

Glendale Grinds Out Win Against Provo

Written by Pat Clifton
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Provo, as expected, was extremely large and extremely physical, and they were able to slow Glendale down in the first half with some grinding 10-man rugby and powerful tackling.

But the Raptors picked up the gauntlet of physicality thrown at their feet and returned the favor en route to a 30-5 win in the National DI Club Round of 16.

“I think our forwards really stepped up, our backs played really good defense,” said Glendale coach Mark Bullock.

“Our goal today was to deny them time and space. Obviously, you always are trying to do that, but we felt it was important today to try and get into them early, and we felt we did that.”

Glendale’s ambitious defense led to them getting on the ref’s radar early, and the first five penalties of the match were called on the Raptors. However, Provo failed to turn those penalties into points, and when the Steelers began to make their mistakes, the Raptors converted them.

Provo’s first penalty was an egregious offside, when a defender dove over the ruck to tackle Glendale scrumhalf Andre Bachelet. Flyhalf Ata Malifa slotted a penalty to put Glendale up 3-0.

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The second big penalty led to a Glendale five-meter lineout, from which No. 8 Mike Kenyon scored the match's first try. 10 minutes later, Malifa slotted his second penalty, putting Glendale up 11-0, where they'd end the half.

Provo was contesting well in the open and at the breakdown, but Glendale's first three scores were direct results of Steeler penalties.

Provo continued to tackle and run hard in the second half, but a lack of territory and line breaks kept them from threatening the Raptor tryline. The Raptors all but emptied their bench in the second half, and still managed to outpace Provo 19-0 until the 78th minute, when hooker Michael Valeti scored the Steelers' lone try of the day.

Glendale draws defending runners-up Belmont Shore in Sunday's quarterfinal, and luckily for them, they have a built-in scouting report coming from Malifa, a former Whaler.

"I'm going to try and see who's going to be playing tomorrow for Belmont, see what their weaknesses are and walk around the hotel room and tell my teammates a few of their weaknesses," said the flyhalf. "That'd be pretty dumb not to."

On the contrary, Malifa knows Belmont Shore is aware of his flaws, and he knows the certainly don't want to lost to their ex-teammate.

"By the looks of it today, I'm pretty sure those guys are out to put me out from the get-go," said Malifa, "so I've got to step out and see if I can exploit that."

Glendale

Tries: Kenyon, Statler, Joslin, Dauper

Cons: Malifa (2)

Pens: Malifa (2)

Provo

Tries: Valeti