

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1984

GLOUCESTER IN SECOND-HALF REVIVAL

TEAGUE DROPS COUNTY HINT

GLOUCESTER 23 Pts., NOTTINGHAM 9 Pts.

Mike Teague is knocking on the door for a place in the Gloucestershire team for the championship final at Twickenham next month.

He turned in a superlative performance against Nottingham last night and was one of few Gloucester forwards to play at full pace throughout a mundane game.

To be fair it must have been difficult for Gloucester's pack to achieve the necessary level of motivation.

After Bath last Saturday, and Auckland on Tuesday, a Friday night encounter against Nottingham, as successful as they may have been, hardly proved inspiring.

Gloucester's early play was littered with errors and it was not until midway through the second half when the possibility of a defeat loomed that the Cherry and Whites put their game together.

From the outset they had looked the better pack of forwards without ever extending themselves.

John Fidler ruled supreme in the line-outs but despite the surfeit of possession their play was cluttered and untidy.

Steve Baker decided to run the ball in the early exchanges but Gloucester's backs were indifferent and handling errors were frequent, though wingers Nick Price, later carried off injured, and Derek Morgan both produced powerful runs.

Gloucester secretary Terry Tandy said today: "Price had a damaged knee. There is swelling, but indications are that it is not too serious."

Gloucester's cause was not helped by a string of penalties against them, two converted by Nottingham fly-half Simon Hodgkinson.

But a change of tactics close to half-time finally put Gloucester on the winning trail.

And it was Teague who was largely responsible for the turnabout.

The number 8 led a series of powerful forward drives which took the stuffing out of Nottingham and at last created space for Baker to operate more effectively.

Sustained pressure from Gloucester was rewarded shortly before the interval when winger Price crashed over in the corner and minutes later Morgan was held up only a yard short for hooker Kevin White to take the ball and score.

Hodgkinson again gave Nottingham the lead, but it was short-lived, as Gloucester began to play with more conviction.

There were some sniping runs from Baker and more powerful support play from Teague, John Gadd and Malcolm Preedy before Steve Boyle celebrating his return to 1st XV rugby with a typical bullocking charge and a try from a tap penalty move. Paul Webb converted.

Gloucester's superiority was by now clear and Nottingham, who were always game to run, were unable to win sufficient possession to really threaten.

Mike Hamlin kicked a penalty for the Cherry and Whites and a comfortable victory was finally rounded off by Steve Parsloe – replacement for Nick Price in the second half – when he galloped over following the best move of the evening. Hamlin converted.

JC