

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 2001

GLOUCESTER SHOUT A WARNING TO TIGERS

CHERRY AND WHITES WIN ROUND ONE  
OF LEICESTER SHOWDOWN

GLOUCESTER 22 LEICESTER 13

Gloucester hammered out a Heineken Cup warning as they grounded champions Leicester in a thrilling finale to the Premiership at Kingsholm.

They turned in a massive forward performance, knitted together by Junior Paramore at the back of the scrum, to grab a massive physiological advantage ahead of their semi-final showdown at Vicarage Road.

They scored tries through Ian Jones and Andy Gomarsall to virtually guarantee them a place in the play-offs they will confirm with victory at London Irish on the final day of the season. Leicester managed tries from Richard Cockerill and Geordan Murphy, but it was Gloucester's day.

A visit of the champions is a seminal way to end the season but that is exactly what faced Gloucester at Kingsholm.

It made a refreshing change to be able to concentrate on on-field matters and consign the rumour mill to an afternoon in the background.

This was also a barometer to their Heineken Cup semi-final next month and to that end Leicester, as expected, chose to rest a good number of their high profile performers.

There was no Martin Johnson or Neil Back, while Austin Healey and Tim Stimpson were relegated to the bench.

The opening was tetchy, spiteful and full of commitment. Neither team managed to control much in the way of set-piece possession, but Gloucester slightly held the end in the line-out.

James Simpson-Daniel was a hasty switch to number 10 – his first start there in the Premiership after Simon Mannix pulled out with an injury and he almost watched his team take the lead.

Leicester threw a line-out long to Pete Short. He collected, but Gloucester turned him over and Trevor Woodman emerged on a blistering surge. Jason Little took over and looked as if he would go all the way before linking with Terry Fanolua and Joe Ewens, but Gloucester lost the opportunity.

However, they grabbed the Tigers by the scruff of the neck, and hammered two line-outs close to the line and Andy Gomarsall kicked them ahead with a penalty after Chris Fortey and Lewis Moody were sin-binned for fighting.

But if Gloucester thought that would ignite the blue touch paper, they were wrong. It took Leicester just three minutes to go ahead.

Play was taken deep inside the Gloucester half and Leicester collected a close-range line-out and Martin Corry was driven to the line for Richard Cockerill to claim the score.

It was a significant advantage because it allowed the Tigers an advantage[*sic*], and Leicester were able to establish a foothold in the scrums and get ahead in the line-outs.

Gloucester were forced to work ferociously hard, particularly around the fringes where they were forced to defend with vigour and consistency.

It was nip and tuck in the loose and Gloucester slashed the deficit to 8-6 with a Gomarsall penalty.

That was just what Gloucester needed. They came together and put together a ferocious sequence of attacks, based round the forwards, that established a game-winning lead. Simpson-Daniel was having a lukewarm day at standoff, but he is quick and has natural ability in abundance and Gloucester used the battering Jake Boer as cover on the short pass.

But it was a bludgeoning break by Paramore that breathed life into the game. He hammered forward at great pace and Fanolua was first on the scene to drive forward and when Gomarsall slipped in Little, the Australian, was just held.

The power from Boer and Paramore and the speed of Hazell had to pay off and it did just before the break. Gloucester took play to centre field and Gomarsall floated a long pass to Ian Jones who beat Winston Stanley to score.

Hazell then made a blistering break from a line-out, only to be penalised for a double movement, but Gloucester had the scent now and Gomarsall capped an excellent first period when he scythed off from the back of a ruck and slithered his way to the line. He missed the conversion, but Gloucester were well pleased.

Half-time:

Gloucester 16, Leicester 8

There was nothing easy about this Leicester side, despite the fact that they were reduced in quality and the first score in the second half was going to be crucial.

Gloucester continued to dominate territorially, and there was nothing lacking in the confrontation.

Gloucester replaced Ian Jones with Adam Eustace and he gave a telling wave to the crowd before departing the field.

It remained seriously hard edged, but Gomarsall missed his fourth kick when he missed an early penalty.

However, he made amends in the 62nd minute with a well struck penalty to take Gloucester away to 19-8, before almost collecting their third try. Simpson-Daniel was at its heart with Fanolua, but Tom Beim could not get away.

Fanolua was having a quite extraordinary day in the loose. If every player had his commitment to the cause, Gloucester would be champions every season. He made a series of bone-crunching tackles as Leicester tried to pull play wide. It was he who thumped straight into Paul Reeves to win Gloucester a penalty. Gomarsall kicked it and Gloucester were 22-8 ahead.

Gloucester, if they thought they were safe, were wrong. Stimpson had an immediate impact when he fielded a high kick and took the ball into a ruck. From that, Booth kicked deep and Geordan Murphy and Winston Stanley were in a race to the line that Murphy won to score. Booth missed the conversion, but Leicester were right back in the contest.

There was no time to catch breath because Leicester were back on the offensive again. Adam Balding was having a major impact around the fringes.

But Gloucester wiped away the seat and came again. Robert Todd, on for Fanolua, took possession from Byron Hayward and dummied his way forward on a beautiful break.

He chipped ahead, but Stanley got to the ball ahead of Catling and Ewens. Gloucester kept the squeeze on and did not allow Leicester the time or space with which to make the telling break.

It was fitting Gloucester ended with the ball, a significant factor on an afternoon when they sent Leicester away from Kingsholm with plenty to think about.

GLOUCESTER: C. Catling; J. Ewens, T. Fanolua, J. Little, T. Beim; J. Simpson-Daniel, A. Gomarsall; T. Woodman, C. Fortey, A. Deacon (capt.), R. Fidler, I. Jones, J. Boer, A. Hazell, J. Paramore.  
Reps.: B. Hayward, J. Djoudi, R. Todd, K. Jones, A. Eustace, S. Ojomoh, S. Sanchez.

LEICESTER: P. Reeves; W. Stanley, G. Gelderbloom, P. Howard, G. Murphy; S. Booth, J. Grindall; P. Freshwater, R. Cockerill (capt.), R. Nebbett, L. Deacon, M. Corry, P. Gustard, L. Moody, P. Short.  
Reps.: T. Stimpson, A. Healey, D. Jelley, G. Chuter, B. Kay, A. Balding, G. Lewitt.

REFEREE: S. Lander (RFU)

STAR MAN: Junior Paramore

JC