

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2004

GLOUCESTER GIVE ANDY A FANTASTIC SEND OFF

THRILLING VICTORY IS A FITTING FINALE  
FOR STALWART DEACON

GLOUCESTER 28 WASPS 25

Andy Deacon was given the perfect send off as he played his final Premiership match at Kingsholm with Gloucester defeating Wasps.

The Londoners scored a late try to make the score closer, but Gloucester were worthy winners with tries from James Simpson-Daniel, Marcel Garvey and Andy Hazell.

GLOUCESTER : R. van der Bergh; M. Garvey, T. Fanolua, H. Paul, J. Simpson-Daniel; D. McRae, A. Gomarsall; T. Woodman, C. Fortey, A. Deacon, M. Cornwell, A. Brown, J. Boer (capt.), P. Buxton, J. Paramore.

Reps.: D. du Preez, R. Roncero, N. Wood, A. Eustace, A. Hazell, S. Amor, R. Todd.

WASPS : M. van Gisbergen; T. Voyce, F. Waters, S. Abbott, K. Logan; A. King, P. Richards; C. Dowd, T. Leota, T. Payne, M. Purdy, R. Birkett, J. Worsley, P. Volley, L. Dallaglio (capt.).

Reps.: W. Green, M. Lock, B. Gotting, J. Hart, R. Howley, M. Denney, A. Erinle.

Referee : T. Spreadbury (RFU).

Star Man : Junior Paramore.

Gloucester sent Heineken Cup finalists Wasps spinning to defeat at Kingsholm – and gave Andy Deacon the perfect home Premiership send-off.

Cheered round the ground at the end of a thrilling encounter, Deacon played yet another remarkable part in a Cherry and White victory over the reigning champions that had a capacity crowd enthralled.

Gloucester were fired to victory by three tries – from James Simpson-Daniel, Marcel Garvey and Andy Hazell, while Henry Paul kicked 13 points.

The first half was a roaring, raucous affair, littered with everything good about the Zurich Premiership – thudding forward confrontations, stratospheric levels of desperation, commitment by the bucket-load and the occasional dashing break.

And it was going so well for the home side. They started at an exhausting pace and established a thoroughly warranted lead. They knocked Wasps about at the contact area, turned them over at the breakdown and set about their line-out to work up a serious head of steam.

Gloucester should have scored after two minutes when a powerful forward attack sucked in defenders and Henry Paul came on an angled break but looked inside for Marcel Garvey who dropped the ball.

But Paul kicked a fourth minute penalty and the pressure kept coming. When Alex Brown or Junior Paramore were not smashing possession up the middle, Duncan McRea tried to release the powerful Terry Fanolua or dancing feet of James Simpson-Daniel.

Gloucester were simply quicker in all the major areas. They desperately tried to prevent possession slowing down in the rucks and to counter a Wasps midfield defence that loitered off-side, kicked in behind with great regularity but without much success.

It was a break from Paramore and hooker Chris Fortey that had Wasps back-peddalling again and PAUL landed a 17th minute penalty for a 6-0 lead.

We saw hardly any of the threat of Wasps as an attacking force and even Lawrence Dallaglio disappeared for running repairs to a nose injury – to the morbid delight of a capacity crowd.

What Gloucester really needed was a try and with 10 minutes of the half to go, they got it. Paramore created it with a chip and chase and big hit on Tom Voyce and when Wasps turned the ball over, Paul's raking pass picked out McRea.

He made a slashing break to open up midfield and sent Simpson-Daniel away for a score that brought the house down. Paul converted and Gloucester were 13-0 ahead.

However, Gloucester undid a serious amount of their good work to hand Wasps a life-line at the end of the half after Alex King landed a penalty.

Scrum-half Peter Richards kicked long from a scrum and Riaan van der Bergh collected. But in an attempt to open up play that was at best risky and worst foolhardy, McRae's pass was picked off by Fraser Waters who went unopposed to score.

King's conversion left Wasps only three points adrift at the break.

HALF-TIME :  
GLOUCESTER ..... 13  
WASPS ..... 10

How Gloucester responded to the set-back was crucial and they began the second half in mean mood. There was no denying the power and physicality, but Gloucester really required some precision to much of their build up.

Some of Andy Gomarsall's kicking had not been effective but there was a general air of sharpness and hunger that had been missing in recent weeks.

In fact, they gave Wasps a bruising examination in most areas – they produced a forward performance of real stature – particularly Paramore and the front row, while Brown and Mark Cornwell were not far behind.

And Gloucester increased their lead after 47 minutes with another Paul penalty after Wasps had been penalised for off-side in mid-field.

What they really needed was another try to create a bit of breathing space and it arrived in curious fashion after 54 minutes.

Gomarsall kicked overhead for Simpson-Daniel to chase and the bounce beat the Gloucester man and Stuart Abbott.

Leota decided he could not play the ball from an off-side position, Paramore stooped in to scoop a pass in the direction of Marcel Garvey and the winger nipped in at the corner.

The score required confirmation from the TV official, but awarded it was. Gloucester were now 21-10 ahead but the action did not cease.

King kicked a penalty after Gloucester were off-side but there was no hint of a recovery.

The intensity did not drop and the home side raised hopes of an unlikely bonus point with a third try. Gloucester pressure pressed Wasps inside their own 22, Woodman came short to plough into a tackle and when play came right down the short side, Paul, Fanolua and Garvey all had a hand in sending Andy Hazell through Dallaglio's tackle for the try.

Paul converted from the touchline and the Cherry and Whites were 15 points ahead.

Wasps were still able to launch an attack that was sustained by the forwards to in front of the posts, Rob Howley pressed the short side and Kenny Logan slipped home down the short side.

King's conversion left Wasps a point short of a bonus point and they caused a few palpitations when King's straight-line break put Mark Denney in the clear and he beat Simpson-Daniel, just, for the try in the seventh minute of stoppage time.

King pulled the conversion to the right and despite a desperate rally, Gloucester held on for a three point win.

JC