to play alongside the older boys like Grills (Will James) and learn off them. Hopefully, I provided a bit of experience for them as well.

For a man with 11 caps for Wales, Knoyle can draw comparisons in atmosphere with the recent game against Munster with running out at the Millenium Stadium.

"The Munster game was excellent, it was good to be part of it. I'll be honest, nothing beats playing for your national team, it's something that you dream of when you're a little boy.

"Playing in front of 15,000 plus for Gloucester, it was a special night that one and the atmosphere was electric. It's excellent support and the supporters deserve great rugby and this club has seen great players both in the past and currently.

"You do feel as a player that you can't let the supporters down, as they give you so much support and it's a great feeling you get from them. The boys are all working hard individually to make sure we improve as a group and individually."

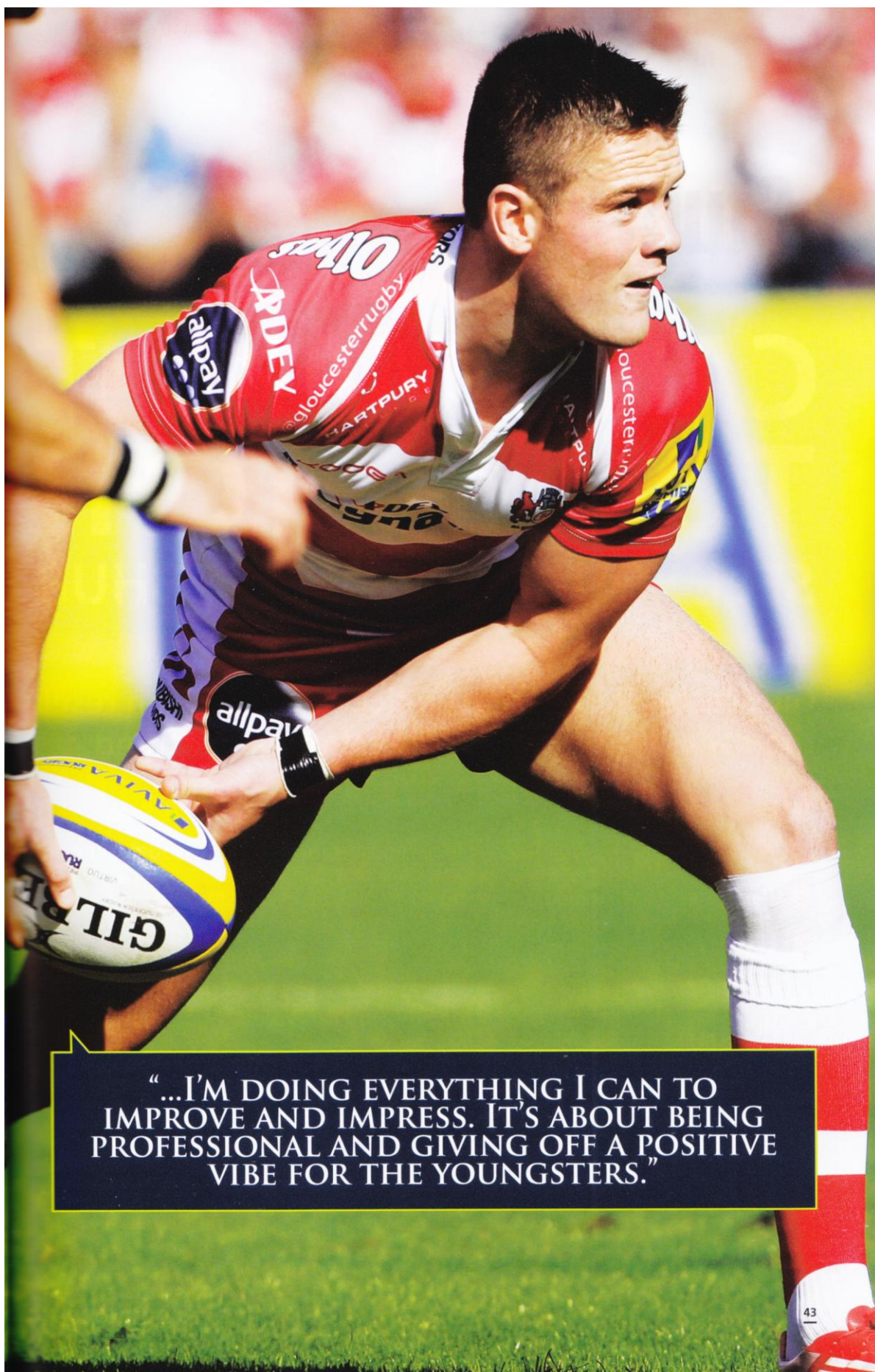
Taking on Wasps this afternoon, another chance for the LV= Cup to showcase some talents, Knoyle highlights that within the Gloucester set up there are several up and coming stars that have impressed the 23 year old.

