

# **GLOUCESTER RUGBY**

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2006**

**FIVE-STAR WASPS TAKE THE POINTS**

**LONDON WASPS 33 GLOUCESTER RUGBY 12**

GLOUCESTER felt the full force of Wasps' clinical armoury of fire-power, physicality and organisational subtleties to slide to a five-point defeat at Adams Park.

Despite second half scores from Rory Lawson and Anthony Allen, Gloucester were distinctly second best – lacked the composure to make the most of their promising start and came off worst in the collisions to suffer a comprehensive defeat.

Wasps had any number of outstanding contributors to their five-try win. But in the colossal efforts of Dan Leo and number eight Joe Worsley, they comfortably had the players of the match.

Leo carried possession with such intent in crucial areas of the field that Wasps were able to build on their platform and Worsley generated serious momentum of his own – carried ball well, made his tackles and distributed, most of the time, with the touch of a man who has serious international pretensions.

Gloucester, despite plenty of territory and possession in the first 15 minutes, were hurried and simply made too many mistakes. There was another magnificent effort from Peter Buxton and plenty of industrious intent but they ran aground on Wasps' defence and found themselves 19-0 behind at the interval.

“You cannot come to a place like this before starting to play when you are 19 points behind,” head coach Dean Ryan said. “We were second best and that disappoints me and disappoints the team. But we have worked tremendously hard in the last 12 to 18 months and won't allow one bad performance to de-rail us.

“There are areas we know we can be better in – I am just disappointed we didn’t show it today.”

Gloucester did make a good start but had nothing to show for it. Peter Richards and Mike Tindall combined behind their own sticks after seven minutes to attack close to the right touchline and when Tindall found Luke Narryway in support over half-way, it looked as though Gloucester may score one of the tries of the season but Worsley got back brilliantly to make the decisive tackle.

But they soon began to lose their way. Although Willie Walker’s close-range kick was carried over his line to present a five-metre scrum by Paul Sackey, Gloucester coughed up possession thanks to Wasps’ aggressive defence and when Christian Califano was penalised for off-side, Wasps could breathe easy again.

From the penalty, the impressive Tom Palmer tapped down from a line-out, Worsley joined the line to link with Dominic Waldouck and he sent Sackey in to score with some ease after 15 minutes.

For Wasps, it was as easy as that. And 10 minutes later they were in again. Gloucester clearly thought they would be penalised for accidental off-side at a line-out but the home drive kept coming and Palmer plunged over. Alex King’s conversion made it 12-0.

It was a desperate score to concede and worse was to follow after 32 minutes. Gloucester struggled to clear their lines with any degree of composure and when Walker tried to relieve the pressure, Palmer charged down his clearance, caught the rebound and had enough in his legs to reach the line.

Wasps were 19-0 ahead and cruising. However, Gloucester hit back in the third quarter with their first score to finally hint at a recovery.

Replacement James Forrester broke decisively and brilliantly from a scrum and threw an inside pass that was taken by Lawson, who dived in to score.

Gloucester desperately needed another try immediately to give themselves a sniff of a comeback and although they started to make a real nuisance of themselves at the contact area through the likes of Buxton, Marco Bortolami and Andy Hazell, Wasps were also in unforgiving mood.

Try as they might, particularly at the set-piece, Gloucester simply couldn't penetrate Wasps' defence and with 12 minutes to go, they sealed a bonus point when Tom Voyce angled his run brilliantly to take King's inside pass and surge to the sticks.

It was the killer punch and although Worsley's ambition got the better of him when Allen picked off his long pass and ran 80 metres for the score, just having enough pace to beat Danny Cipriani, the home side were never in danger.

Replacement Ryan Lamb made it 26-12 but it was Wasps who had the final say of a match they thoroughly deserved to win when James Haskell barged over for try number five.

#### Wasps Team

15. Mark Van Gisbergen 14. Paul Sackey 13. Dominic Waldouck  
12. Josh Lewsey 11. Tom Voyce 10. Alex King 9. Simon Amor  
1. Tim Payne 2. Raphael Ibanez 3. Phil Vickery 4. Martin Purdy  
5. Tom Palmer 6. Dan Leo 7. Jonny O'Connor 8. Joe Worsley

16. Joe Ward 17. Peter Bracken 18. George Skivington 19. James Haskell  
20. Eoin Reddan 21. Lawrence Dallaglio 22. Danny Cipriani

#### Gloucester Rugby Team

15. Iain Balshaw 14. James Simpson-Daniel 13. Mike Tindall  
12. Anthony Allen 11. Mark Foster 10. Willie Walker 9. Peter Richards  
1. Patrice Collazo 2. Olivier Azam 3. Christian Califano 4. Marco Bortolami  
5. Alex Brown 6. Peter Buxton 7. Andy Hazell 8. Luke Narryway

16. Mefin Davies 17. Carlos Nieto 18. Adam Eustace 19. James Forrester 20. Rory Lawson 21. Ryan Lamb 22. Olly Morgan

HT: 19 - 0

Attendance: 10,000

JC