

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, APRIL 1, 1963

GLO'STER'S BRAVE FIGHT

HARLEQUINS 30PTS., GLOUCESTER 11PTS.

Rugby football injuries must be accepted as both unfortunate and inevitable – and no one should criticise Gloucester for their defeat at Twickenham on Saturday without fully appreciating the effect which injury had on this game.

And in saying this I am not merely putting forward excuses in an attempt to redeem the Cherry and Whites.

In actual fact they deserve a good deal of sympathy, for the 30pts.–11 final score gives a completely distorted reflection on their play and the game in general.

The biggest blow to Gloucester came seconds before the half-time whistle when wing-forward David Gilbert-Smith was taken off with a deep cut over his eye after a clash of heads when he crunched straight into 'Quins wing three-quarter Eden who also left the field.

Neither Gilbert-Smith nor Eden returned during the second half and only a few minutes after the change over centre Jeremy Taylor felt the effects of a leg injury which imposed restrictions on his speed and cross kicking.

Then, as if for superstition's sake, wing three-quarter Peter Meadows made it three in a row when he sat on his own ankle, twisted under him after being tackled, and was left hobbling for the remaining minutes.

THREE INJURED

Three injuries and prop forward Alan Townsend playing under a slight handicap, tipped the scales right against Gloucester. As if to make matters worse 'Quins wing forward Todman, who took over wing three-quarter duties when Eden went off, dropped into the position incredibly well and scored no less than two second half tries.

And no matter what type of play Gloucester produced – tactical or orthodox – they could find nothing to beat 'Quins' ability for getting the ball, their at times faultless handling, and generally more constructional Rugby.

Garry White and Dave Owen scored Gloucester's two tries and fully deserved them for they had both been the mainstays of defence when Gloucester were on their heels, and had used few gaps in the 'Quins' threequarter line to their advantage.

Russell Hillier opened Gloucester's scoring with a penalty and converted one try.

In short, this was a game where the Kingsholm men were genuinely unlucky with injuries and would not close the second half of the game up by kicking to touch.