"Players like Ross, Lewis Ludlow and Alex Woodburn, they're great. You throw in Billy Burns and even Jonny Bentley, who's worked so hard behind the scenes to get back to fitness, and come in and made an impact for the side.

"Even the little wingers Steph and Drew Cheshire. I never even knew Drew had a voice until that game! The boys are stepping up and it's good exposure for them.

"Even little Reece (Boughton) coming through as a scrum half is impressing. These boys have bright futures and it can only be good for the team going forward."





“...I’M DOING EVERYTHING I CAN TO IMPROVE AND IMPRESS. IT’S ABOUT BEING PROFESSIONAL AND GIVING OFF A POSITIVE VIBE FOR THE YOUNGSTERS.”





## KINGSHOLM NEWS with BOB FENTON

*It's the nature of the beast now, it was always going to be that way once professionalism really took hold, and I guess we can look forward to transfer fees and mid-season swaps between clubs becoming the norm in years to come.*



**H**ere we are then, another day another cup game. I'm no clairvoyant, but I'm willing to wager a small fortune that the ground is slightly less packed than it was for the last one when the men from Munster came knocking.

That was some occasion, and a great game to go with it. When it's full like that Kingsholm is a magical place, there isn't a venue like it. I've been in packed grounds for games at Leicester, Northampton, Twickenham, Cardiff and indeed Thomond Park – together with a host of others –

but you don't get that same raw emotion from the crowd.

It's a real shame that the political shenanigans that are going on around the European club game could mean that afternoons like that become memories, rather than things to look forward to.

Yes the Heineken Cup is flawed, but it is a hugely enjoyable affair for supporters and players alike – and obviously lucrative for the clubs involved. Hopefully something will come about to keep a competition of its kind in the schedule for future seasons. If not the game will be all the poorer for being without it.

We did go well against Munster.

After the dark days after the Saracens debacle, all the experts predicted that we would be sunk without trace – in fact we might as well have not bothered coming out of the changing rooms such were the odds against us.

It's been said before though, that evening (or late afternoon) games under the lights at Kingsholm make it a very different place, and the team came out and gave Munster a heap of problems. In the end they were too good for us, but we went down fighting and with spirit. Sometimes that's all you can hope for!

We carried that spirit over into



the next weekend and we put in a great shift at Perpignan. To come away with the win – and five tries in the bag – was a great result and was enough to get us a spot in the Amlin Competition.

OK, so there are arguments about whether teams from one competition should drop into another, but we don't make the rules! Our reward is a trip to Wasps, get through that and it's a home semi-final. If we carry on the rate of improvement from those games into the Wasps game I don't see why we shouldn't come away with a result. Given the way the rest of the season has gone, a bright spot on the horizon is to be grasped – however we happen to get to it.

So, mention Wasps and here we are back to today. For us it is pretty obvious that LV= elimination awaits regardless of what happens today. Saracens top our group with maximum points – impressive considering they played twice on consecutive days last weekend – and we can't catch them.

This competition has really failed to ignite the passion in supporters



**Youngsters** The LV= Cup allows young players to gain valuable game experience



**Hidden Gem** Elliott Stooke

for some reason. Perhaps it's the over complicated format, or the fact that it is played when so many 'big name' players are away on international breaks? Whatever the reason, you do think some kind of an overhaul is needed.

As it is, it tends to be treated by the clubs as an opportunity to run out some of the up and coming players in a more competitive environment. That's a good thing as it means they get experience and we get to run the rule over them.

And talking of younger players, It was great to see Elliott Stooke getting a run out for England Saxons last weekend. His rise from the junior ranks to the edge of the international squad has been rapid to say the very least.

I wrote a few programmes back about sitting in front of his father when Elliott scored for us against Northampton - he must have been super proud last weekend. It does seem that we have got ourselves a bit of a gem here but we are clearly keeping him under wraps – check out the team profiles on the website and he's not there! Despite turning out in 12 games so far, we've hidden him away on the Academy pages.

