

England Names Lineup for USA

Written by RUGBYMag Staff
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England Saxons today named the side for their opening Churchill Cup game against the USA at Northampton on Saturday (Noon Eastern).

There are only two survivors from the team that beat Canada 38-18 to claim the trophy in New Jersey last summer with scrum half Micky Young (Newcastle Falcons) in the starting line-up and full back Alex Goode (Saracens) on the bench.

But Saxons head coach Stuart Lancaster has an exciting combination of youth and experience to call on. Saracens prop Matt Stevens (32 caps) is the most experienced of six senior internationals while Henry Trinder (Gloucester Rugby) and Tom Johnson (Exeter Chiefs) made try-scoring first appearances for England in the non-cap game won 38-32 by the Barbarians last weekend.

Lock Mouritz Botha makes his first Saxons appearance a week after winning the Aviva Premiership title with Saracens while Amlin Challenge Cup winner Rory Clegg (Harlequins) steps up to start at fly half for the first time.

England Saxons captain Luke Narryway sits out the Churchill Cup's opening game to receive treatment on a calf injury and Leicester Tigers No.8 Jordan Crane will lead the side in his place.

Lancaster said: "We want to make sure win this trophy again and to do so we've got to win some tough games starting off with the USA and Tonga, both of whom are gearing up for the World Cup later this year.

"But we've got a good mix of players including seven of those who did well against an experienced Barbarians side at Twickenham and there are more players who've joined us after taking part in big club games at the end of the domestic season.

"There's lots at stake for all of them, whether they're pushing for places in this World Cup this year or the next one in 2015, but the most important thing is to get off to a good start against what we're expecting to be a very smart USA side on Saturday."

After taking on the USA, England Saxons play Tonga at Gloucester on June 12 followed by Italy A, Russia or Canada on the June 18 finals day at Worcester.

England Saxons

- 15 Mike Brown (Harlequins)
- 14 Topsy Ojo (London Irish)
- 13 Henry Trinder (Gloucester Rugby)
- 12 Billy Twelvetrees (Leicester Tigers)
- 11 Miles Benjamin (Worcester Warriors)
- 10 Rory Clegg (Harlequins)

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- 9 Micky Young (Newcastle Falcons)
- 1 Matt Mullan (Worcester Warriors)
- 2 Joe Gray (Harlequins)
- 3 Matt Stevens (Saracens)
- 4 Mouritz Botha (Saracens)
- 5 Dave Attwood (Gloucester Rugby)
- 6 James Gaskell (Sale Sharks)
- 7 Tom Johnson (Exeter Chiefs)
- 8 Jordan Crane (Leicester Tigers, captain)

- 16 David Paice (London Irish)
- 17 Kieran Brookes (Newcastle Falcons)
- 18 Graham Kitchener (Worcester Warriors)
- 19 Jamie Gibson (London Irish)
- 20 Paul Hodgson (London Irish)
- 21 Alex Goode (Saracens)
- 22 Charlie Sharples (Gloucester Rugby)