



**SARACENS**

Club Partnership Programme 2004/5

## **CLUBS UPDATE**

17<sup>th</sup> August 2004

### **CLUB NEWS**

Rod Kafer and his coaching team have been putting the players through their paces in recent weeks as they prepare for the campaign ahead. The team continue their preparations for the 2004/05 with their first competitive XV a side match on Wednesday night.

#### **NEXT MATCH:**

Saracens get down to business on Wednesday night with the first of three pre-season games. The team are currently in South Africa for a week long training camp and they will be facing South African Provincial side Golden Lions.

In his first team selection of this pre-season, Head Coach Rod Kafer has opted for a powerful scrum and a new-look back line.

Up front, led by captain Hugh Vyvyan at No. 8, the front row will be powered by former Springbok Cobus Visagie and Kevin Yates with Matt Cairns at hooker. Iain Fullarton starts alongside Simon Raiwalui in the second row while Taine Randell packs down at blindside with youngster David Seymour.

In the back line, Kyran Bracken starts at No. 9 and has a chance to throw down an early marker for fellow scrum halves Morgan Williams and Mosese Rauluni, while Mark Bartholomeusz starts at fly half. Thomas Castaignede partners Kevin Sorrell in the midfield while new boy Dan Scarbrough starts on the wing along with Paul Bailey and Robbie Kydd at full back.

"We have selected a strong team for our first warm up game," explained Kafer. "We are expecting a tough test against the Lions on Wednesday. We are hoping to make full use of our bench and try out our combinations during the game. All positions are currently up for grabs so it's a chance for players to prove themselves as well as for us (the coaches) to see how our preparations are coming on.

"The squad have settled in nicely and hospitality we have been shown has been superb. Both training sessions have gone well here today and the weather is a very comfortable 22 degrees with clear blue sky. We also meet up with UniBond out here for lunch today as they are helping to sponsor part of the tour through their South African Brand Pattex and it was good to meet their representatives."

## **Saracens Team**

15. Robbie Kydd
14. Dan Scarbrough\*
13. Thomas Castaignede\*
12. Kevin Sorrell
11. Paul Bailey
10. Mark Bartholomeusz\*
9. Kyran Bracken
1. Kevin Yates\*
2. Matt Cairns
3. Cobus Visagie\*
4. Simon Raiwalui\*
5. Iain Fullarton\*
6. Taine Randell\*
7. David Seymour
8. Hugh Vyvyan (capt)

16. Andrew Kyriacou
17. Ben Broster
18. Aston Croall
19. Kris Chesney
20. Ben Russell
21. Ben J Russell
22. Morgan Williams\*
23. Nicky Little\*

Golden Lions v Saracens - Wednesday 18th August, Kick off 7.30pm (local time). Ellis Park Stadium, Johannesburg, South Africa

## **CLUB PARTNERSHIP NEWS**

The summer break has meant that there has not been a lot of activity over the last few weeks, but watch out for more coaches updates and information about forthcoming coach development events which Saracens will be holding exclusively for Partner Club Members.

### **MASTERCLASS 04**

Supported by  and **UniBond**

The next Masterclass is being held next week at OAs RFC. Unfortunately it has been completely sold out for the last couple of months, but all the players are looking forward to passing on more tips to the stars of tomorrow, once they return from South Africa.

## **NEWS FROM THE TRAINING GROUND**

### **NEXT HOME GAME:**

The next 'home' game will be against London Wasps as part of the London Double Header at Twickenham on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2004. The Double Header will see all four Premiership teams from the capital battling it out in two huge games.

Saracens will meet London Wasps (Kick off 4.15pm) and Harlequins face London Irish (Kick off 2.00pm) as the 2004/05 Zurich Premiership season starts with a bang!

The event promises to be a great day out and will be the first chance for supporters to see the new Saracens players in action in a league match. Season Ticket Holders get the game free as part of their package but with adult prices at just £20 - it's great value to watch two games at the home of England Rugby in what promises to be one of the top events on the London sporting calendar. Make sure you buy your tickets through your club to help them raise funds for new equipment in the 2004-5 season.

