

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, MARCH 19, 1962

GLOUCESTER'S PACK HELD THE WHIP HAND

GUY'S HOSPITAL 9 Pts., GLOUCESTER 21 Pts.

Gloucester are now well in the clear so far as wins and points are concerned. Their credit stands high, and whatever happens at Newport – assuming the game will be played – they will be a winning side worth an investment by Kingsholm fans when Harlequins come Saturday week.

For Gloucester may not travel to Newport because of the smallpox scare, and if they do it is difficult to see anything but a close result in this traditionally close encounter at Rodney Parade.

The Cherry and Whites have now topped 402 points, having conceded 372, and won 16 matches, lost 13, and drawn two.

They were not on their best form on Saturday, despite the apparent ease with which they won.

"IRREVERENT" SIDE

The reason for this, I believe, is that Guy's are a somewhat irreverent bunch of players who have nothing much to lose and will try anything – including unwise kicks ahead, which ensure a crunching impact of packs and little else. The greatest batsman in the world can lose his wicket to a long-hop(!) and Gloucester did not shine in this type of free for all.

As was expected, Gloucester's pack ruled and Hal Symonds again distinguished himself in the lines-out and in the loose. On his day Symonds is one of the very best forwards one could wish to see.

He has an eye for the main chance and can support the backs with a run or two as well as – on Saturday quite noticeably – excellent passes.

SNATCHING

In fact against Guy's there was very little wrong with the passes which most of the Gloucester players handed out. But there was a great deal wrong with the way they were received.

I saw Hopson, Holder, Brinn, Spalding all pass well, but few players had the grace to wait for the ball to reach them. There was too much snatching and consequently too many knocks-on.

Full-back Russell Hillier put the first points on the board with a penalty and scored another after Guy's winger Egwuattu had crossed for a try.

Skipper Alan Townsend crossed for a try just before the interval and upon the resumption both Tony Osman and Peter Meadows scored tries before the Hospital centre, Biggs and their full-back Myall, replied with penalties.

Hillier was to score another penalty and scrum-half John Spalding a try before the curtain fell on a game which will look better in the record book than it appeared to a handful of shivering spectators.

POLISHED DISPLAY BY UNITED

GLOUCESTER UTD. 19 PTS., CLEVE 5 PTS.

Temperament – that seems the most likely reason for Gloucester United's pattern of successes and failures.

In registering a decisive win over Cleve, on Saturday, United gave one of their most polished displays of the season.

It's almost as though their pre match attitude to the game decides the result of the match. On Saturday, there was no doubt that United felt like winning and win they did.

A JOY TO WATCH

Cleve started in fine form but United were soon on top with their swiftly-moving threes and rock-steady forwards, taking absolute command.

Hannaford, Bayliss, Stephens, and Timms were a joy to watch in either combined or individual efforts with Hawkes and scrum-half Cooper also distinguishing themselves.

United's tries came from Timms (2), Hawker (2), and Bayliss, and Cleve's five points came from winger Yeadon.

JC