

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1961

FINE PACK FORM IN GLOUCESTER WIN

GLOUCESTER 14PTS., COVENTRY 8PTS.

The Gloucester pack was back in command on Saturday. To be able to say as much is to anticipate a return to the fighting form that Gloucester showed during the first few weeks of this season.

It must come as something of a relief to the selectors to know that the shake-up they engineered has paid off.

The forwards looked collectively better than I have seen them for weeks. They had fire and speed and strength which continually had Coventry's defences reeling.

TENACIOUS TACKLING

And if the visitors' trialist half-back combination of Dalton and Cole did assist the ball out into the open, instead of their customary course of kicking for touch, then the Gloucester threes and wing forwards were tenacious in the tackles.

It was the day of the two Peters; Ford and Hawker. The stand-in full back played a splendid game, opening the scoring for Gloucester after Cole had notched a dropped goal, and lending his open talents to attack as well as defending vigorously.

And now to Peter Ford who, at wing-forward, notched a further two opportunist tries to add to his reputation for ubiquity. He could not put a foot wrong !

CONSISTENT BOOTH

His second try – from an interception – was converted by Booth, who played a consistently intelligent and thoughtful game from the first to last whistles. This rounded off his first half with Gloucester comfortable 11 points to 3 points in the lead.

But Coventry were far from beaten. Many thought they deserved a better showing, so far as the score-board was concerned. But many more criticised their half-back combination for insisting on so many line-outs.

Wing-forward Keith Brookes added a try for Coventry in the second half, and Cole, who was not on form with his boot on Saturday, converted.

And finally, fly-half Terry Hopson went over for Gloucester's last unconverted try, just before the no-side whistle.

There is a popular saying in Rugby about front row forwards. It is: "Never saw him once. He must have played a blinder!" Could this apply to Jack Fowke, who came in for Tony Ricketts in Gloucester's front row ?