

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1963

GREAT LOCAL TRIPLE FOR GLORIOUS GLO'STER

STROUD (35–3), LYDNEY (22–6) TASTE DEFEAT –

NOW IT'S CHELTENHAM'S TURN

CHELTENHAM 3Pts., GLOUCESTER 20Pts.

Two splendid dropped goals by fly-half Terry Hopson provided an apt finale to Gloucester's exhilarating performance at the Athletic Ground last night when they beat Cheltenham by a clear, convincing 17 points.

Towards the end of the second half Hopson took the opportunist's chance and with split-second accuracy and precision-like kicking shot the ball cleanly between the uprights from an angled position approximately 40 yards out.

Minutes later he added another three points with an identical kick which brought admiration from players and spectators alike – and at the same time put Cheltenham completely out of their class.

But Hopson, though giving a tonic fly-half exhibition with his spirited tearaway dash through the Cheltenham backs and his ground-gaining punt ahead, had to be content last night to share the honours with lock-forward Garry White.

The robust ex-Old Centralian lock opened the scoring with an angled penalty after some 15 minutes.

RACED 20 YARDS

Then, when Peter Ford touched down for the first try of the game, he added the extra conversion kick points, and before half time had scored a try of his own when he snatched up a pass from Peter Ford after Hopson had raced at least 20 yards along the flank.

And it was only bad luck which prevented White from converting his own try, for the ball was just inches wide and struck the upright.

At half time, the score stood at 11 pts.—nil which all in all was quite a fair reflection on the game at that stage as Cheltenham had been caught in possession on innumerable occasions and had shown a complete lack of initiative and enterprise.

The Gloucester hooker, Mike Nicholls was winning ninety per cent of the scrums and the line outs were dominated by Peter Ford, Alan Brinn, and Brian Hudson who time and time again had got the ball to scrum-half Mickie Booth before their Cheltenham counterparts had even seen it.

NO RELUCTANCE

Consequently, the Gloucester three had their full, fair share of the ball and once a comfortable lead had been established they showed no reluctance whatsoever to throw the ball about.

At the beginning of the second half Cheltenham's wing three-quarter Nick Foice came within yards of the line when he made their first really dangerous break, but he was grounded with a dust-biting tackle from full-back Alan Holder, and when the ball ran loose centre John Bayliss kicked safely to touch.

Cheltenham were then reduced to 14 men, when prop John Newman was taken off with a leg injury, and minutes later had yet another three points set against them when Tony Osman touched down after a sprint and a dodge through the backs.

Then came Cheltenham's lone try, with wing-forward Ian Holmes snatching a meagre three points – but it was painfully obvious that Cheltenham would never have made amends, not even if the game had gone on all night.

ONE OF THE BEST

Finally, in the gloom (and more's the pity) Terry Hopson finished off what was probably one of the best Cheltenham-Gloucester matches yet played with those two magnificent dropped goals and it was all over – Gloucester had won by no less than 17 points.

It was a game which made Gloucester supporters proud and Cheltenham supporters envious and, after all had been said and done, who can ask more of a side than that ?

Teams :

Cheltenham: J. Crouch; J. C. Jones, D. Brookes, C. Frost, N. Foice; M. Roberts, M. J. Davies (capt.); A. T. Davies, D. Cooke, J. Newman, C. Wiggins, G. Farr, B. Capaldi, B. Lee, J. Holmes.

Gloucester: A. Holder (capt.); R. Smith, J. Bayliss, J. Taylor, A. Osman; T. Hopson, M. Booth; J. Fowke, M. Nicholls, A. Townsend, B. Hudson, A. Brinn, P. Ford, G. White, R. Smith.

Referee: Mr. J. Thompson (Warwick).