It's best we keep them hidden

too, or like so many of our other youngsters another club will arrive waving their cheque books and promising access to the vast untold riches that are to be found in the east (midlands).

It's the nature of the beast now, it was always going to be that way once professionalism really took hold, and I guess we can look forward to transfer fees and mid-season swaps between clubs becoming the norm in years to come.

Sadly I reckon the days of 'one club' players like Andy Hazell and James Simpson-Daniel will become rarities – and the game will be poorer for it.

I don't blame the players for moving, life is short and you have to do what you can to secure your future – just the same as we all do in our working lives – I've changed jobs about a dozen times I guess, but there was no outcry from colleagues when I went. I guess perhaps that says something about me though!

Finally many people will be aware of the sad passing of our friend Jinnette – or Mrs Whispering John – recently. Our little cabal around the half-way line will miss her greatly; we'll always be keeping a space for her.





AS THE FIELD OF POTENTIAL WINNERS IN THE LV= CUP NARROWS TO FOUR THIS WEEKEND - AND WE ALREADY KNOW BATH, NORTHAMPTON AND SARACENS ARE IN THE SEMI FINALS - THE 2014 SIX NATIONS KICKS INTO GEAR.

**AS you read this Italy will be in Cardiff to face Wales, and later this evening England start their campaign in Paris.**

You don't have to spend long talking to former Gloucester international prop Phil Vickery to realise how much he loves the tournament.

He watched the demolition of England at the Millennium Stadium last March with Gareth Thomas, and experienced the atmosphere that can, as he put it, "flood" from a city centre into a ground that sits at the heart of it.

As a man who had proudly captained his country, Vickery took the defeat on the chin, but revelled in the noise and excitement that projected the appeal of the game to a huge audience.

This time round England have only two home matches, and after facing the French tonight travel

to Murrayfield before welcoming Ireland to Twickenham.

It's a sequence that you might think puts England at a disadvantage but Vickery doesn't agree.

"The balance of the games is only important when it suits people to say so" Phil told me. "Playing France first is no bad thing, because if you're going to catch them on the hop then that's the most likely time to do it. Win in Paris, and you'd be hopeful of going to Edinburgh and making it two from two."

"The sole ambition of Stuart Lancaster and Chris Robshaw ought to be to win all five games. If England have serious ambitions to be a top team then you have to be capable of beating anyone anywhere at any time. There's no doubt France in Paris is a huge test but it is one England are capable of passing."

If you were here last Saturday

you'll have been delighted to see Elliott Stooke's rapid rise take another giant step with 30 minutes off the bench for the Saxons in defeat to the Irish Wolfhounds.

With over 60 players in the EPS squads and the likes of Stooke still able to be called in, Vickery says Lancaster's role is akin to a car mechanic with a engine in bits in front of him. It's about assembling the right pieces in the right order.

"Stuart has widened the base in terms of depth, but there are still a lot of inexperienced guys in there" said Phil, who as a fan worries about the demands for instant success.

"You don't get selected unless you have the talent. Equally, you are never the finished article and you have to understand what the team is good at and what success will be built on."

"It's a bit like creating an identity and I don't think this team has one







yet. They probably can't dominate most of the top packs in the world with driving play so what else are they good at?

"We don't quite know. There are question marks about every team but Stuart has to give these guys a go, try and get them to progress but also back them up."

At the time of writing, the England team for tonight's game had not been announced. Freddie Burns was with the Saxons last night, and by now you'll know what role, if any, Kvesic, May, Morgan and Twelvetrees will have on the opening weekend.

Vickery's view is that they could be waiting in the wings for an opportunity, at least initially.

"I'd love to have seen Jonny May play in the autumn internationals"

Phil went on.

"I hope Stuart gives him a chance because he is a match winner and there is no substitute for pace but it's just whether his all round game is there yet. I fear the back line is not settled enough and that may count against him but that's a decision the coaches have to make."

"Matt Kvesic is a specialist open side but I don't think he's performed at a high enough level to get in. It hasn't quite happened for him at Kingsholm yet but the forwards have started rolling a bit better in recent weeks so he may get some confidence from that."

"The disappointment for me has been Freddie Burns. It looked like we were going to have a rivalry between Burns and Owen Farrell like there was between Stuart

Barnes and Rob Andrew, but things haven't gone well for Freddie and George Ford has jumped past him in the queue at the moment. I've been impressed with him."

