

V GLOUCESTER SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2008 KICK-OFF 2.45PM

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GLOUCESTER
Rivalries renewed

TWENTY
QUESTIONS

Hape under
the spotlight



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BATH RUGBY

Head Coach Steve Meehan

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

Director of Rugby Dean Ryan



T C P D



- Nick **ABENDANON**
- Joe **MADDOCK**
- Tom **CHEESEMAN**
- Eliota **FUIMAONO-SAPOLU**
- Matt **BANAHAH**
- Butch **JAMES**
- Michael **CLAASSENS**



- David **FLATMAN**
- Lee **MEARS**
- Matt **STEVENS**
- Justin **HARRISON**
- Peter **SHORT**
- Stuart **HOOPER**
- Michael **LIPMAN (C)**
- Jonny **FAAMATUAINU**



- Pieter **DIXON**
- Duncan **BELL**
- David **BARNES**
- James **SCAYSBROOK**
- Scott **BEMAND**
- Shaun **BERNE**
- Jack **CUTHBERT**

V

- 15 FULLBACK 15
- 14 RIGHT WING 14
- 13 CENTRE 13
- 12 CENTRE 12
- 11 LEFT WING 11
- 10 FLY HALF 10
- 9 SCRUM HALF 9

- 1 PROP 1
- 2 HOOKER 2
- 3 PROP 3
- 4 LOCK 4
- 5 LOCK 5
- 6 FLANKER 6
- 7 FLANKER 7
- 8 NO. 8 8

- 16 REPLACEMENT 16
- 17 REPLACEMENT 17
- 18 REPLACEMENT 18
- 19 REPLACEMENT 19
- 20 REPLACEMENT 20
- 21 REPLACEMENT 21
- 22 REPLACEMENT 22

- Olly **MORGAN**
- Lesley **VANIKOLO**
- Matthew **WATKINS**
- Mike **TINDALL**
- James **SIMPSON-DANIEL**
- Ryan **LAMB**
- Gareth **COOPER**

- Nick **WOOD**
- Andy **TITTERELL**
- Carlos **NIETO**
- Will **JAMES**
- Alex **BROWN**
- Peter **BUXTON**
- Andrew **HAZELL**
- Luke **NARRAWAY**

- Olivier **AZAM**
- Dave **YOUNG**
- Marco **BORTOLAMI**
- Alasdair **STROKOSCH**
- Rory **LAWSON**
- Olly **BARKLEY**
- Willie **WALKER**

T C P D

FINAL SCORE

TODAY'S OFFICIALS: Referee | Wayne Barnes Touch Judges | Stuart Terhegge & Kevin Stewart

FINAL SCORE

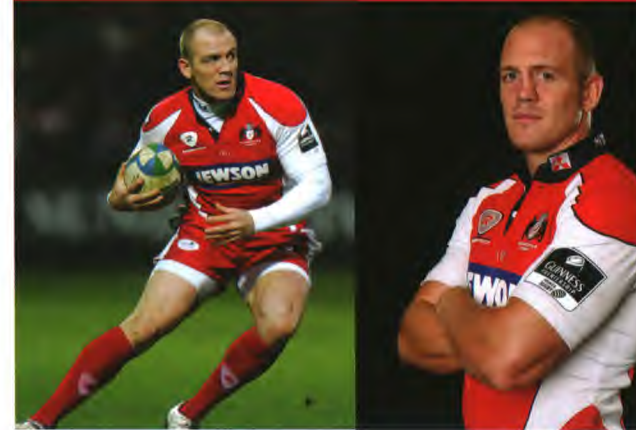
MIKE TINDALL

MIKE TINDALL will return to his former employers this afternoon as captain of Gloucester.

Once a large and decisive cog in the midfield workings of Bath, Tindall will skipper their closest and biggest rivals for the second time in a Guinness Premiership match.

Put together like a pillar of St Paul's, Tindall is the central element to Gloucester's three-quarter line. A damaging ball carrier and destructive defender, Tindall has a wealth of experience and was part of England's World Cup winning squad in 2003. Able to operate at either 12 or 13, he also possesses a crucial kicking game.

In total, he has made 62 appearances for Gloucester and has won 56 England caps. Alongside Olly Barkley, Gareth Delve and Iain Balshaw, Tindall is one of four ex-Bath players in Gloucester's squad.



LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT FINISH

It was not so much about what happened at Gloucester over the summer as what didn't happen. Despite finishing top of the Guinness Premiership pile again at the end of the regular 2007-8 season, Gloucester again failed to transfer their obvious potential into a dividend during the play-offs – it was a familiar, unfulfilled ending to what threatened to be a triumphant season.

Leicester's magnificent manipulation and street-wise cussedness consigned Gloucester's season to the dustbin of history at the semi-final stage and that tantalising wait for a domestic trophy went on.

By that time, head coach Dean

Ryan had done the majority of his recruiting – a policy that included nabbing one of Bath's diamonds in Olly Barkley – Llanelli centre Matthew Watkins and former Gloucester second row Adam Eustace – also from Stradey Park.

When he completed negotiations to bring Canterbury prop Greg Somerville to Kingsholm by Christmas, the general thought was that Gloucester's squad was stronger than last season's and well capable of challenging again this season.

Barkley has been brought in to provide a tactical nous and big-game understanding that so often seemed to evaporate and as a left-

footed kicking option, will via with Ryan Lamb and Anthony Allen for the 10 and 12 positions respectively.

He is yet to pull on Gloucester colours in anger after damaging his left wrist on England duty in the summer but he is expected to be a highly influential addition to the squad once he is fully fit.

Somerville is the most capped prop in All Black history and alongside Dave Young – the young and aggressive tight forward from Leicester – Gloucester kept their summer additions to a minimum.

With the likes of the emerging and increasingly gifted Luke Narraway, the robust Anthony Allen and the safe as houses Olly Morgan a year

"Another combustible afternoon of mayhem is almost guaranteed and for those who make the trip from the red half of this contest, they will be thinking, as they always do 'could this really be the year.'"

older and a year wiser, Gloucester's squad is up there with anything in the Premiership.

Their pre-season preparations centred on a training camp in Canada and a victory over their A side, before a strong Bayonne team won comfortably in France after Cardiff pulled out of a fixture scheduled at Kingsholm.

They completed their preparations with a 30-8 victory over Glasgow under the new ELV's but their Premiership campaign got off to the worst possible start last weekend with a home defeat to those Tigers – their third successive victory at Kingsholm in eight months.

Tries from Geordan Murphy and Toby Flood sealed a 20-8 victory – Gloucester's only try coming from the outstanding Morgan in the first-half.

But today is different – different for the reasons that mark this particular brand of West Country tribalism as unique to the people involved. Gloucester's league record at the Rec is as wretched as it could possibly be and Bath's thumping success over Bristol last weekend has established

Steve Meehan's side as early pace-setters.

Gloucester could be without Anthony Allen, who picked up ankle injury last weekend, but there is enough history between these two giants to suggest another mini classic this afternoon.

When Gloucester beat Bath 1 at Kingsholm on the final day last season it was regarded by many as the match of the season. Another combustible afternoon of mayhem is almost guaranteed and for those who make the trip from the red half of this contest they will be thinking, as they always do 'could this really be the year.'