

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1963

BOOTH AND HOPSON "LAUNCHED" GLO'STER TO VICTORY

CHELTENHAM NIL, GLOUCESTER 6 PTS.

The score is a fair reflection of this muddy match, although Cheltenham deserved a few points in the second half after some promising rallies and plenty of attacking tackling.

Before the interval Gloucester held complete territorial sway, spending at least 20 consecutive minutes in the home half without a chance of Cheltenham breaking through.

The second half was far more interesting. Cheltenham had had more than their fare share of the set scrums throughout and on the resumption the home eight even had Gloucester's powerful pack on the retreat in the tight.

UNBEATABLE

But Gloucester's form in the loose and lines-out was unbeatable. Second row forward, Alan Brinn played a blinder and hooker Ken Taylor put in a lot of work – work which often saw him emerging from a jungle of legs in possession !

The real star among the Gloucester backs – apart from the half-back combination of Mickie Booth and Terry Hopson – was Jackie Fowke, at centre.

It was a long pass by Lowe to winger Tony Osman which gave Gloucester their lead at half-time. And in addition Lowe always looked for work.

The second half resumed with further evidence of fly-half Hopson's great natural brilliance. He took a one-handed and difficult pass from Booth on one occasion, that had even the Cheltenham supporters roaring.

WONDERFUL RUN

And during this period the home eight was pushing Gloucester's pack with tremendous will; while the Cheltenham full-back, Graham Wright, collected those kicks of Hopson, Booth and Alan Holder, he was able to assist his team on to the attack.

After the resumption, too, Hopson had a wonderful run which resulted in him passing to Peter Ford at wing forward.

One felt that perhaps the Gloucester fly-half could, with his tremendous speed, have made it alone.

But he chose to pass to Ford and Ford's pass to centre Ron Pitt was fumbled.

BETTER THAN EVER

Throughout the second half the Cheltenham scrum half, Mike Davies, seemed to be gaining confidence, with the result that defence was turned into attack with his kicks – across field or for touch.

Finally, though, it was Gloucester's half back combination – playing possibly better together than even in the Cardiff match last week – which produced the clincher for the Cherry and Whites.

Booth dive-passed expertly to Hopson and the Gloucester fly-half looked as if he was set for an attempt at a dropped goal from 25 yards out. Left footed he booted the ball to the wing, however, and Tony Osman was there to collect and dive over for the second try.

This was not a great match. But it was refreshingly open for a local "derby," which was also threatened with tedious play by the muddy surface on which it was enacted.

NO CHANGES

Gloucester's skipper, Mickie Booth, believes the next six matches lined up for his team will result in victories for the Cherry and Whites.

After beating Cardiff and Cheltenham with virtually the same team he is loth to have it changed.

So for the New Brighton match at Kingsholm on Saturday the home game against Sale on Monday and, barring injuries the away match with Lydney next Tuesday, he is hoping to prolong the lucky spell with the same line-up.

Team: A. Holder; R. Timms, J. Bayliss, R. Pitt, A Osman; T. Hopson, M. Booth; J. Fowke, K. Taylor, A. Townsend, A. Brinn, B. Hudson, P. Ford, D. Owen, D. Smith.

Reserve: B. Jackson.

UNITED AT HEREFORD

United have only one match during the club's crowded holiday period – with Hereford on Saturday (coach 1.30 from Kingsholm).

Team: R. Hillier; R. Smith, E. Stephens, J. Lowe, J. Laurant; R. Byrne, G. Mace; I. Oakes, N. Halls, J. Herbert, A. Davies, J. Mace, P. Hawker, E. Smith, G. White.

Reserve: M. Cooper.