

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2003

GLOUCESTER COMPLETE MISERABLE HAT-TRICK

WASPS 20 GLOUCESTER 12

WASPS : T. Voyce; S. Rosier, F. Waters, M. Denney, J. Rudd; M. Van Gisbergen, R. Howley (c); C. Dowd, T. Leota, W. Green, M. Purdy, R. Birkett, I. Clarke, P. Volley, M. Lock.

Reps: A. King, P. Richards, B. Gotting, J. O'Connor, J. Hart, P. Scrivener, T. Payne.

GLOUCESTER : J. Goodridge; M. Garvey, R. Todd, H. Paul, J. Simpson-Daniel; D. McRae, S. Amor; R. Roncero, C. Fortey, A. Deacon, M. Cornwell, A. Brown, J. Forrester, J. Boer (c), P. Buxton.

Reps: C. Collins, N. Wood, A. Olver, M. Rimmer, L. Narraway, A. Page, J. Frape.

Referee : A. Rowden.

Star Man : Chris Fortey.

Gloucester completed a hat-trick of defeats as they were edged out at Wasps in a game riddled with errors and turnovers.

Wasps were sharper in their execution than their visitors but even they – shorn of their England contingent – looked a shadow of the side that inflicted Twickenham heartbreak on Gloucester last term.

Gloucester had the first opportunity to put points on the board after Wasps number eight Mark Lock spilled the kick-off into touch under good pressure from winger Marcel Garvey.

As the Cherry and Whites attacked from the line-out, their hosts conceded a penalty but Henry Paul's kick did not have the distance.

Fly-half Van Gisbergen kicked Wasps in front on five minutes after the visitors had strayed off-side.

Paul levelled the scores two minutes later when Wasps were penalised for hands in the ruck and were marched back another 10 metres for back-chatting.

Wasps went back in front when a knock-on by Peter Buxton put Gloucester on the back foot and Van Gisbergen posted the subsequent penalty chance.

Paul had a chance to reply when winger John Rudd was penalised for holding on but he pulled the difficult kick wide.

Paul and flanker James Forrester were then undecided as to who should collect the restart and Paul inevitably knocked on.

Van Gisbergen punished the error by slotting a penalty for a 9-3 lead but Gloucester hit back with a successful Paul penalty.

Forrester was then called upon to save Gloucester's blushes with a fine line-out steal after full-back Jon Goodridge carried the ball into touch under pressure from centre Fraser Waters.

The Cherry and White forwards thundered into their opponents after the interval with Paul restoring parity with a penalty after Wasps were penalised for not rolling away.

A couple of clever kick through by McRae, chased up by Paul and Simpson-Daniel, carried Gloucester into dangerous attacking positions and when Van Gisbergen was forced to kick into touch, Alex Brown took a good catch, enabling the visitors to attack from the line-out.

A knock-on thwarted their raid but the incessant pressure was finally rewarded when Paul kicked a penalty.

Wasps' response was swift with Van Gisbergen lofting a lovely kick through the midfield with Waters winning the race for the touchdown. Van Gisbergen's conversion hit the post.

A missed penalty meant Wasps could not extend their lead until replacement fly-half Alex King slotted a drop-goal.

Paul missed a penalty to leave Gloucester trailing 17-12 and Wasps dealt with everything their visitors threw at them before a successful Van Gisbergen penalty closed out a disappointing game for the men from Kingsholm.

JC