

THE CITIZEN

TUESDAY, APRIL 16, 1963

HOW GALLANT GLO'STER TURNED THE TABLES TO WIN 19-6

GLOUCESTER 19PTS., SALE 6PTS.

Reflecting on this great 14-man victory by that oh-so-gallant Gloucester team, one question remains uppermost in my mind; What, Rugby-wise, makes Gloucester fly-half Terry Hopson tick . . ?

For it was Hopson who dropped two magnificent goals early in the second half of this thrill-packed game at Kingsholm yesterday.

Gloucester were losing 5pts.-6 at the interval but once the teams had changed over Hopson got his boot to the ball and winged it over from the Sale 25.

Five minutes later he did precisely the same thing again – but this time from 30-35 yards out, booting the ball over and above the uprights.

Thus, in little more than five minutes, a 5pts.-6 Sale lead had been transformed, virtually by Hopson alone, into an 11pts.-6 Gloucester lead.

TURNING POINT

This was Terry Hopson, the fly-half, who played such an unenthusiastic and dispirited game eight weeks ago which saw him get "the drop" for a time – and certainly deservedly so – providing Gloucester with six vital points which proved the turning point (or should I say points?) of the game.

And no-one can say that Hopson just happened to be in the right place at the right time yesterday.

The second kick in particular was a precision-like, split second planned piece of Rugby artistry which makes all the more mediocre games worth enduring.

Why then should Hopson play such a chequered pattern of games throughout the season ?

I can sum it up in just five words – temperament and the Kingsholm crowd – and leave it at that, apart from adding that he must provide the Gloucester selectors with one of their worst headaches.

GARY WHITE, TOO

But from fly half to wing forward – Gary White, in fact the man who added no fewer than ten points with a try which must have given Gloucester an immense amount of confidence.

The Cherry and Whites were losing 6pts. to nil when White touched down, and when he converted his own try to put them just one point behind Sale.

He then went on to play what was by far his best game of the season, kicking a penalty and converting Alan Brinn's try which came late in the second half to give Gloucester their 19pts. to 6 victory.

EXCEPTIONAL WIN

And it was a truly exceptional victory. For Gloucester, having lost wing-forward Dick Smith after only 18 minutes, went on with 14 men to thrash Sale with fast, open, incident-packed Rugby which more than suited the Bank Holiday crowd.

Credit must also, of course, go to skipper scrum-half Mickie Booth, who commanded this depleted side and, I feel justified in saying, steered them to success.

Praise also for the Gloucester threequarter line, especially centre Jackie Lowe and left wing Tony Osman who so nearly got away during the first half.

Of the forwards, Alan Townsend, Alan Brinn, and Brian Hudson featured well in this win, as did full back Alan Holder, and, all in all, the entire Gloucester side deserve a good pat on the back for giving us a bright point-spree of a holiday game which was, to say the least, well worth watching.

UNITED LINE-UP

Gloucester United's last game of the season – Thursday, at Kingsholm (6.30 p.m.), against Cheltenham United – is : –

R. Hillier; A. Nield, J. Wright, E. Stephens, B. Jackson; J. Lowe, G. Mace; J. Herbert, N. Halls, I. Oakes, A. Davies, J. Mace, P. Hawker, R. Smith, R. Haines. Reserve: G. Stone.

JC