

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2001

RECORD VICTORY CAPS PAUL'S PERFECT DEBUT

RUGBY LEAGUE STAR SCORES 28 POINTS IN GLOUCESTER'S
ROUT OF CAERPHILLY

GLOUCESTER 98 CAERPHILLY 14

Gloucester went on an astonishing points spree to carve Caerphilly apart with 15 blistering tries at Kingsholm. Led by 28 points from rugby league convert Henry Paul, the Cherry and Whites were in cruel and unrelenting form as they broke the 90-point barrier for the first time in a competitive match.

Paul converted 10 of the tries, including his own, and he also landed a penalty as Gloucester simply crushed Caerphilly's effort.

Under the watching eyes of England's back coach, Brian Ashton, Paul put together a convincing start to his Gloucester career.

But he was just part of an astonishing effort. James Simpson-Daniel and James Forrester each grabbed hat-tricks and there were also scores from six different players in Gloucester's points flood.

This was the day when the man called 'Sauce' made his Kingsholm debut to finally end two weeks of mouth-watering anticipation.

Paul was handed shirt number 12 for his debut in the Parker Pen Shield clash against Caerphilly.

But it was more than just the beginning of a new career for Paul – it was the latest hurdle in Gloucester's European adventure – an adventure they seriously believe they can win.

It took Paul only two minutes to open his Cherry and White account. Gloucester won a penalty for a scrum infringement and, rather than allowing Andy Gomarsall a shot at touch, Paul side-footed a 40-metre effort casually over the crossbar.

Gloucester bristled with intent and purpose, full of movement in the springing strides of Forrester and the surges of Terry Fanolua and Olivier Azam.

Caerphilly seemed intent on damage limitation from the start and Gloucester opened their try account after eight minutes.

Olivier Azam straightened an attack infield and Gomarsall shifted play left with an overhead pass to Koli Sewabu. The Fijian back row forward made good ground and Fanolua squeezed over in the corner.

Paul landed a touchline conversion and Gloucester were buzzing. They simply had too much power and pace in every area and it was not long before they were in again.

Paul made his first straight-line break through midfield and Gloucester arrived in numbers to move play left.

Clive Stuart-Smith and Gomarsall shipped play quickly to Simpson-Daniel, who glided beautifully into space and put Federico Pucciariello skirting away up the touchline. His little legs pumping like pistons, the prop created room and Simpson-Daniel scored in the corner.

Caerphilly did not help themselves by kicking away all their possession, but Gloucester were superior in every facet. They were quicker, stronger, and more constructed in their build up and looked like scoring at will.

They scored their second try after 19 minutes and it was a wonderful score. Azam rumbled away from the line-out through midfield. Ed Pearce drove on, Jake Boer and Daren O'Leary swapped an interchange of passes down the right at speed, before Boer changed the angle with a long pass to Forrester. He found Paul who looked certain to score, but off-loaded to Jon Goodridge who galloped in to score.

Paul converted and Gloucester were 22-0 ahead after 19 minutes. What was so convincing was the way Goodridge, Stuart-Smith and particularly Forrester looked totally at home in their first team environment. Maybe Gloucester were not as constructive as they would have liked in midfield, but there was no stopping them.

Paul was involved in a midfield turnover, but Caerphilly came left before Holo Taufahema knocked on and O'Leary scooped up possession and raced away past the cover to score.

Gloucester were in again twice more before the break as Caerphilly were routed up front and carved apart out wide. Gomarsall was at the heart of their fifth try when he tapped a quick penalty and surged forward, before finding Boer all alone out on the wing and he powered home unopposed.

Fittingly, it was Forrester who grabbed their last try of the half when Stuart-Smith and Gomarsall set Gloucester going from a tap-penalty. Paul and Fanolua made heavy hitting imprints and Forrester was on hand to power his long, striding legs away to score.

Half-time: Gloucester 41, Caerphilly 0.

Gloucester's avalanche continued barely 60 seconds into the second period. Sewabu secured the kick-off and powered forward. Gloucester swarmed all over the ball and Woodman's overhead pass picked out Fanolua with Forrester on hand to score.

It was a searing start for Gloucester and put their record score of 88-0 against Fylde in 1997 under serious danger. But to their credit, Caerphilly bounced back and took advantage of a massive overlap from a quick penalty for Taufahema to score their first points.

That, though, could not stem the Gloucester tide and Forrester finished off a powerful move that had Azam and Woodman at its forward heart, before Gomarsall ignored Paul and switched the angle of the attack to Forrester to complete an eight-minute hat-trick.

It was quite an astonishing start to the half, but the best was yet to come. Gomarsall started a move deep in Gloucester territory and found Fanolua. Fanolua put his head down and attacked, feeding Simpson-Daniel who made a surging break.

Goodridge screamed up on his inside and took a splendid pass as Gloucester cut Caerphilly apart. Goodridge moved infield before linking with Boer, who put Sewabu in for his first try in Gloucester colours. Boer was the next to score when he grabbed his second after Gomarsall and Simpson-Daniel had opened up Caerphilly.

It was unstoppable traffic now and the Kingsholm faithful got exactly what they wanted to see when Gomarsall made ground and put Paul away on a carving break from 20 metres for his first ever try. He punched the air in delight to the monstrous acclaim from the Kingsholm crowd. But the drama was only just spitting into life.

Caerphilly got their second try when Andrew Jacobs squeezed over from close range, but that only heightened Gloucester's desire for more points.

Junior Paramore's involvement added a huge bulking powerhouse and, with time running out, Gloucester managed four more tries. Simpson-Daniel ran in two to complete his hat-trick and a splendid display on the wing.

Mark Cornwell plunged over after battering work by the forwards, before another sleek move ripped Caerphilly to shreds for Pucciariello to finish off another flowing move for Gloucester's 15th try.

GLOUCESTER:* J. Goodridge, D. O'Leary, T. Fanolua, H. Paul, J. Simpson-Daniel, C. Stuart-Smith, T. Woodman, O. Azam, F. Pucciariello, M. Cornwell, E. Pearce, K. Sewabu, J. Forrester, J. Boer (c).

Reps.: L. Mercier, J. Ewens, A. Stoica, A. Deacon, C. Fortey, R. Fidler, J. Paramore.

CAERPHILLY: J. Thomas; G. Lewis, H. Taufahema, D. Hawkins (c), K. Morris, L. Richards, A. Chiltern, A. Jones, J. Hughes, G. Thomas, N. Jones, N. Watkins, D. Davies, G. Jones, B. Watkins.
Reps.: S. Tuipolotu, A. Jacobs, R. Greenslade-Jones, M. Buckingham, M. Bolton, A. Williams, T. Maston.

REFEREE: M. Dartigeas (Fr).

STAR MAN: James Forrester.

* [Gloucester starting line-up incomplete.]

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