

BATH RUGBY

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BATH RUGBY VS NORTHAMPTON SAINTS

ZURICH PREMIERSHIP
SATURDAY
9 APRIL 2005
KICK-OFF 3.00pm

SPONSORS



MATCH SPONSORS





Bath Rugby

LINEUP

MATT PERRY 15
JOE MADDOCK 14
ANDY HIGGINS 13
OLLY BARKLEY 12
BRENDON DANIEL 11

CHRIS MALONE 10
NICK WALSH 9

MATT STEVENS 1
LEE MEARS 2
DUNCAN BELL 3
STEVE BORTHWICK (C) 4
DANNY GREWCOCK 5
GARETH DELVE 6
JAMES SCAYSBROOK 7
ZAK FEUNATI 8

REPLACEMENTS

NATHAN HUMPHREYS 16
DAVID BARNES 17
GERAINT LEWIS 18
ROB FIDLER 19
RAMIRO PEZ 20
MARTYN WOOD 21
RYAN DAVIS 22

HEAD COACH:
JOHN CONNOLLY



SPOTLIGHT SAINTS COME TO LIFE

BY SIMON CLARK

The sleeping giant has finally woken up. After struggling to find themselves for most of the season, Northampton Saints have suddenly come to life and seem determined to move as far away from the black hole that is the relegation spot as possible having defeated Leicester Tigers and Gloucester in recent outings.

After making such an impact last season, Northampton have really struggled to do the same this time around after being dragged into the relegation dogfight with the likes of Leeds Tykes, London Irish and Worcester Warriors. However, there are signs that things are improving for a team that has been through so much upheaval this season and the resurgence began after they subjected local rivals Leicester to only their second

defeat of their season, a game sealed with a Ben Cohen try.

The new season started well under South African coach Andrew Solomons as Saints secured back to back wins. After that the curtain came down and a run of nine successive defeats occurred, which saw Northampton plummet towards the bottom of the table. Solomons was sacked and the recently retired Budge Pountney and former England fly-half

Paul Grayson have taken over as joint Head Coaches at the club until the end of the season. Since the turn of the year, whilst things have not been exactly plain sailing for them, they have collected enough points to move themselves off the foot of the Premiership table.

Many pundits had predicted that Northampton would be challenging for the Zurich Premiership title not involved in a relegation fight. It is easy to see why, Northampton finished third in the Zurich Premiership table last season and on paper have a formidable side. Although prop Robbie Kempson left when Solomons parted company with the Saints his other two South African signings have stayed. Former Stormers duo of lock Selbourne

Boome and the ex-springbok captain Cornie Krige

remain, although Krige is set to retire from all professional rugby at the end of the season. Krige has to a certain extent overcome his doubters with a commitment to the Northampton cause and some top draw performances both in the league and the Heineken Cup.

New captain and England hooker Steve Thompson put in a good performance for England against Scotland in the Six Nations and he has shown signs in the Zurich Premiership that he is starting to find his form again. In the backs last seasons Zurich Premiership Players' player of the year, Bruce Reihane is a handful at fullback whilst there is also talent in abundance. Former Bath Rugby player Wylie Hume may be sidelined but Worcester Cup winner Ben Cohen and John 'the Rhino' Ruc are hard men to stop once they start tearing down the sidelines.

With the dark days hopefully behind them now, Northampton have steadied their sinking ship and will be looking to win today and get back on track after last weekend's disappointment in Toulouse.

