

GLOUCESTER RUGBY

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2015

KINGSHOLM

GLOUCESTER BATTLE BRAVELY BUT BARBARIANS' CLASS
IS TOO MUCH ON THE NIGHT

GLOUCESTER XV 14 BARBARIANS 62

Match Report By Duncan Wood

Despite Gloucester's young guns battling heroically, the star-studded Barbarians turned on the style at Kingsholm on Tuesday evening, running in ten tries for a 14-62 win in an awesome display of pace, power and precision.

It was always going to be an uphill task for the Cherry and Whites who have a European Rugby Challenge Cup fixture in La Rochelle in 48 hours, with everyone expected to be on duty in France not available this evening.

But the youthful outfit, which featured a number of teenagers, did themselves and the shirt proud on the night, giving it 100% right up until the very final whistle. They showed courage and no little ambition, trying to play expansive rugby whenever possible.

However, the gulf in class was simply too much to bridge on the night and some of the tries that the Barbarians scored had the Kingsholm crowd on its feet.

It will certainly go down as an occasion to remember, both for the players and the crowd and the Corinthian spirit that the Barbarians strive to maintain is alive and well based on the evidence of tonight's performance.

Against a team boasting so many 'galacticos,' Gloucester actually made a decent start, fronting up in the forwards and winning some of the early physical encounters.

However, one physical encounter they didn't win came on six minutes after some patient build up play by the Barbarians. Nemani Nadolo eventually got the ball a few metres from the Gloucester line and just smashed his way over. With the posts swaying in the wind, Pat Lambie couldn't get anywhere near with the conversion.

The young Cherry and Whites side then took the lead. Dan Thomas showed amazing speed to break off the scrum, intercept Cobus Reinach's pass and score under the posts. Lloyd Evans converted.

The lead was short-lived. The Barbarians' backs showed great hands to send Tehe Milner-Skudder sprinting into space. Everyone knew the sidestep was coming, but it didn't matter. He stepped the last man to score. Lambie converted.

The full-back then latched on to the back of some sheer brute force from Nadolo to scamper into the Gloucester 22 again. The home defence scrambled back, but there was an overlap on the right and Joe Tomane dived over in the corner.

It had taken a while for the Barbarians to click, but they were now on fire. Gloucester were doing nothing wrong, but the invitational side's handling skills were sublime and Joe Tomane was soon put over for his second try. Lambie added the extras.

The high winds had been playing havoc with the play on the pitch, and they now did likewise in the stands. With an advertising hoarding swaying in the wind, certain sections of the East Stand were evacuated as a precaution.

Play went on and Gloucester then camped in front of that Stand, forcing three penalties in a row from five metre scrums.

However, the penalty try gods have not smiled on Gloucester in recent weeks. Nothing was given and Gloucester duly conceded one to relieve the pressure.

The Barbarians then rubbed salt into the wound as they moved upfield and almost scored but for a brave tackle from Mat Protheroe. It was a brief respite. With no time left on the clock, Gloucester ran out of tacklers and Ryan Crotty strolled over.

Lambie converted again, and the Barbarians went in to half time with a 31-7 lead. It had been a dogged effort from the inexperienced Gloucester side, but the class of the visitors was there for all to see.

Scarily, they had also been playing into the strong wind in the first half so Gloucester were going to have to work hard to keep them in check in the second 40 minutes.

However, the momentum was maintained after the resumption. Gloucester were at full stretch to keep the visitors at bay, Protheroe putting his body on the line and Ludlow yellow carded.

Their efforts were in vain though as Lood De Jager, who was simply sensational throughout, crashed over from close range. He was followed by Savea and Naholo as the Barbarians simply failed to step off the gas, a host of quality replacements simply adding to the quality on display.

Kerr-Barlow was the next to cross, but Gloucester kept on fighting, tackling like demons and still trying to attack whenever they had decent possession.

And it looked as though they would have the final word. Dan Thomas almost made the line for his second but was hauled down just short. However, Gloucester had a penalty, kicked to the corner and, when the maul was pulled down, a penalty try was awarded.

Evans converted and it seemed that Gloucester would finish in a high. But there was just time for one last moment of class from the Barbarians, Pat Lambie finishing off another sweeping move to bring proceedings to a close.

Gloucester XV Lineups

Mat Protheroe; Harry Robinson, Olly Thorley, Tim Molenaar, Steph Reynolds; Lloyd Evans, Ben Vellacott; Nick Wood (capt), Darren Dawidiuk, Nicky Thomas, Joe Latta, Tom Hicks, Elliott Stooke, Dan Thomas, Lewis Ludlow

Replacements:

Henry Walker, Dan Murphy, Josh McNulty, Alex Craig, Will Safe, Harry Randall, Jack Spencer, Jack Evans

Barbarians Lineups

15 Nehe Milner Skudder (Hurricanes & New Zealand); 14 Joe Tomane (Brumbies & Australia), 13 Francois Venter (Cheetahs), 12 Ryan Crotty (Crusaders & New Zealand, vice captain), 11 Nemani Nadolo (Crusaders & Fiji); 10 Pat Lambie (Sharks & South Africa), 9 Cobus Reinach (Sharks & South Africa); 1 Jamie Mackintosh (Chiefs & New Zealand), 2 James Hanson (Reds & Australia), 3 Toby Smith (Melbourne Rebels & Australia); 4 Victor Matfield (Northampton Saints & South Africa, captain), 5 Lood de Jager (Cheetahs & South Africa); 6 Stephen Hoiles (Waratahs & Australia), 7 Ardie Savea (Hurricanes), 8 Jarrad Butler (Brumbies)

Replacements:

Stephen Moore (Brumbies & Australia, vice captain), Thomas du Toit (Sharks), Charlie Faumuina (Blues & New Zealand), Bakkies Botha (South Africa), Scott Fardy (Brumbies & Australia), Tawera Kerr Barlow (Chiefs & New Zealand), Lima Sopoaga (Highlanders & New Zealand), Waisake Naholo (Highlanders & New Zealand)