

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1951

GLO'STER COULD HAVE DONE BETTER

Playing considerably below full strength, Birkenhead Park put up stout resistance against Gloucester, but found the opposition provided by their West Country visitors a little too much for them.

For at least threequarters of the game Gloucester held the initiative and finished up worthy winners by two penalty goals and a try (9 points) to one try (3 points).

It was a match in which the standard of rugby never rose to any great heights, and had Gloucester taken all their chances the margin of victory would have been greater.

On the whole the Gloucester pack had the better of the exchanges in the loose, and with Cyril Thomas hooking the ball from a good proportion of the scrummages, Vivian Davies made a successful re-appearance as scrum-half.

He got the ball out quickly with long, straight passes and more than once took advantage of gaps in the Birkenhead defence to make openings on his own.

Outside-half Bill Cartmell also gave a good display as an individualist and, on occasions, his clever running completely baffled the majority of the opposing players.

WEAK FINISHING.

But although Gloucester showed more determination behind the scrum than in any of their matches this season, their finishing was often weak and movements which should have produced tries were not rounded off properly or else were spoiled by faulty handling.

Once or twice, however, it was good to see the forwards backing up the threequarters in passing movements – and no-one was more prominent in this respect than Gordon Hudson, who came very close on one occasion.

Birkenhead were well served by their outside-half, Deb Murphy, who initiated several promising attacks. But, in common with the Gloucester backs, the handling of the home threequarters was not always very sure.

It was unfortunate for Birkenhead that when they were trying to stage a rally Murphy had to leave the field a quarter of an hour before the end of the game with an injured collarbone.

HALLS SOUND

Trevor Halls played another sound game as fullback and it was he who put Gloucester ahead with a penalty goal from nearly 40 yards.

Before the interval, Peter Ford – who, despite a badly bruised shoulder, was a prominent member of the Gloucester pack in the loose – added an unconverted try.

A snap try by Murphy early in the second half reduced the arrears but another penalty goal by Trevor Halls made the game safe.

Although Gloucester never really looked like losing their grip on the game, they should have made better use of some of their opportunities.

UNITED GIVE ONE OF BEST DISPLAYS

Giving one of their best displays for a long time, Gloucester United completely outplayed Bristol Aero at Kingsholm and their win by 4 goals (2 pen., 1 drop), 2 tries (20 points) to nil by no means flattered them.

A vast improvement in the back division, where Burrows, Hill and Jennings made a dangerous attacking triangle, was chiefly responsible for United's win.

Burrows, called in at the last minute in place of Corbett, still proved himself one of the city's finest outside halves.

Young Gordon League centre, John Jennings, made a highly successful debut and impressed with his straight running and deadly tackling.

Hill, the other centre, also played in his best form, while Humphries was a bag of tricks at the base of the scrum.

At full-back, Heath performed splendidly and the best forwards were Ivor Jones, Daniells, Wadley, and newcomer Redman, the former Bristol player.

Jennings (2) and Ibbotson scored tries for United, Heath converting one and kicking two penalties. Burrows also dropped a goal.