"I'm also not sure being behind the Gloucester pack in the first half of the season has helped Billy Twelvetrees. In a more settled team he'd have had more of a base to work from. I just hope if Stuart selects him we'll see him relax into his international role so he can show what he is made of."

**\*Phil Vickery is an ambassador for Six Nations sponsors RBS**

ExtraMEDIA   

Follow Ian on Twitter: @ian\_randall1

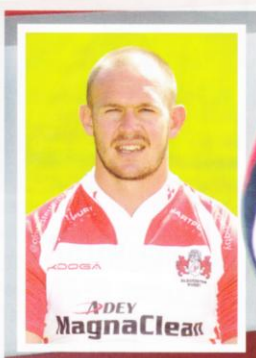


In each and every match programme, we'll be offering Gloucester Rugby supporters the opportunity to provide the questions which will form the basis of an interview for that week's chosen player.

Simply keep an eye on the official Gloucester Rugby Twitter feed, [@gloucesterrugby](https://twitter.com/gloucesterrugby), in the weeks leading up to a game to see which player we'll be featuring and how you can submit your questions.

Do you want to know what they have for breakfast? Find out who has the worst dress sense, who has the best banter and who is the biggest moaner?

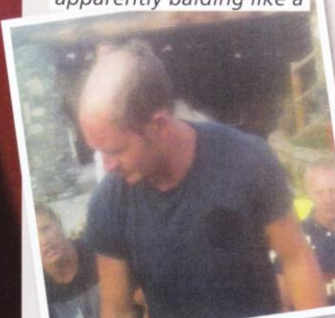
## #AskCookie



[@LeeBrooks10](https://twitter.com/LeeBrooks10)

**Why do you have the nicknames #monk and #monkey??**

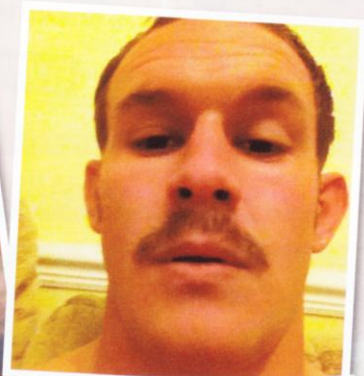
*Monk from Sinbad as I'm apparently balding like a*



*monk! And monkey from my Pirates days, as the boys reckon I look like a monkey. Don't agree with either.*

[@EmmaThurston23](https://twitter.com/EmmaThurston23)

**How's the new kicking technique doing? Any plans to revert back to the old & very much loved style?** *It's going well! No plans to change back at the moment!*



[@tom\\_parkes\\_88](https://twitter.com/tom_parkes_88)

**Why do you wear a scrum hat?**

*I used to wear it when I was young as my ears bruised! And I've just stuck with it! It does give me a bit more confidence in contact.*

[@JAHoddy](https://twitter.com/JAHoddy)

**You play cricket as well as rugby, if you had to pick one of the sports which would it be?**

*I had that choice and I chose rugby! I love cricket but it does take a long time to finish and it might be a draw #boring*





## NEXT TIME...

We have our Irish winger, **Shane Monahan**, poised and ready for your tweets to feature in the matchday programme against Harlequins on 22nd February

**@DerekFordBailey**

**What was your first thought when you ran out at Kingsholm for the first time?**

*Amazing, the atmosphere and the noise from the shed was unreal!*



**@Jola\_Squarehead**

**Do you think you will make it into an @EnglandRugby shirt?**

*It's the dream to play for my country! But I'm very happy to have reached to where I am at the moment.*

**@TallySparkle**

**Your kicking technique is unusual but effective how long did it take to perfect?**

*It gradually got worse (lower and wider) over the years. I'm always working on it and I don't think I will ever perfect it*

**@Ben\_Chalky**

**Who's the longest in the Kingsholm shower?**

*There are a few who take their "time" in the shower, but Yann Thomas seems to take the longest!!!!*



