

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 2001

CHERRY AND WHITES END LOSING RUN WITH HALF-CENTURY
OF POINTS

DEBUT TRY FOR TODD IN GLOUCESTER ROMP

GLOUCESTER 50 ROTHERHAM 17

Gloucester rattled up a half century of points as they got back to winning ways after their five match losing run in the Premiership.

They despatched bottom-placed Rotherham with seven tries, one of them from centre Robert Todd to mark his long awaited Premiership debut for the Cherry and Whites.

Youngster James Simpson-Daniel also had a dream outing as he also got on the score sheet after replacing injured winger Tom Beim.

Before the kick off, fans were introduced to new coaching assistant Andy Keast who told the crowd: "It's been a fantastic week. The players have been very responsive and I have been made very welcome.

"My role is to help Gloucester push forward to a top eight place and hopefully get to the Euro finals."

Despite his positive words, Gloucester conceded a penalty and two free kicks in the opening minutes and it was Rotherham who compiled the first promising attack, working their way into the home 22.

However, a break by Tom Beim from inside Gloucester's 10 metre line in the 5th minute brought a great try. Beim passed to Phil Vickery who thundered forward, interpassing with Junior Paramore before putting Beim clear from 30 metres out. Simon Mannix converted to put Gloucester 7-0 ahead.

Mannix extended Gloucester's lead with a penalty in front of the posts in the 12th minute after a sustained attack launched by Jason Little in the home half.

With Gloucester recycling well, a dozen pairs of hands carried the attack right to the line where Phil Vickery actually went over, but after referee Tony Spreadbury had blown for a penalty.

Rotherham opened their account in the 19th minute when Gloucester were penalised for offside as they defended after a line out inside their 22. Full back Mike Umaga potted the points.

Gloucester lost Beim in the 23rd minute when he went off after being shaken by a high tackle and James Simpson-Daniel took his place. The 18-year-old was immediately involved in another well-orchestrated Gloucester attack from the home line when Andy Gomarsall stole Rotherham's ball.

Simpson-Daniel was felled by a dangerous high tackle by Umaga which resulted in the full back being sin-binned. Moments later, a great phase of handling down the left wing brought a try for Chris Catling after Gomarsall and Simpson-Daniel linked with the full back to put him clear.

Mannix missed the conversion but was spot on two minutes later when Mark Cornwell crossed for a try after more excellent passing among the backs.

Kingsholm erupted in the 37th minute when Simpson-Daniel made a scorching 60 metre run for a try behind the posts. It came after Gloucester were awarded a penalty inside their 22. Olivier Azam broke away and Catling slipped a nifty pass to the England U-19 player who showed Rotherham a clean pair of heels. Mannix converted.

Half-time:
Gloucester 29, Rotherham 3

Rotherham emerged from the break to mount their best attack of the game. From a midfield scrum they moved the ball swiftly and winger Michael Wood went over for a try which Umaga converted brilliantly from the sideline.

And two minutes later they scored again as Gloucester were penalised on the visitors' 22 and Rotherham quickly ran the ball. Gloucester's tackling was shoddy and Simon Binns was able to go in and Umaga converted again.

Rotherham had dramatically undone so much of Gloucester's good first half work.

But Gloucester got back on track when they tried to drive over the line in a scrum and the referee awarded a penalty try because Isaac Fea'unati detached himself and went off-side to try to kill the move. Mannix converted the score.

Jason Little claimed Gloucester's sixth try when he broke from the 22 in the 61st minute and crossed beneath the crossbar, presenting Mannix with an easy conversion.

Rotherham made wholesale changes almost immediately, bringing on four replacements, and they put Gloucester under such pressure that Olivier Azam transgressed and was sin-binned in the 67th minute.

Kingsley Jones left the field to allow Chris Fortey to take over from Azam. At the same time, Robert Todd made his Premiership debut as he replaced Little.

Todd, who joined last summer, has been out injured all season after dislocating an ankle in a pre-season friendly but had to wait only ten minutes for his first try.

Simpson-Daniel led the break, Terry Fanolua raced deep into the visitors' half and Todd finished the move with a try behind the posts which Mannix converted.

GLOUCESTER: C. Catling; J. Ewens, T. Fanolua, J. Little, T. Beim; S. Mannix, A. Gomarsall; T. Woodman, O. Azam, P. Vickery, R. Fidler, M. Cornwell, J. Boer, K. Jones, J. Paramore.

Reps.: B. Hayward, H. Simpson-Daniel, R. Todd, A. Hazell, C. Fortey, A. Eustace, A. Deacon.

ROTHERHAM: M. Umaga; N. Simpson, D. Trivella, J. Shephard, M. Wood; S. Binns, S. Forster; J. Thorp, C. Johnson, S. Turner, L. Greeff, G. Kenworthy, I. Fea'unati, N. Spence, M. Schmid.

Reps.: A. Grivil, R. Latham, H. Parr, B. Wade, D. Scully, A. Northey, S. Dixon.

REFEREE: T. Spreadbury

STAR MAN: James Simpson-Daniel

JC