

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2002

PATHETIC GLOUCESTER ARE THRASHED AGAIN CHERRY AND WHITES HUMILIATED FOR THE SECOND TIME IN FOUR DAYS

NORTHAMPTON 58 GLOUCESTER 21

Gloucester were subjected to an eight-try humiliation at a buzzing Franklin's Gardens as Northampton ran riot in a devastating exhibition of finishing.

In four days Gloucester have conceded 13 tries, 102 points and four cards as their quest to finish runners-up to Leicester took a more than serious knock.

Gloucester's tries came from Koli Sewabu and Junior Paramore, but they were never really in the game.

Gloucester who struck first[sic]. Andy Gomarsall pilfered Northampton ball on half way and James Forrester, Terry Fanolua and Junior Paramore went on a sortie down the left. Gomarsall appeared to knock on, but fed Ludovic Mercier who dropped a goal.

Then it all started to unravel. Northampton enjoyed a field day around the fringes from rucks and mauls where Gloucester's defence crumbled under the pace and precision of the Saints' attack.

Two Paul Grayson penalties after eight and 15 minutes gave Northampton the lead and they did not look back. The pace of John Leslie, Peter Jorgensen and James Brooks caused serious damage and it was a Jorgensen surge up the middle the engineered their first try.

It was endemic that it started from a Gloucester attack when Mercier knocked-on and after a series of powerful surges to the right, Tom Smith emerged with the try, despite Gloucester's protests. Gloucester's bubbling ill discipline, a constant theme in the opening quarter, cost them the services of Olivier Azam when he was yellow carded.

Northampton did not waste any time in exploiting the advantage. Grayson kicked a penalty to the corner and Northampton drove forward with tremendous power and Steve Thompson touched down.

Gloucester snapped back with two well struck Mercier penalties to narrow the gap.

Considering the pounding it had been, Gloucester were still very much in the contest as the break drew near.

However, one minute into added time, Northampton grabbed their third try when Grayson's pass inside drew the cover and sent Andy Rennick scurrying through for his first ever try. Grayson converted to leaving Gloucester with a mountain to climb[*sic*].

Half-time: Northampton 23, Gloucester 9.

Matt Dawson had been inspired in the first period and he led Northampton on a devastating 15-minute points spree that destroyed Gloucester and all their hopes.

Initially, the second half started brightly when the thumping Fanolua set up a platform for Forester to break a tackle and scamper away through midfield.

Gloucester moved play to the left and Koli Sewabu dummied and hurried over for a try after 43 minutes. Mercier converted and Gloucester were only a score behind.

But a combination of petulance and Dawson's brilliant handling and link play shattered Gloucester's hopes.

Firstly, a raging break from Thompson through a series of missed tackles allowed Ben Cohen to surge over.

Collazo was then sinbinned for a trip on Dawson and while he was off the field, Northampton hit them with 14 points.

Dawson was the architect for Jorgensen's score when he gave a superb underhand pass back inside and the centre crashed through the cover. Grayson converted.

Budge Pountney then peeled off from the side of a line-out after a Brouzet tap-down to surge over. Grayson again converted for a sensational spree of scoring in which Gloucester had not got off the ropes.

With men down, Gloucester had conceded 19 points as they were left shattered by the power and precision of the Saints effort. Pountney's score was Northampton's sixth try for a lead of 44-16.

But the dismemberment had not finished. Northampton came again to add a seventh try when Nick Beal was on hand to finish off wave after wave of pressure. Grayson's conversion took Northampton past the 50 mark. Gloucester looked dead on their feet – dazed and shocked at the vitality of Northampton's swiftness, pace and power. They were a well defeated side long before a line-out win enabled Junior Paramore to scamper in for his side's second try – created by Sewabu.

Northampton moved the ball quicker and with more skill out of the tackle and were always devilishly tough up front. They grabbed their eighth try when lock Jon Phillips went over in the last minute which Grayson converted to leave Gloucester shattered and demoralised.

NORTHAMPTON: N. Beal; J. Brooks, P. Jorgensen, J. Leslie, B. Cohen; P. Grayson, M. Dawson; T. Smith, S. Thompson, R. Morris, J. Phillips, O. Brouzet, A. Rennick, B. Pountney (capt.), A. Blowers.
Reps.: D. Richmond, M. Stewart, A. Brenton, G. Seely, D. Malone, M. Tucker, C. Moir.

GLOUCESTER: C. Catling; D. O'Leary, J. Simpson-Daniel, T. Fanolua, T. Beim; L. Mercier, A. Gomarsall; P. Collazo, O. Azam, F. Pucciariello, R. Fidler, M. Cornwell, J. Forrester, J. Boer (capt.), J. Paramore.

Reps.: D. Yachvili, H. Paul, J. Ewens, A. Deacon, T. Woodman, K. Sewabu, C. Gillies.

REFEREE: D. Pearson (Northumberland).

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