

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 2000

HAYWARD UNABLE TO STEAL A VICTORY

HEARTBREAK AT KINGSHOLM AS GLOUCESTER FAIL
WITH LATE KICK

GLOUCESTER 18 SALE 19

GLOUCESTER

T. Fanolua	15
R. Jewell	14
J. Ewens	13
C. Yates	12
F. Schisano	11
B. Hayward	10
I. Sanders	9
O. Azam	1
J. Djoudi	2
A. Powles	3
M. Cornwell	4
I. Jones (capt.)	5
S. Ojomoh	6
J. Boer	7
J. Paramore	8

Subs: N. Cox, R. Fidler,
A. Eustace, K. Jones,
H. Gregoire-Mazzocco,
J. Simpson-Daniel,
C. Walton.

SALE

V. Going
M. Moore
J. Baxendell
D. Harris
S. Hanley
N. Little
S. Hatley
P. Winstanley
B. Jackman
D. Bell
G. M-Bishop
A. Whittle
P. Anglesea
R. Appleyard
A. Sanderson (capt.)

Subs: B. Redpath, M. Deane,
S. Davidson, S. Lines,
J. Thiel, A. Black, J. Clark.

Referee: G. Aston-Jones (RFU)

Star Man: Olivier Azam (Gloucester)

Byron Hayward missed a conversion five minutes into stoppage time to condemn Gloucester to their second successive Zurich Premiership defeat at the hands of Sale.

Vaughan Going seemed certain to hand the Manchester side the victory they thoroughly deserved with a last minute try, but Gloucester battled back with a try from Franck Schisano, but in a barnstorming finish, Hayward's attempt just missed in a game Gloucester did not deserve to win.

A troubled Philippe Saint-Andre ushered in Gloucester's opening Zurich Premiership game at Kingsholm with yet more injury problems.

Talismanic French prop Serge Simon was forced to withdraw on the day of the game with flu, leaving Saint-Andre with just four fit front row players.

Jawad Djoudi took over at hooker to allow Olivier Azam to take over at prop – youngster Nick Cox was the only front row replacement and was joined by fellow Academy youngsters James Simpson-Daniel and Chris Walton.

Sale opened the scoring with a Niki Little penalty after just four minutes when Gloucester were penalised for going over the top.

Gloucester roared back and Byron Hayward invited Schisano to chase his deep kick and the Cherry and Whites earned a scrum after Terry Fanolua made the tackle.

The set pieces were proving a great source of joy for Gloucester and Adey Powles and Azam were causing serious problems, particularly Azam on Duncan Bell. It was from one such strong scrummage that allowed Hayward to level the score with a penalty.

The Sale line-out was worse. They had no continuity from their own throw and both Mark Cornwell and Ian Jones both stole possession.

Gloucester's problems were behind the scrum; they lacked pace on the vital second phase. But it was still Gloucester dictating terms, set mainly through the hard work of the forwards and finally, after 31 minutes, they scored the try they craved.

Their best chance came when Ian Sanders fed Fanolua on an arching run towards the corner and Schisano was stopped just short with Djoudi piling in.

However, after a succession of scrums had gone to waste, Bell was penalised again against Azam, and Gloucester opted for a line-out.

Cornwell held the catch and Gloucester's pack swarmed round him and Jake Boer earned a superb try. Hayward added the conversion for a 10-3 lead.

However, in the third minute of injury time, Little kicked a penalty after the referee had awarded four penalties in succession.

Half-time :
Gloucester 10, Sale 6.

Sale began the second period with a massive intent to try to stamp their authority on the game. Pete Anglesea made a neat break and found Steve Hanley, who chipped infield and Fanolua was forced to clear up.

It was now the visitors who were dictating terms and pegged Gloucester with a series of ground drives.

They narrowed the deficit to just one point with Little's third penalty, for an offence by Paramore, and minutes later Little was on target again with his fourth penalty to give them a 12-10 lead.

If they had not realised it before, Gloucester were in a serious fight for their lives, a home defeat was unthinkable, but very much on the cards.

What followed was a huge Gloucester response. Kingsley-Jones, freshly introduced, was the fulcrum to a rumbling forward move involving Azam, and Joe Ewens hurtled through the middle and seemed to be taken high, but Gloucester could not capitalise.

The game now had crackled into life but Gloucester could find no way through Sale's defence.

They were not helped, however, by some chronically slow ball from Sanders which never allowed the Gloucester three-quarters to get going.

Ewens was taken high again but there was nothing doing from the referee as it dawned around Kingsholm an away victory was very much on the cards.

That possibility became almost a certainty when Little made a superb break towards the line and Going was on hand to score right next to the posts for Little to convert.

Gloucester now had to score and they seized the game by the scruff of the neck for the first time.

Hayward kicked a penalty and then Gloucester strode back. A series of Gloucester attacks allowed them to move the ball from left to right and Fanolua gave the scoring pass to Schisano, who plunged over.

Kingsholm was now in delirium and it was left on the shoulders of Hayward to snatch Gloucester a win. But from the tightest of angles, his sweetly struck kick missed on the left post to leave Sale victors by just one point.