

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1962

NEATH FULL-BACK STOOD BETWEEN GLO'STER AND VICTORY

GLOUCESTER 6PTS., NEATH 6PTS.

How Gloucester failed to win this match only the Neath full-back can tell you. The visitors'-man-in-the-rear, G. Hodgson, meant everything to the outplayed Welsh side in the last twenty minutes.

The failure to win was certainly no fault of the home pack and Mick Booth, the scrum-half and skipper. For they all drew on resources of strength and ingenuity in an effort to break through.

In fact neither side's line fell in this match, although in all fairness, Gloucester came more breathtakingly near to scoring tries than ever the Welshmen did.

The opening score came from Hodgson's boot and the tally remained at 0–3 until the changeover.

Booth eventually equalised with a dropped goal in the second half after he had received possession from a scrum.

AHEAD

And it was the home skipper Gloucester had to thank also for the three points which briefly gave them the lead. Booth banged over a short penalty goal after centre John Bayliss had been obstructed in front of the Neath posts.

The equalising points for Neath came again from their star player, Hodgson, who booted the final score of the day with yet another penalty.

Thus it was a moral victory to Gloucester. For my money a dropped goal and a penalty are worth more than two penalties.

ON THE ATTACK

But the home advantage was really territorial in the second half. Most of the post-interval period was spent inside the Welsh half and much of that time in the Neath "25."

And Gloucester can thank energetic "Baggy" Hudson for much of this. His work in the line-outs outshone that of his opposite number, D. Davies who looked formidable in the opening stages.

Booth had his best game to date in this fierce and lusty match, touch-finding with casual ease and great accuracy.

In fact his touch-finders were rivalled only by those of Neath's overworked Hodgson.

WETSON GREAT

Mike Wetson had a superb game in the loose. No half-back was safe when Wetson was near in the line-out and, in defence, winger Peter Meadows was always enthusiastic and reliable.

Ron Pitt had a fair game but was outshone by his partner, John Bayliss whose runs under pressure were a feature of a match in which the backs had very little to do.

VARIATION NEEDED

For my money, fly-half Richard Clutterbuck could have varied his technique somewhat. The diagonal kick ahead is only of use once or twice in a match and, with a player like Hodgson on the opposite side, it tends to lose all meaning and value.

VERDICT: a good forward game, marred by over-heated brows. The side which decided to open it up could have won !