

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1952

GLOUCESTER PACK EARN MORE GLORY

The hearts of Gloucester players, officials and supporters were in their mouths 30 seconds from the end of the club's match against Coventry at Coundon-rd.

With the scores level at three points all, Coventry had been awarded a penalty right in front of the Gloucester goal-posts and it seemed that the Warwickshire side could hardly miss collecting the winning points. But Roy Rowland failed to get his boot properly to the ball when taking the kick, and the game ended in a draw.

Rain and mud made conditions anything but ideal for constructive rugby but both sets of backs made some creditable attempts at handling.

ANOTHER SPLENDID DISPLAY

The main battle was, however, between the packs, and the grand Gloucester eight earned fresh glory with another splendid display. In the first half, good hooking by Cyril Thomas, who was well supported by the rest of the pack, brought Gloucester the lion's share of the ball from the set scrums.

But after the interval the initiative in this department passed to Coventry, and for a time it looked as though the home team might get on top. It was then that Gloucester's forwards really "got cracking" in the loose.

Their strong effective rushes and forceful play completely upset Coventry's calculations, and the Midlanders found themselves doing more defending than attacking.

ONE OF THE BEST

One of Gloucester's best forwards in this match was Brian Hudson, their second row reserve from the United.

The back row trio of Ford, Gwilliam and Ibbotson were also in very good form.

Coventry's quickness to seize a chance brought them their try, which was scored in the corner by right-wing, A. E. Sutton. Michael Baker kicked a penalty goal to give the visitors equalising points.

Gloucester fully merited their share of the honours.

BITTER BLOW FOR UNITED

Though they had a decided territorial advantage, and sufficient chances to have won comfortably Gloucester United lost to Coventry Extra 1st by the only score of the match – a try by Watson in the closing stages.

And with it went United's home record !

But they hardly deserved to lose. They were beaten by a side who were unable to get going themselves, but pounced avidly on the slightest United error.

The home backs found the close Coventry marking and a greasy ball a difficult combination to counter.

It was from a handling mistake by United that Coventry kicked through and scored – right against the run of play.

Brumfitt made several clever moves and both Sutton and full-back Halls were sound in defence, but generally United backs were below form.

Not so the pack, however! They performed magnificently. Burford completely out-hooked his opposite number, while in the loose, Gordon Hudson, Wadley, Evans, skipper Ivor Jones and Redman – the latter in his first game of the season – played superbly.

It was a bitter blow for United to lose their record in such conditions.

JC