## **PLAYER NEWS**

**Head Coach Rod Kafer has announced that Hugh Vyvyan will captain Saracens for the 2004/05 season.**

The 27-year-old joined the Men In Black this summer and has a wealth of experience as captain after leading his former club side Newcastle Falcons and the England A side on their two previous Churchill Cup tours.

Kafer said: "Simon Raiwalui did a fantastic job as captain last season in difficult circumstances. He featured in every game for us last season and is an outstanding player to have in the squad, but he is quite happy just to focus on his own game.

"There were a number of candidates for the role within the squad - all with experience of either leading their club or country. Taine Randell, Richard Hill, Raphael Ibanez, Kyran Bracken, Moses Rauluni, Simon Raiwalui and Alex Sanderson all fit into that category and they still have a major role to play in supporting the team.

"We wanted our selection of captain to mirror the criteria of our recent recruitment policy. We were looking for an English-based player and someone who could lead the club in the long term - Hugh fits into that category."

Kafer added: "Being captain does not guarantee automatic selection. There is a lot of competition in the squad this season and nobody has an automatic right for a place in the team. Performances will decide team selection."

Saracens Rugby Manager Steve Diamond, who has worked with Vyvyan as part of the England A side, added: "Hugh is a very experienced club and international captain. I've been very impressed with his leadership of the England A side and he is someone who can captain the side in the long term."

Vyvyan said: "It's a fantastic opportunity for me and I can't wait to pull on the new jersey and play for the first time. I must admit it did take me by surprise because there are some fantastic players in the side who have led both their clubs and country with great distinction. I'm looking to improve as a player and captain at Saracens and there is a great mixture of experience and youth at the club.

"There is a fantastic atmosphere around the training ground and we are all preparing hard for the new season. It's been a busy few months for me after moving down from Newcastle and I'm really looking forward to the future with Saracens."

Born in Guildford, Vyvyan's professional rugby career began with Newcastle Falcons – for whom he made more than 100 appearances and last season captained the side to Powergen Cup glory. His impressive performances for the Falcons also earned him international success with the England A side. Last year, he captained the team to victory in the Churchill Cup and again led them in the summer of 2004. He also led the England side which faced the Barbarians at Twickenham in May 2004 in the traditional end of season fixture.

### **Five picked by Clive**

Five Saracens players have been named by England Head Coach Clive Woodward as part of his Elite Player Squad (EPS) for the 2004/05 season.

Richard Hill, Alex Sanderson, Dan Scarbrough and Hugh Vyvyan have been named in the Senior Squad with Richard Haughton selected in the Sevens squad.

In all, the RFU have announced 59 players from the Zurich Premiership who are to form the EPS for this season. Under the agreement announced last month between the RFU and the Zurich Premiership clubs, the players will come under the direction of the England Head Coach Clive Woodward, National Academy Manager Brian Ashton and Sevens Coach Mike Friday. The process will be centrally managed by the RFU's Performance Director Chris Spice on behalf of England Rugby Ltd.

The Elite Player Squad is made up of 40 senior squad players, 15 Senior National Academy and 4 sevens players - 24 of the 40 senior squad players selected are world champions who took part in last year's Rugby World Cup.

Performance Director Chris Spice said: "Together with the Zurich Premiership clubs we now have a three year strategy in place that will manage the elite programme through to the 2007 World Cup, something that couldn't have been achieved without the continued support of our top clubs."

Every EPS player receives an individual playing, training and rest programme, planned jointly by the RFU and his club. This involves support in fitness, nutrition, psychology and joint injury management. There's also an upper limit of 32 on the amount of "full matches" a player can play for their club and country and an 11 week off-season period of preparation.

As part of the EPS agreement players can be called up for a total of 16 training days in addition to the recognised international test weeks for each of the next three years building up to the Rugby World Cup. As Spice explains, any of the 59 players could be called up for England training, including the sevens players.

"Clive can choose to invite any of the 59 players to take part in these EPS training days. The sevens players can play in a maximum of four 7s tournaments, at the discretion of the England sevens coach, and all will be available for wider EPS selection. If any Senior National Academy players are not required by Clive to train, they will automatically be available to take part in the Intermediate National Academy training in Bath under Brian Ashton on the same training days."