**@cowan\_jimmy**

**Why are you such a poor tipster.....#answerpls**

*Shut up Jimmy*





## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Martyn Thomas
14	W	Charlie Sharples
13	C	Jonny May
12	C	Billy Twelvetrees
11	W	Shane Monahan
10	FH	Freddie Burns
9	SH	Dan Robson
1	P	Yann Thomas
2	H	Darren Dawidiuk
3	P	Sila Puafisi
4	L	Elliot Stooke
5	L	James Hudson
6	F	Matt Cox
7	F	Matt Kvesic
8	N8	Gareth Evans
16	R	Huia Edmonds
17	R	Dan Murphy
18	R	Shaun Knight
19	R	Tom Hicks
20	R	Sione Kalamafoni
21	R	Tavis Knoyle
22	R	Rob Cook
23	R	Ben Morgan

## MUNSTER RUGBY

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Felix Jones
14	W	Keith Earls
13	C	Casey Laulala
12	C	James Downey
11	W	Johnie Murphy
10	FH	Ian Keatley
9	SH	Conor Murray
1	P	Dave Kilcoyne
2	H	Damien Varley
3	P	BJ Botha
4	L	Dave Foley
5	L	Paul O'Connell
6	F	Peter O'Mahony
7	F	Tommy O'Donnell
8	N8	James Coughlan
16	R	Duncan Casey
17	R	James Cronin
18	R	Stephen Archer
19	R	Donncha O'Callaghan
20	R	CJ Stander
21	R	Duncan Williams
22	R	JJ Hanrahan
23	R	Simon Zebo







**Match Details:** 11th January 2014, 18:00

**Attendance:** 16,121

**Referee:** Leighton Hodges

## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

7

**TRY:** Sharples (39) **CON:** Burns (40)

## MUNSTER RUGBY

20

**TRIES:** Earls (32), O'Mahony (60) **CONS:** Keatley (33, 61) **PENS:** Keatley (21, 69)

**IT TRULY WAS THE HOTTEST TICKET IN TOWN, AND KINGSHOLM WAS ROCKING AS THE RED ARMY FROM LIMERICK DESCENDED EN MASSE TO GLOUCESTERSHIRE - THE ATMOSPHERE WAS RED HOT!**

**F**or Gloucester fans the real recipe for a memorable evening of rugby is to combine a sell out crowd with a sprinkling of European giants, a pinch of fired up Gloucester players and topped off with the Kingsholm floodlights.

For hours beforehand, Kingsholm Road was swarming with colour and flags, as both sets of supporters arrived to take their spots and ramp up the noise.

For the Cherry and Whites, the wounds of the previous week's defeat to Saracens were slowly healing and the pre-match routine was altered. Club legend Mike Teague handed out the shirts and the team bus arrived to a huge welcome.

Munster welcomed back Lions Conor Murray and Simon Zebo into their star studded squad, and the away fans had fulfilled their promise to create a memorable atmosphere to spur their side on to secure Pool Six supremacy.

The action from the first whistle was fierce, both sides were putting everything and more into the cause and, for those in Cherry and White watching on, to a man, each home player was playing with the heart and passion to match their opponents.

It was the visitors that struck first, Billy Twelvetrees had minutes before missed a kick at goal, but it was the boot of Ian Keatley that opened the scoring. Shortly afterwards Keatley threaded a neat

grubber through the onrushing Cherry and White defence that bounced perfectly for Keith Earls to race onto and touch down.

At 10-0 down Gloucester responded superbly. Munster were becoming increasingly stretched and despite Twelvetrees missing a second kick, Gloucester were no way out of

was in sight.

The intensity Gloucester displayed was ferocious, the relentless waves of attacks were stirring the crowd up and it seemed that a home score was bond to follow.

Hindsight will show that Gloucester had to take their chances in that period of dominance, as the

**Champagne Moment:** *Charlie Sharples, overlooked by England in the lead up to the game, showed exactly what he could do by running in a super try. Changing direction with no let up in speed saw the winger soar past the tackles after a well-timed pass from Matt Kvesic.*

the game.

Fierce tackling and work at the breakdown was earning quick ball, and Dan Robson scuttled horizontally to feed Matt Kvesic on the overlap in front of the Shed, who roared on as the flanker timed his pass to Charlie Sharples to perfection. But the winger still had plenty to do.

Showing a dazzling turn of pace and balance, Sharples glided inside Johnie Murphy and through Ian Keatley's saloon door tackle to race away. Freddie Burns knocked over the conversion and the hosts went in 10-7 behind at the turnaround.

The next score, as always was vital and Gloucester went hell for leather to ensure it was they who got it. Munster's tackling was getting desperate but, crucially, it remained strong with both Shane Monahan and Jonny May seeing the door slammed shut when the line

European savvy of the visitors came to the fore and Munster started to wrest control back.

