

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1963

IT WAS A GALLANT EFFORT BY GLOUCESTER

MOSELEY 6PTS., GLOUCESTER 3PTS.

If Gloucester can learn by their mistakes this narrow defeat by Moseley will certainly prove invaluable to them.

For if it did little else, this generally uninspiring game in which neither side gave of their best did hammer home the fact that it is vital in present-day Rugby football to be able not only to take the loose ball but also to use it to the best possible advantage.

Very rarely indeed in today's game do tries come directly from the set pieces.

SHATTERED

On Saturday it hardly mattered how well second-row forwards Alan Brinn and Barrie McDougall jumped and got the ball away in the line outs; or how well hooker Mike Wetson heeled the ball back in the set scrums; or how well scrum-half Gary Mace's service linked up with fly-half David Ainge from either the scrums or the line outs.

For with the man-to-man marking and the excellent covering, movements from the set pieces were shattered almost before they had time to gain ground.

But in the loose it was a completely different story.

It was the man who could latch on to that loose ball and send out the surprise pass to the waiting three-quarters who could then hare down the flank, who did the damage.

This was the way in which Moseley held possession for such long periods and the way in which they took play so near the Gloucester line on so many occasions that a break through seemed inevitable.

But it was also the way in which Gloucester opened the scoring in the first half.

It was that surprise pass which came out of a midfield melee (from skipper Alan Holder?) which found wing three-quarter Peter Meadows, who made valuable ground before passing on out to scrum-half Gary Mace, who, in turn, chipped a pass to winger Bob Smith, who touched down.

UNIMAGINATIVE

Gloucester were not, in all fairness, worth their three points lead, for they had spent long periods set back on their heels, and I am confident that the Moseley three-quarter line, in which centre Bedggood[*sic*] was outstanding, would have broken through time and time again had they tried to draw the man and make the gap instead of constantly running across the field.

Thus the unimaginative play by the Midland's backs did little to liven up the game and certainly didn't help them to level the scores, but ten minutes after half-time full-back Gavins kicked a penalty to give Moseley three equalising points.

And that would have been a fair result for both rather off-form sides had it not been for a slick Moseley three-quarter movement which left Bob Smith on his own to cope with both the Moseley centre Hazledine and winger Curry and of course the obvious happened.

Hazledine passed to Curry as he was about to be tackled and Curry touched down in the corner for the winning try.

HIT UPRIGHT

It was indeed tough luck for Gloucester, who had held on gallantly for most of the game with full-back Alan Holder working overtime as the last line of defence.

And it was tough luck also on reserve fly-half David Ainge, who saw his dropped goal attempt fall only a few feet short and the ball strike the upright with a conversion attempt.

It was a game which Gloucester cannot complain at losing, but nevertheless, they deserve a good measure of sympathy for being beaten in the last five minutes after keeping Moseley out with such grim determination for so long.

UNITED LET GAME SLIP AWAY

GLOUCESTER UNITED 11PTS.

MOSELEY UNITED 14PTS.

Bald-headedness may not be a virtue, and it may not help a Rugby player very much – except to distinguish him from his team-mates.

But when two bald-headed players score tries in quick succession, as they did on Saturday, one begins to have second thoughts about the disadvantages of a 'draught up top.' Perhaps there is something to be said for it after all !

Certainly the two gentlemen in question – Moseley United's Maurice Hume and Ron Collison – could not have timed their effort better.

Their two vital tries, one of which was converted, rallied their dispirited team-mates and served to spur the visiting XV on to eventual victory.

Gloucester United, 11 points up at the interval, never recovered from Moseley's spirited rally, and conceded two more tries before closing up the game.

The impression one had in the last quarter was of 30 players doing their best to do something constructive, though never quite succeeding.

Wright, and Laurie scored tries for United, Tocknell converting one and kicking a penalty.

JC