

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, APRIL 29, 1963

BOYS' MATCH; DISAPPOINTING

ENGLAND 5 PTS., WALES 8 PTS.

Criticisms of the Welsh Boys' Club side which played the pick of the English Boys' Clubs were quite unjustified. There were shouts of: "Open it up, Wales, let's see some football!" Now, in the circumstances – they were that there was no score until well into the second half – this would have been foolhardy.

In trying to close the game up after a great try by centre P. Dennis of Neath (converted by J. Morgan) the Welsh team were employing the regrettable, but correct, tactics.

KEPT CLOSE

This was a strangely disappointing match. One expects copybook but open play from the youngsters. And neither side seemed disposed to allow the ball into the open from the outset.

Shearing, the England hooker, marred the earlier part of the game by holding on to the ball too long.

Why this policy was pursued, I don't know; for there was little likelihood of the English pack pushing back the Welsh "eight" Coventry style.

And the visitors' pack was a good deal livelier in the loose, too. At least one of the Welsh boys – second row forward, R. Davies, of Neath, who is at the moment a little too fiery – will play for Wales if he continues with his Rugby.

BARGING RUN

It was Davies whose barging run made Wales' second try by prop D. Whitlock.

But one must be fair to Shearing. It was a heel against the head which enabled scrum-half J. Pike, of Bristol (a little too fond of holding on to possession?) to pluck the ball from the back row and dart over for England's single try. Prop forward Reg Pearce converted.

Of the England backs V. Bennett, of Cornwall, at centre, was the most noticeably adept. His ability to find a gap by switching to an inside direction was the best thing in England's game: that and the lusty energy of London's Agamban on the wing – a determined and courageous runner.

I feel that if England had had an inspiring pack leader, the story would have been very different. As it is, they lost their enthusiasm very early and correspondingly the Welshmen got more fire and confidence.

CARELESS HANDLING

England's handling, too, was quite awful. It was careless and passes were flying irresponsibly around the field.

The less said about individual performances the better. It was a disappointing display for a match which could have been the best of the season.