

THE CITIZEN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1961

CONVERSION DECISION MYSTERY

FOR THE RECORD IT WAS A 35 PTS. WIN –

FOR A FREE-SCORING GLOUCESTER

GLOUCESTER 35PTS., STROUD NIL

Homespun Rugby and homespun laws provided diversion for the fancy[*sic*] who watched Gloucester devour Stroud at Kingsholm last night.

Homespun Rugby? Well, in all humility, Gloucester could not have taken this match as anything but a practice game after the first fifteen minutes.

Homespun laws? The chances are that referee, Mr. A. K. Golledge was mistaken when he awarded goal points in the closing minutes after Mick Booth had hit the uprights (for the third time) in a conversion attempt.

COMPLICATED

The story goes that Booth struck the posts and the ball was "blown back" (Mr. G.'s phrase) into play after Mr. Golledge had indicted a conversion, following a signal from the clairvoyant linesmen before Mick's kick had crossed the bar. This may sound complicated; the idea behind the theory that a vagrant gust of wind blew the ball back into play was even more complicated. The linesmen were wrong.

They were, to coin a phrase, counting the goal points before they were scored !

Mr. Ken Golledge delayed his bath in the clubhouse last night to tell me: "When I last saw the ball it was heading between the uprights. Both touch judges put up their flags so I whistled for a goal and ran back upfield. I don't know what happened after I turned my back but I could not change the decision."

Anyway let's forget the laws for a moment and comment on the play. That's what we all went to see, after all.

Gloucester won by 35 points to nothing and did so with a surprising degree of expertise.

IMAGINATION

Surprising? The "Red and Whites" rarely produced their best form last season when meeting a predictably beatable opposition.

Last night the threes showed great imagination – more than they showed against Bristol – and the whole team kept up the pressure to the last minute.

This indicates a ruthless win-spirit which is encouraging to those who wish the local team well in a hard season to come.

Gloucester amassed a 27-point lead in the first half after Booth had opened the account with a penalty goal at 5 minutes. Ten minutes of Gloucester attack elapsed before Bob Timms, the Gloucester left-wing, crossed for a try from a kick ahead by Peter Ford. Booth converted.

Then wing forward Dick Smith caught a high pass and crossed by the left-hand flag for Booth to convert again. John Bayliss flipped a pass to Alan Holder, who scored, and again Booth converted.

SMART MEADOWS

Some mesmeric work by the Gloucester threes followed and Bayliss crossed. But this time Booth hit the post with his conversion attempt.

Stroud's Mike Hughes then had a crack at a penalty goal which he missed, and soon Gloucester's best wing three-quarter, Peter Meadows, was swerving and dodging, and passing on the tackle for fly-half Terry Hopson to cross.

Booth's conversion attempt went wild.

And just before half-time Bayliss went over again from a scrum and a fine break by scrum-half Booth, who again hit the uprights when he attempted the conversion.

Half-time : 27pts. to nil.

It was some time before the home side produced another score.

Then Bob Timms became airborne and notched three points by the left-hand flag.

He did what Peter Meadows, faced with a similar situation, should have done in the first half; he decided to fly the last two or three yards instead of dodging.

Holder missed the goal points.

At last Peter Meadows scored from (yet again) a break by Booth. But unlucky Booth hit the posts. Or was he unlucky? Mr. Golledge would disagree !

Comments: This was a practice game for Gloucester who used the time intelligently behind the scrum and showed far greater enterprise in throwing the ball about – none of this formal cross-the-line convention – than hitherto this season.

Alone among the Stroud backs, Ieuan Sheen, at full-back, stood out as a prodigious performer in defence and attack.

THE TEAMS

Gloucester: P. Hawker; P. Meadows, A. Holder, J. Bayliss, R. Timms; T. Hopson, M. Booth; A. Townsend, M. Nicholls, A. Ricketts, R. Long, A. Brinn, P. Ford, T. Davies, D. Smith.

Stroud: I. Sheen; C. Woodruff, J. Hughes, B. Pollard, J. Hogg; R. Clutterbuck, R. Simmonds; C. Whittaker, A. Moore, R. Rowling, V. Chandler, D. Pegler, K. Cooper, K. Smart, B. Taylor.

JC