

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1983

A DOUBLE FOR GLOUCESTER

COVENTRY CRASH TO FORWARD POWER

COVENTRY 6 Pts., GLOUCESTER 18 Pts.

The glow of satisfaction and pride was almost visible from Gloucester's triumphant forwards as they celebrated a crushing 'double' over old rivals Coventry at Coundon Road.

"We proved we have one of the best sets of forwards in the country; it was a very pleasing show," said skipper Gordon Sargent after the one-sided encounter was over.

"It's a great achievement to get the double over Coventry – the sort of thing that happens once in a decade. They did it to us last year, so this is sweet revenge."

From the moment flanker Dave Spencer crashed over for the first of Gloucester's four tries in the 12th minute, the issue was never in doubt.

Gloucester's mighty eight were in no-nonsense mood and by the end had ground down the opposition.

Pundits have recently been talking about Gloucester as 'England's Pontypool' and that title was no more deserved than during this game.

Outstanding, beyond doubt, was No. 8 Mike Teague, who gave an international performance in the loose. His job was made easier by an equally gritty and determined show from flankers John Gadd and Spencer, both of whom played leading roles in try-scoring moves.

There was no let-up either in the front five's efforts. In the scrums they were in total control by the time the second half arrived and although Steve Boyle and John Orwin did not establish any significant dominance in the line-out, Gloucester were able to get far more advantage from them than Coventry.

Among the backs Paul Taylor once again shone at centre and half-backs Steve Baker and Mike Hamlin were smoothly effective despite the heavy and sticky conditions.

The happiest of Gloucester's men, however, must have been centre Clive Dyke. Making a rare first team appearance because Richard Mogg pulled out with flu, Dyke scored two tries.

His first in the 25th minute was created by a midfield break by Taylor with Teague and Spencer driving on. Hamlin's conversion attempt rebounded.

A Peter Roseborough penalty gave Coventry their only first half points and then, after the interval, Hamlin showed he too can kick when he converted a try by Nick Price. It came from a 'tap' penalty with Baker passing to Spencer, receiving the ball from him and giving it to Hamlin, who lobbed a superb kick which left Price clear to score.

Dyke's second try resulted from a break by John Gadd, who had Blakeway and Mills in support. Again Hamlin's conversion effort was wide.

The match was not without its casualties. Steve Mills had to have seven stitches in a head gash and Sargent was seeing double after the game as a result of one bruising clash.

KNOCKS

But with Coventry's only additional score being a second-half penalty by Bob Massey after Rossborough went off injured, the euphoria of the occasion more than compensated for the physical knocks.

The only unfortunate point as Gloucester look forward to their trio of Christmas matches is that the same powerful team won't be together again during the festive break because many regulars are spending Yuletide elsewhere.

Coventry: Pens; Rossborough, Massey.

Gloucester: Tries; Dyke (2), Spencer, Price. Con.; Hamlin.

JC