

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2001

GLOUCESTER SEE OFF A SPIRITED PARMA SIDE
SIMPSON-DANIEL AND FORRESTER AT THE DOUBLE
IN CHERRY AND WHITES WIN
GRAN PARMA 5 GLOUCESTER 48

Gloucester strengthened their position as the front runners in pool seven with a workmanlike performance against a highly-spirited GRAN Parma to emphatically establish a commanding position in the group.

There were two tries apiece for James Simpson-Daniel and James Forrester plus tries for Alessandro Stoica and Olivier Azam.

Although Gloucester worked hard they did not conjure the number of points Philippe Saint-Andre would have been hoping for. However, they made the perfect start. Alessandro Stoica fielded a long kick and fed Diego Albanese deep inside his own territory.

He set off on a laser like break into the Parma half, Ed Pearce bounded up in support, Robert Todd linked with Mark Cornwell with an overhead pass, Cornwell drove hard and sent Junior Paramore on a lung bursting surge and James Forrester was on hand to finish off an 80 metre try. Ludovic Mercier converted to bring up his 100th point of the season and Gloucester were rocking.

However, the men from Kingsholm threw all sorts of passes in a hazy, exotic beginning in a balmy atmosphere but suffered because forwards appeared where backs should have been and they over-complicated a series of threatening moves.

Despite encouraging drives from Diego Colli at number eight, Parma looked a brittle outfit, and after Mercier had kicked Gloucester 13-0 ahead they scored their second try.

Dimitri Yachvili and Mercier moved play left and before Todd straightened the attack, Forrester and Stoica were involved before Gloucester secured a line-out. Cornwell held the catch and Gloucester, perhaps executing their first real move of any clarity bundled Olivier Azam over for the try. Mercier's conversion took Gloucester 20-0 ahead after 18 minutes.

But from there it all jammed up in a bluster of attacks but petered out into nothing. Parma defended with more vigour in the second quarter, to restrict Gloucester to only one further try.

Mercier's long pass again picked out Todd in midfield on a crucial break before Paramore rollicked his way into three tacklers before somehow finding James Simpson-Daniel, who scored in the corner.

Mercier was again on the spot with the conversion but Gloucester should have been further clear than just the 27 points they managed before the break.

Half-time: Parma 0, Gloucester 27

Parma came out with renewed energy for a full-throttle go at Gloucester in the second period. There was more about them up front in a series of committed and hard working drives.

They deserved some reward for their efforts and chose to run every penalty rather than take the three points that were on offer to them. Just as it looked like Gloucester would not emerge from their sluggish gear they hit Parma with their best move of the match.

Cornwell touched down a line-out, Andy Gomarsall found Mercier, he drew the cover and Todd threw a pass for Ewens to burst through the gap. He may have breached the line himself, but Stoica was on hand to take the pass and score.

But that still did not act as the spark Gloucester needed to blow Parma away. Instead it breathed life into the hosts and they managed a try when a series of short range drives allowed Daniel Stead to burrow over.

Gloucester scored again when a break from Terry Fanolua cut space for Ewens and he was able to give Simpson-Daniel the scoring pass for his second and Gloucester's fifth try.

Jon Goodridge almost capped the win when he intercepted in his own 22 but was dragged down after an 80 metre sprint chase when Matthew Dowling dragged him down. But Gomarsall was on hand to drag him into touch and he wrestled the ball free before throwing a long pass infield to allow Forrester to grab his second try.

GRAN PARMA: M. Dowling; A. Tanzi, N. Aldrovandi, P. Mensah, G. Rodriguez; J. Boden, L. Villagra; L. Artal, F. Berzieri, C. Nieto, F. Minello, F. Tedeschi, D. Stead, F. Soncini, D. Colli (capt.).
Reps.: M. Alonso, C. Pretera, R. May, T. Francke, D. Gati, S. Caffaratti.

GLOUCESTER: A. Stoica; J. Simpson-Daniel, J. Ewens, R. Todd (capt.), D. Albanese; L. Mercier, D. Yachvili; T. Woodman, O. Azam, P. Collazo, M. Cornwell, E. Pearce, A. Eustace, J. Forrester, J. Paramore.
Reps.: A. Gomarsall, J. Goodridge, T. Fanolua, K. Sewabu, C. Fortey, R. Fidler, A. Deacon.

REFEREE: M. Hall (Scotland).

STAR MAN: James Forrester.