

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1961

CARDIFF WON, BUT GLO'STER GAVE THEM A SEVERE SHAKING !

CARDIFF 10 Pts., GLOUCESTER 6 Pts.

If Gloucester lost at Cardiff last night they did so gloriously, taking with them the sting of Cardiff's reputation for invincibility at Arms Park. For the Red and Whites richly deserved to win and completely unnerved their Welsh opponents.

Even hardened nationalists like the Arms Park crowd cheered Gloucester's successes in the second half which produced the best rugby Gloucester have served up this season.

The splendid Red and White pack – which included four of this season's new boys – beat its Welsh opposition in the lineouts, drew in the set scrums and won time and again in the loose mauls.

The first half passed without a score and the lack of points emphasised the comparative lack of excitement.

Gloucester's defence was magnificent and then, against the run of play at that stage, Gloucester took the initiative when centre Alan Holder broke through, dribbling into Cardiff territory and well backed up by his wingman, Peter Meadows.

Cardiff's Wells failed to smother when he fell on the ball and Meadows continued the dribble and landed on it to open the scoring.

A FOOT WIDE

Full-back Russell Hillier missed the goal points with an angled kick only a foot wide of the uprights.

Wells, who had been unable to avert the score, corrected the situation for Cardiff to round off a perfect, fast three-quarter movement from well behind the centre line.

And that truly great player Alan Priday – possibly the best full-back playing Rugby to-day – scored the goal points from a central placing.

Wells had crossed by the corner flag only inches ahead of Osman and then raced back to place it conveniently for Priday.

Gloucester had shown once that they could reverse the run of play and penetrated the often faulty defending Welsh threes.

Again they rallied magnificently. Newcomer Nicholls, who more than justified his selection at hooker (a feather in Old Centralians' cap, by the way) won a vital strike and scrum-half Mick Booth booted it for a long touch.

BOOTH BEST

This brought Gloucester up and rubbed it home to the Welshmen that in Booth – as well as the superb pack – they had a worthy opponent. For much of the game he appeared the best man behind the scrum on either side.

Then Holder gave the ball a diagonal kick after the Gloucester men had retreated a little and from the line-out and around an avenging pack, Roy Long went over for a try.

Again Hillier failed with a difficult kick.

DIAGONAL KICKS

Then for the second time the Cardiff threes, swift and sure in occasional attacks, outran their Gloucester counterparts, passing . . . one, two three and just drawing men of Gloucester until centre, Merion Roberts, scored by the flag. Priday's conversion kick was perfect.

Too often throughout this game Alan Holder was forced to rely on a diagonal kick ahead and this you just cannot get away with if you have a man like Priday watching you like a hawk and catching every ball like a seal catching fish. He never missed once.

But on the credit side Alan Townsend repeated his last season's magnificent performance of leadership against Cardiff and showed Gloucester's forwards to be one of the most lethal weapons in Rugby.

The inclusion of Tug Wilson – R.A.F. and Gordon League by the way – was wise. He is strong and showed himself capable of passing well.

And in Tony Ricketts, Alan Townsend had a worthy front row partner, a splendid loose scrummager, with a figure reminiscent of Roy Fowkes !

Special accolades to: newcomer Nicholls and twinkling, intelligent Mick Booth.

But that man Priday . . .