

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 1984

SMITH BACK ON TARGET AS TOWN TAKE A TUMBLE

CHELTENHAM 13 Pts., GLOUCESTER 27 Pts.

Gloucester full-back Tim Smith has probably ensured his First XV place for the remainder of the season.

Reduced in status to playing on the wing for the United after Christmas, Smith took his chance to shine against Orrell last Saturday and last night confirmed the return of his confidence with a top class performance.

His accurate goalkicking destroyed neighbouring Cheltenham while his play in every other respect was also outstanding. Smith kicked six penalty goals and a conversion.

Gloucester had left a lot of their big guns behind but still proved too powerful in the forward exchanges after weathering Cheltenham's early enthusiasm.

The Town had scored an outstanding early try following a superb run by winger Mike Jones who made the score for full-back Andy Morgan.

It was a perfect start, and for the rest of the first half they matched Gloucester stride for stride, kick for kick.

But Gloucester's work in the tight had taken its toll and this was revealed in the very first scrum after the interval when Cheltenham were pushed back yards.

From then on, Gloucester were on course, forcing the errors which gave Smith a night to remember.

It was a comfortable win which saw the new half-back pairing of Marcus Hannaford and Roy Pinnell, both making debuts, produce tidy performances.

Hannaford's service was accurate while Pinnell varied his options nicely, producing a couple of darting blindside breaks which deserved more than penalty goals. He gained his first Gloucester points with a second half drop goal.

Boyle and Brain did well in the line-outs for Gloucester while flanker Ian Smith had a good second half and winger Jim Breeze produced a couple of blistering runs while Taylor and Mogg also had their moments.

Cheltenham should be looking to make more use of winger Mike Jones who looks an outstanding prospect while flanker Sam Masters, who had to be replaced late in the game, was the pick of their forwards.

A good win for Gloucester then, especially without many of their leading players though Cheltenham's forwards lacked the drive and commitment to really test the Cherry and Whites.

The result was a mundane club match rather than one of those old-fashioned action-packed and much loved derby battles.