

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1961

WIZARDS HAD THE PACE – AND A MUCH BETTER FRONT ROW

GLOUCESTER 13PTS., ABERAVON 19PTS.

As in the Cambridge match, it was speed which beat Gloucester on Saturday. The result looks fair enough to me, but I suppose it might be argued that the Cherry and Whites could have made it a draw if two penalty goals had been kicked.

But this would really give a false impression for the Wizards had the best of the match, both from the point of view of territory and play in all departments.

Indeed it is surprising, when you consider the advantages Aberavon boasted over Gloucester, that the visitors did not muster a greater score.

Once again one must look with relief at the standard of tackling which Gloucester always seem to pull out.

You can praise the Aberavon 'threes for slickness as much as you like. I agree they were slick but they did not gain their team much territory. On many occasions, because of close Gloucester marking, the ball, having travelled the length of the 'threes, ended up further back than it had started !

But the fact remains that they were able to see the ball from scrums and lines-out, a situation which, alas, could rarely be said of Gloucester.

Courageous tacklers they may well have been but surely it is better to initiate an attack than stem one !

FUMBLE, FUMBLE . . .

And this brings me to another grouse; the home team were fumbling incompetents when it came to collecting a loose ball, or even taking passes which were not at hip height. By comparison, Aberavon looked like the Harlem Globetrotters.

Some serious polishing needs to be done in Gloucester, starting with the front row of the pack who, had they played with the enterprise of Aberavon's three, Cunningham, Loveluck, and Morgan, would have won the game for Gloucester.

The Wizards opened the scoring with a try by centre Brian Jones – all their tries were by the threes, by the way, and this indicates the conventional nature of the Rugby they were playing – who scored another after co-centre, Dai Thomas had also crossed. Coslett converted one.

During this time Gloucester's Peter Meadows at wing threequarter (and very good, too!) scored a try which Russell Hillier converted. Full back Hillier also added a penalty goal so that the interval came with Gloucester trailing three points, having been in the lead.

THOMAS AGAIN

In the second period, winger Owen Hughes went over and so did Dai Thomas (again), whose third try was converted by Coslett.

Gloucester revived considerably in the second half, chiefly because of scrum-half Mick Booth's splendid use of the touch-line, even in defence.

Not once did Booth settle for an easy, careless clearance under pressure. He always tried for the longest possible touch. He may not have the length of Russell Hillier but he kicks better than anyone in the team under pressure.

MEADOWS STARS

Booth started the move which led to Gloucester's final score, a penalty try, after an attack which went the length of the field.

Meadows, with his individual run from the left wing to the right – to put Bob Timms on the attack – was the star of this move.

But it was fitting that Booth should convert the penalty try, awarded to Dick Smith, who was obstructed under the posts.

JC