

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1996

GLOUCESTER SCORE A TON

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James Simpson-Daniel led the way with four touchdowns, including a second half hat-trick, as Gloucester scored 16 tries in a one-way performance that blitzed the hard working but vastly out-classed Romanians.

Quite what Dean Ryan will take from such a victory is anybody's guess but he managed to work on several important combinations ahead of the autumn international period.

Outside the tries, there were impressive performances from Mefin Davies and Nick Wood but the points fairly whizzed past Bucuresti when Gloucester attacked their defensive line instead of running around it.

Pretty predictably, it was all one-way traffic before the break. Gloucester may have scored five tries and wrapped up the bonus point but there were still areas that would have had Ryan far from pleased.

Gloucester simply didn't attack the defensive line often enough – despite an avalanche of possession and territory. Too often they attempted to run around Bucuresti without engaging defenders and they should have been further ahead than 35-3.

But there was still plenty to keep a good sized crowd warm. Gloucester were ahead as early as the fourth minute when they butchered a Bucuresti scrum against the head and Luke Narrayay linked with Marcel Garvey down the short side.

Mike Tindall offered support and his inside flick was taken on by Peter Buxton and Narraway finished the move with the try.

Four minutes later, they were in again. Olly Morgan had a big carrying first half and after Phil Vickery had hit possession up the middle, Haydn Thomas and Narraway showed great hands and Rob Thirlby finished off the move.

Gloucester had to wait until the end of the first quarter to score again but Thirlby was on hand to complete the move after Mercier had kept hold of the ball under considerable attention. Andy Hazell, Thomas and Vickery all supported and Thirlby finished off again.

Thomas was to get the bonus point score when he pounced on a loose ball following a series of scrums and Garvey got the fourth try right on the whistle when Davids controlled a line-out, Thomas linked with Mercier, who fed Garvey steaming in off his wing to score beneath the posts.

Mercier was successful with all his shots at goal but Bucuresti's only points came from a penalty by scrum-half Lulian Nere after 20 minutes.

But the second half proved to be an avalanche. Peter Richards, on at scrum-half, added a hard-running edge and his lovely break created the next score for Nick Wood, who dived home from short range.

Richards was heavily involved in the next try when another powerful surge got Gloucester on the front foot, Davies linked with Mercier, Anthony Allen was held up on the line but Simpson-Daniel finished off.

The half-century was reached after 50 minutes when James Forrester chased his own kick and charged down an attempted clearance for Allen to pick up and score.

But it was the final half hour that really told on Bucuresti. They were running on empty and it allowed Gloucester to score 50 more points.

Allen and Forrester combined to set up the next try for Hazell, Eustace got the next following more hard running, Simpson-Daniel weaved home for the next before completing a brilliant attack after 71 minutes for his hat-trick.

Thirlby made the next score for Forrester and there was still time for Simpson-Daniel and Garvey to score again.

The only question remaining was whether Gloucester could reach 100 and they did thanks to a penalty try but it hardly seemed to matter.

HT: 35 - 3

Attendance: 7,500

Referee: Tim Hayes

JC