Captain Peter O'Mahony was awarded a dubious try via the TMO after a spell of Munster pressure, and Keatley added another penalty.

The Cherry and Whites had by no means thrown in the towel, and spent the remainder of the game hurling themselves at the Munster defence. But, to no avail. A brave effort came up short.

Nigel Davies and his men could take huge pride from their performance. The Director of Rugby challenged his team to play for the shirt, and it's exactly what they did.

Perhaps looking back at the period in the second half where a try had to come cost the Cherry and Whites, but the level of intensity and heart shown will give Davies a benchmark of expectation in the coming weeks.



## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Rob Cook
14	W	Charlie Sharples
13	C	Jonny May
12	C	Billy Twelvetrees
11	W	Shane Monahan
10	FH	Freddie Burns
9	SH	Dan Robson
1	P	Yann Thomas
2	H	Huia Edmonds
3	P	Sila Puafisi
4	L	Elliot Stooke
5	L	James Hudson
6	F	Matt Cox
7	F	Matt Kvesic
8	N8	Gareth Evans
16	R	Dan George
17	R	Dan Murphy
18	R	Shaun Knight
19	R	Will James
20	R	Sione Kalamafoni
21	R	Jimmy Cowan
22	R	Martyn Thomas
23	R	Ben Morgan

## USA PERPIGNAN

#	POS	NAME
15	FB	Joffrey Michel
14	W	Tommaso Benvenuti
13	C	David Marty
12	C	Sione Piukala
11	W	Watisoni Votu
10	FH	Sofiane Guitoune
9	SH	Tom Ecochard
1	P	Sebastien Taofifenua
2	H	Romain Terrain
3	P	Paulica Ion
4	L	Daniel Leo
5	L	Romain Taofifenua
6	F	Justin Purl
7	F	Luke Narraway
8	N8	Karl Chateau
16	R	Maxime Delonca
17	R	Giorgi Jgenti
18	R	Sona Taumalolo
19	R	Jean-Pierre Perez
20	R	Nicolas Durand
21	R	Lifeimi Mafi
22	R	Jens Torfs
23	R	Alasdair Strokosch







**Match Details:** 19th January 2014, 13:45

**Attendance:** 7,235

**Referee:** George Clancy

## USA PERPIGNAN

**TRIES:** Piukala (19), Chateau (62) **CON:** Ecochard (20) **PENS:** Ecochard (3, 41)

## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

**TRIES:** May (13), Monahan (29, 52), Sharples (33), Morgan (79) **CONS:** Burns (30, 34, 53, 79) **DG:** Burns (73)

18

36

**AS GLOUCESTER RUGBY TRAVELLED TO USA PERPIGNAN IN ROUND SIX OF THE HEINEKEN CUP, THE JOB DESCRIPTION WAS PLAIN AND SIMPLE, BUT A RATHER TOUGH ONE.**

**D**ebeats to Edinburgh and Munster at Kingsholm had left the chances of Heineken Cup progression practically nil, but with Exeter Chiefs winning at Cardiff Blues, the complicated mathematics meant the Cherry and Whites could extend their European adventure via the Amlin Challenge Cup and a Quarter Final at London Wasps.

All Nigel Davies' men had to do was win with a try bonus point, something they hadn't done competitively since Round Six of last year's Amlin Challenge Cup against Mont-de-Marsan.

The parallel was there, French opposition, Amlin Challenge Cup Quarter Final at stake and a bonus point win needed.

Perpignan, with ex-Gloucester captain Luke Narryway in the engine room opened the scoring at the Stade Aime Giral through scrum half Tom Ecochard and despite having nothing to play for, the Catalans were fired up to end the Pool stages on a high.

But Perpignan didn't heed the lesson afforded to several sides this season, dropping the ball in midfield, Jonny May swooped and raced away sending several chasers on a merry dance, causing them to collide as the flyer raced away to score Gloucester's first try.

The Catalans came back, perhaps embarrassed by May's pace around international defenders but Sione Piukala exacted some revenge as he

picked a neat line off David Marty to slice past May and put the hosts back in the lead.

Gloucester though showed ambition and hit back again through Shane Monahan after strong work from Matt Cox and a good miss pass from Burns.

