

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MAY 8, 2004

DREADFUL DAY AT THE REC. FOR GLOUCESTER

NIGHTMARE FOR GLOUCESTER AS THEY ARE THRASHED BY BATH

BATH 41 GLOUCESTER 7

Gloucester endured one of their worst days at The Rec when they were thrashed by Bath.

The Cherry and Whites managed a late consolation try from Delarey du Preez, but that was all they could manage on an awful day.

A year ago, Bath were fighting for Premiership survival. Twelve months on they administered a serious hiding towards their greatest rivals to finish top of the Premiership.

This was the stuff of Gloucester nightmares on a grand scale. As well as being out-scored four tries to one, they were totally outplayed in all the major areas and their hopes of qualifying for the Heineken Cup now rest on a victory over Sale next Saturday.

Rarely can Gloucester have been on the end of such a first half hiding this season.

Without the ball for good periods and with even less territory in threatening parts of the field, it was all about defence, concentration and a sack-load of tackles. Bath started like a train from the kick off and the ferocity of their approach never relented.

Their only concern would have been the lack of an even greater lead because they dominated with unnerving superiority but could not find a way to the line much of their play deserved.

Gloucester were rocked onto the back foot immediately when Zak Feaunati and Jonathan Humphreys steamed forward from the kick-off and Michael Lipman weighed in with useful support to force a line-out.

But there were any number of blue and black warriors ready to put it about. Danny Grewcock displayed almost savage commitment and Gloucester were never allowed to relax in their defensive duties or at the breakdown, where Bath flew into contact.

However, their biggest problem was that they conceded 12 penalties – four within the kicking range of Chris Malone – and he built on the foundations of his forwards.

Bath possessed all the great attacking ideas and in the thoughtful, accurate line kicking of Malone, strangled Gloucester to death. In truth, Gloucester did have some willing warriors themselves – Junior Paramore played on despite a seriously bloodied nose.

Alex Brown put himself about and the front rows waged their own personal one-on-one wars, but it was the home side who looked more composed and threatening.

Gloucester had kept Malone at sufficient arms reach to trail by only three points with 10 minutes of the half remaining but they lost their cool on the deck and Malone slotted home from 30 metres to increase their worries.

And three minutes later, he was on target again when Andy Gomarsall peeled off-side and from an even greater distance Malone added the points.

There was no idea where a try might arrive, but Bath were more controlled in the key areas, particularly the line-out, while Feaunati charged around and the midfield drifted well in defence when Duncan McRae was in possession.

Henry Paul did have the chance to drag Gloucester back into the game when Grewcock was penalised for off-side, but slightly drew his kick and Malone ended his one-man points show with a fourth penalty in added time after Gloucester were penalised for handling on the floor.

HALF-TIME :  
BATH ..... 12  
GLOUCESTER ..... 0

It did not get any better for Gloucester. Although there was the occasional burst from Marcel Garvey and a couple of slashing breaks from James Simpson-Daniel, Gloucester were picked apart.

The level of Bath's commitment was a throw back to the good old days at the Rec and led by Herculean performances from Humphries, Grewcock and Feaunati, Bath steamed to a hugely convincing victory.

Gloucester did have the chance to reduced the deficit to only nine points immediately after the break, but Paul again missed with his penalty attempt and from thereafter, Bath enjoyed near blanket control.

What they really needed was a try but there was no hint at what was to follow which for Gloucester was the stuff of nightmares.

Robbie Fleck and Wylie Human breathed life into a move that came to the left of Gloucester's posts before the pumping legs of Grewcock broke the first line of defence, Duncan Bell came in support and Ross Beattie slammed home from close range.

And Bath were almost in again immediately when Fleck profited from the kick-off to return possession, but Bath were forced to make do with a Malone penalty but it hardly seemed to matter.

There was plenty to admire about Bath's performance – notably the attitude they displayed up front and the composure of Malone but once they started to break out, looked capable of causing havoc from almost everywhere.

Gloucester looked short of ideas and much stamina and when they coughed up possession again, Malone kicked long for Andrew Higgins to chase and although he collided with Goodridge, Bath retained possession well enough and from a ruck, Martyn Wood put replacement prop Lee Mears through a hole and he scored.

The game had swung around almost incomprehensibly after the break and although there was a consolation try by Delaray Du Preeze from short range, Bath claimed an almost improbable bonus point with a fourth try.

Malone restarted, du Preez dropped the ball and Alex Crockett ran home to score.

BATH : M. Perry; A. Higgins, R. Fleck, S. Davey, W. Human; C. Malone, M. Wood; D. Barnes, J. Humphreys (c), D. Bell, S. Borthwick, D. Grewcock, A. Beattie, M. Lipman, Z. Feaunati.  
Reps.: R. Blake, L. Mears, D. Flatman, M. Catt, A. Crockett, J. Scaysbrook, R. Fidler.

GLOUCESTER : J. Goodridge; M. Garvey, T. Fanolua, H. Paul, J. Simpson-Daniel; D. McRae, A. Gomarsall; T. Woodman, C. Fortey, A. Deacon, M. Cornwell, A. Brown (c), J. Boer (capt.), P. Buxton, J. Paramore.  
Reps.: D. du Preez, R. Roncero, N. Wood, A. Eustace, A. Hazell, S. Amor, R. Todd.

Referee : S. Lander (RFU).

## RUGBY RESULTS

### ZURICH PREMIERSHIP

Bath .....	41	Gloucester .....	7
Leeds .....	20	Sale .....	31
London Irish .....	14	Saracens .....	20
Northampton .....	18	Harlequins .....	17
Rotherham .....	20	Newcastle .....	26
Wasps .....	17	Leicester .....	48

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Bath	22	18	0	4	508	311	79
Wasps	22	16	0	6	575	406	73
Northampton	22	15	1	6	574	416	70
Gloucester	22	14	0	8	491	412	63
Leicester	22	11	3	8	537	430	55
Harlequins	22	10	2	10	502	449	54
Sale	22	9	3	10	510	472	53
London Irish	22	10	1	11	427	454	49
Newcastle	22	7	2	13	497	525	45
Saracens	22	8	1	13	397	543	39
Leeds	22	7	1	14	449	588	37
Rotherham	22	0	0	22	309	770	3

JC