

GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECHO

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SAINT-ANDRE HAPPY AS GLOUCESTER ARE UNDONE

BY SALE BACK LINE

INEXPERIENCE WAS SO COSTLY – MELVILLE

Nigel Melville believes a lack of experience in the backs cost his side at Sale on Friday.

Gloucester slumped to a 35-17 defeat in the Zurich Premiership.

Sale, who included current England internationals Jason Robinson, Mark Cueto, and Charlie Hodgson in their back line, ran in four tries.

They had too much know-how for a Gloucester back-line that was without Terry Fanolua, Marcel Garvey, and Henry Paul, while Duncan McRae was on the bench.

Brad Davies, Mark Foster and Seti Kiole all started.

"We had a young back-line against an international back-line," said Melville.

"They weren't strong enough but you stick with them and work hard."

Gloucester trailed 16-0 at half-time. A penalty try gave them brief hope, but they were overrun before replacement Peter Buxton scored a last-gasp try.

"We got more in the game but we did not have the backs," said Melville.

"We were poor in the backs so the forwards have to win the ball and they cannot do everything, they have to have some help from the backs.

"They're very young, very inexperienced and they learned a lot."

Sale coach Philippe Saint-Andre, who was replaced by Melville at Gloucester in 2002, praised his side's character and commitment.

They were playing on the back of four league defeats and Saint-Andre was impressed with his players' response.

He said, "We wanted to play a wide, expansive game as we knew they had key players out in their back three.

"We still managed four tries. It was a very good first half performance but we did not have enough ball in the second half."

- Supporters of Gloucester are staging An Evening With The Welsh Boys tomorrow.

It will be their last function in the old members' club at Kingsholm before it is pulled down and doors open at 6.45.

The Welsh Boys concerned are Mefin Davies, James Merriman and Gary Powell, and questions start at 7.15.

The supporters will also be able to vote for their player-of-the-season and young player-of-the-season.