

# THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1984

BATH 13 PTS., GLOUCESTER 6

BATH BEST IN THEIR OWN BACK YARD

Bath were as effective on their own cabbage patch as Gloucester had been when these old rivals met at Kingsholm earlier in the season.

On the day they were the better side and deserved to win.

The county championship final at Twickenham in March, when Gloucestershire play Somerset, is the nearest possible match to a decider and there is going to be some lively debate among those who have watched the first two legs as to who will win.

For certain it will be a close run affair, and if the first two matches are any guide it will be decided by the form of the back-rows.

It was Bath's turn to come out on top on Saturday.

Hall, Simpson and Spurrell held the edge reversing the advantage which Gadd, Teague and Spencer had achieved at Kingsholm.

## HEAVY

They mopped up most of the loose ball, gave Baker and Hamlin an uncomfortable afternoon and set up the best scoring chances for a set of backs who had the edge in pace and skill over the Cherry and Whites.

There was no gain for either side in the set scrummages, whilst the line-outs were equally shared. Gloucester conceded an unusually heavy crop of penalties, a point which must have upset the concentration.

Coach Dick Smith could well be having a quiet word or two over several of them, especially the couple which involved attempting to lift John Fidler who always seems best left to his own devices when timing his jumping.

There was plenty of West Country vigour, though the match fell some way short of expectations for quality rugby, as most chances were created by exploiting breakdowns.

It must have been a shade disappointing for England's chairman of selectors Derek Morgan and coach Dick Greenwood as apart from Bath winger Trick no-one stood out ahead of their rivals.

That, of course, was what they were hoping for.

#### OUTSTANDING

Hall played excellently as did Spurrell. The Bath captain was a fox in the Gloucester henhouse, leading from the front tackling everything and diving fearlessly at the feet of the Gloucester forwards.

A disappointed Gloucester captain Gordon Sargent said afterwards: "We dominated the game at Kingsholm and whether it was in the back of our minds we would do it again I don't know, but we were certainly disappointing.

"It was not a good game and Bath won more loose ball. I thought Hall was their outstanding forward although John Gadd and Mike Teague started very well."

A Palmer penalty goal was the only score in the first half, but Bath moved further ahead with a splendid try initiated by Cunningham.

The lively hooker gathered a loose ball and sent Hall away. He put Trick free on the right and he produced a blistering run to score wide out for Palmer to convert.

Bath took a leaf out of Gloucester's book with a try from a tap penalty and there was no-one strong enough to stop Gaymond smashing his way over in the corner.

Gloucester's response was limited to two penalty goals kicked by Hamlin.

Will the County gain revenge? It's certainly boiling up to a great final at Twickenham.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Roger Spurrell . . . always in the action.

JC