Ecochard hit the post with a penalty and Gloucester then struck in equally devastating fashion, Huia Edmonds secured the turnover and set Matt Cox away. The back rower shoved off the feeble Narryway tackle and Gloucester reset to attack, deep in their 22.

Billy Twelvetrees straightened the attack and fed Gareth Evans and the number eight had only one

Robson was busy at the base and his industry created the fourth try for Monahan who dotted down in the corner.

Burns had his kicking radar on and along with some impressive touchline conversions he was putting the ball in the right areas. Every kick option came with a purpose and the fly half was marshaling things with ease and it was great to behold.

Perpignan did hit back through Karl Chateau but as a comeback looked on, they were extinguished as Gloucester seized the total control and through replacement Cowan and Burns refused to let the hosts play and their frustrations

**Champagne Moment:** Jonny May - is there anything this man can't do? Turning the home defence inside out to race in from well in his own half was a stunning score, made even better by the comedy collision between the two chasing defenders.

thing on his mind. After excelling earlier in the season for the Sevens squad, Evans showed a staggering turn of pace and dummy to slice through Piukala and Tomasso Benvenuti and surge 60m to give Charlie Sharples a simple finish.

It was a stunning try and it was three tries for the Cherry and Whites before half time. Much to the delight of the travelling masses in the South of France.

Ecochard opened the scoring in the second half and Gloucester had to work hard in defence but the control was always there. Dan

were growing. Burns then dropped a goal from in front to ease the nerves and put the hosts to bed.

Replacement prop Giorgi Jgenti was a fan of the off-the-ball scraps and after he had taken aim at Sila Puafisi, the Georgian took exception to Will James right in front of referee George Clancy and was sent, very red-faced to the naughty step.

From the resulting scrum, the Cherry and Whites shoved the hosts enough for Ben Morgan to flop on the ball and record try number five and a fantastic afternoon for the Cherry and Whites.



Teams correct at time of print: 30th January 2014



# TODAY'S TEAMS



## GLOUCESTER RUGBY

<b>ROB COOK</b>	FULLBACK
<b>MARTYN THOMAS</b>	RIGHT WING
<b>HENRY TRINDER</b>	CENTRE
<b>MIKE TINDALL</b>	CENTRE
<b>SHANE MONAHAN</b>	LEFT WING
<b>RYAN MILLS</b>	FLY HALF
<b>TAVIS KNOYLE</b>	SCRUM HALF
<b>NICK WOOD</b>	PROP
<b>KOREE BRITTON</b>	HOOKER
<b>RUPERT HARDEN</b>	PROP
<b>WILL JAMES (C)</b>	LOCK
<b>JAMES HUDSON</b>	LOCK
<b>SIONE KALAMAFONI</b>	FLANKER
<b>MATT COX</b>	FLANKER
<b>GARETH EVANS</b>	NO.8

<b>DAN GEORGE</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>DAN MURPHY</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>SHAUN KNIGHT</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>TOM HICKS</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>SAM UNDERHILL</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>JIMMY COWAN</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>BILL MEAKES</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>STEPH REYNOLDS</b>	REPLACEMENT

## LONDON WASPS

<b>TOMMY BELL</b>	FULLBACK
<b>TOM HOWE</b>	RIGHT WING
<b>WILL HELU</b>	CENTRE
<b>ANDREW SUNIULA</b>	CENTRE
<b>JOSH BASSETT</b>	LEFT WING
<b>JOE CARLISLE</b>	FLY HALF
<b>CHARLIE DAVIES (C)</b>	SCRUM HALF
<b>TAIONE VEA</b>	PROP
<b>TOM LINDSAY</b>	HOOKER
<b>WILL TAYLOR</b>	PROP
<b>WILL ROWLANDS</b>	LOCK
<b>JAMES CANNON</b>	LOCK
<b>ED JACKSON</b>	FLANKER
<b>MATT EVERARD</b>	FLANKER
<b>RORY PITMAN</b>	NO.8

<b>KEVIN DAVIES</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>RICKY REEVES</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>PHIL SWAINSTON</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>TOM PALMER</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>GUY THOMPSON</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>MATT HEEKS</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>ANDREA MASI</b>	REPLACEMENT
<b>CHARLIE HAYTER</b>	REPLACEMENT

**IN CHARGE  
TODAY:**

Referee: **Greg Macdonald**  
Assistant Referees: **Phil Watters and Roger Baileff**