

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1983

MOGG'S MAGIC TO THE RESCUE

GLOUCESTER 14 Pts., EBBW VALE 9 Pts.

Gloucester's Richard Mogg demonstrated the touch of class which has taken him to the verge of International recognition with some deft running at Kingsholm last night.

The Gloucester centre came to the rescue when the chips were down after Ebbw Vale had taken the lead in the second half.

Mogg gathered a poor clearance and produced a typically elusive and determined run to split the visitors' ranks. He was tackled 20 metres out but Gloucester's forwards had been pointed in the right direction and a sharply won ruck enabled Baker to switch play to the left for Price to race in for a nicely constructed try.

The balance of power was back with the Cherry and Whites and while the game remained in the balance Hamlin ensured victory with a drop goal with the last kick of the match.

Ebbw Vale were a better side than their poor record of just nine wins from 24 games suggested. Their pack was hard and uncompromising, they were excellent at half-back and always threatening a breakaway.

Perhaps conscious of their poor record they relied far too heavily on spoiling tactics, paying plenty of attention to Baker and Hamlin who were frequently under heavy pressure and forced to kick when, with better support from their forwards, they would have preferred to let Mogg and Taylor have their heads.

Gloucester's mid-week pack was never very convincing. They did many good things and there were some tenacious individual performances but they were too easily disrupted, playing less as a unit than the Saturday line-up.

Orwin enjoyed some lively bursts in the first half and Preedy was always in the action but the teamwork was obviously less constructive than usual.

Behind the scrum chances were few and far between but Taylor looked the best back on view making the most of limited chances to produce two superb breaks.

There were few chances for the wings but both Hamlin and Smith kicked well under pressure.

Not a game for the purist then, but an important and deserved win, reversing last year's feeble performance in Wales.

Gloucester had taken the lead with a try by hooker Steve Mills to which Ebbw Vale responded with a penalty by full back Deri Best. Hamlin knocked over a penalty following a late tackle to give his team the interval lead.

Ebbw Vale's Geoff Mott gave the visitors the lead before Mogg produced the goods for Price to score and Hamlin came up trumps with his injury-time drop-goal.