

THE CITIZEN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1962

SLOW MOTION WIN FOR GLOUCESTER

GLOUCESTER 14PTS., CHELTENHAM NIL

It was a win in slow motion when Gloucester met Cheltenham at Kingsholm last night. It took the home side 25 minutes of hard Rugby to find the chink in Cheltenham's armour – far too long for a team with Gloucester's potential.

And it was worth noting that the try scored by scrum-half skipper, Mickie Booth was the result of a successful line-out for Gloucester's forwards.

For the home pack reigned supreme in the line-outs, and it was from these that the Gloucester skipper launched most of his personal attacks.

Full-back Alan Holder missed the goal points, but this was not worth remarking, considering the fine game he played.

His positioning was always opportune, his kicking for touch safe and the cause for many a sigh of relief for Gloucester; and, in addition, he was fully capable of opening up an attacking move.

MUCH IMPROVED

The three-point lead, therefore, was all the home side could muster in the first half. But there were encouraging performances from Booth himself – much improved in form and leadership since Saturday's defeat by Lydney – and also Ken Wilson at prop and Hal Symonds at lock.

Both the latter were exceptionally lively in the loose, Wilson emerging frequently in possession and using brawn and brains with equal facility, and Symonds showing how well he can run with the ball.

It was in the set scrums that Gloucester's pack was again wanting, and one cannot help but wonder if the front row fault on Saturday really lay with Alan Townsend, who was dropped.

Could Mike Wetson at hooker be the culprit ?

OPPORTUNITIES SEIZED

Gloucester certainly were not getting nearly their usual share of the ball from the set scrums in either game.

The home three-quarters came into their own in the second half and, again, this was not so much by tactical design as because they seized the rare opportunities they were given, or capitalised on Cheltenham defensive errors.

The ever-strong Ron Pitt, forceful when given the opportunity, opened the second half scoring with a crash-over try under the posts.

Booth had received a good clean heel from Wetson; Richard Clutterbuck at fly-half took it upfield and passed to Pitt who dived over, taking Cheltenham defenders with him. Booth converted.

INDIVIDUAL EFFORT

This was virtually the only traditional attacking move in a game which was again lacking in constructive thought on both sides. Success throughout seemed to depend far too much on individual effort.

Like Hal Symonds' splendid dummying run and Peter Ford's individual ranging of the field, looking for opportunities to initiate attacks.

I am not sure who to credit the third try to. Bob Timms and Ron Pitt cracked their heads together as they landed on the ball after Cheltenham's Dickie Bassett at wing three-quarter had thrown it behind his own line while under pressure.

Dick Smith and Timms embarked on a dribbling attack a few minutes later which saw Smith, at wing forward scoring the final try.

Once again the fate of the threes was left to chance in this game and although both Booth and Clutterbuck played an infinitely better game than on Saturday, there was still too little constructive and tactical use of the twin towers of strength, Pitt and John Bayliss, who constitute perhaps the best centre combination Gloucester have had in years.

JC