

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1962

GLO'STER WELL HELD THE MIGHTY COVENTRY PACK

GLOUCESTER 3PTS., COVENTRY 6PTS.

Coventry must derive what satisfaction they can from their victory by a try and a penalty goal to a try.

And the Warwickshire selectors, present at the match, must now have a few misgivings about the Coventry "eight" which is also the Warwickshire "eight" and boasts the England front row.

For the boys of Gloucester held that mighty Midland machine in one of the most keenly stimulating forward games I have seen since the South Africans were fighting it out against Newport.

Gloucestershire's selectors on the other hand can feel nothing but pride in a local club, most of whose players are drawn from an area with a fraction of Coventry's population.

NOT A DUD

There was not a single dud performance in the home eight which was superbly led once again by Alan Townsend. And if Bert Godwin was more successful with the heel than Gloucester's Mike Wetson, the Gloucester hooker was a positive inspiration in the open, usurping Peter Ford's prerogative of being the first forward to get a hand on a ball which goes loose !

I refer to the Gloucester "eight" but most members of the pack believe that the inclusion of Brian Hudson swells the figure to nine and sometimes, ten !

He is certainly the fiercest second row forward in the county and should really be in the England trial instead of Bristol's Dave Watt. He is, however, reserve to Watt.

To return to Wetson again; it was he who set up Peter Meadows' equalising try in the first half. He moved in a close field in the way one was expecting Peter Jackson to move. But Jackson and the backs of Coventry saw very little of the play.

Jeremy Taylor again showed an ability to penetrate, Meadows took his only opportunity and Bob Timms kept Jackson well under control, even fooling the master with a well-timed pass which drew the jinking genius at the last second.

Several of fly-half Terry Hopson's touch kicks put Gloucester in attacking positions, likewise those of skipper Mickie Booth, whose cute brain never stopped ticking over.

REST LOOKED ON

But this was not Hopson's day any more than it was Dalton's or Cole's.

This was the day on which the packs fought to a man and the rest looked on.

The first half was a draw with Coventry holding the territorial advantage.

In the second half Cole added a penalty goal to Melville's first-half try. But Gloucester kept play in the Coventry half for 80 per cent of the post interval spell, of which 80 per cent 25 per cent was spent inside the Coventry "25."

To my way of thinking this makes the match a home win and if Gloucester's place kickers had been on form, it may well have been a victory.

FINAL WORD

But the final word must be for that magnificent "eight" – Messrs. Jack Fowke, Mike Wetson, Alan Townsend, Alan Brinn, Brian Hudson, Peter Ford, David Gilbert-Smith, and Dick Smith.

In many ways they reminded me of the league batsman who, warned about a particular fast bowler, said: "Lindwall? Who is he?" and cracked the master for a brace of sixes to show that reputation matter nought to him !

JC