

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, APRIL 9, 1984

STEAMROLLER CRACKS THE CORNISH NUT

LAUNCESTON 9 Pts., GLOUCESTER 50 Pts.

If only Gloucester's backs were able to shine as gloriously as this against more illustrious opposition, what an intimidating side they would be.

The Cornish champions, outweighed and outplayed up front, could only watch with bemused impotence as their visitors dazzled them with 11 tries, all scored by the backs.

There could well have been more but for Gloucester's understandable easing off as they ran out of points to prove against the unrefined and thoroughly outclassed Cornishmen.

The possession flowed virtually all one way as big John Fidler amazed the disbelieving home crowd with the height of his line-out jumping.

In the scrums Launceston battled gamely at first but their strength was exhausted long before half-time.

Even against a Gloucester pack short of such stars as Blakeway, Orwin and Gadd, the going was far too heavy for Launceston's forwards and in the second phase they hardly got a look in.

Steve Baker can rarely have had such a monopoly of ball and he kept it moving briskly out along the line.

In consequence there were four tries for Nick Price, two each for Derek Morgan, Richard Mogg and Paul Taylor, and one for Tim Smith.

THREE CONVERSIONS

Only three of the tries were converted – by different kickers – and Gloucester chose from the start to use their penalty awards for positional advantage rather than immediate points.

The only cloud to darken Gloucester's highly enjoyable day out in the lush Cornish countryside bordering the River Tamar, was the withdrawal of Steve Mills from the field shortly before the end. But Mills made it clear it was only a precautionary measure because he felt his ankle tightening again after the injury he suffered in the County final. He expects to be fit for the far tougher match with Neath at Kingsholm on Saturday.

The only surprising feature of Gloucester's flattening of Launceston was that it took so long for their steamroller to chug into action.

After the opening try in the third minute by Morgan – converted by Smith – it was 22 minutes before the next score. Finally Morgan crossed again and Smith missed the conversion.

Price got his burst in the 29th minute with Mogg following four minutes later. Smith and Hamlin missed conversion kicks but Hamlin succeeded when Smith joined the line to score from a move which had begun with the Cornishmen running a penalty on Gloucester's 22. Mogg rounded off the first-half scoring with an unconverted injury time try that put Gloucester 29-nil up at the interval.

A penalty by Jeremy Fry at the restart gave Launceston their first points but the Gloucester onslaught quickly continued with Taylor crossing. Smith missed the kick.

Price then had an enjoyable period as try scorer and kicker. He scored a 61st minute try, converted it, and then immediately crossed again although this time his kick was off target.

Launceston's proudest moment came when Ian Goodman intercepted a pass as confident Gloucester ran from their own line. He scored a try and Fry converted.

Taylor scored Gloucester's 10th with Jeremy Bennett this time missing the conversion before Price was over again. He failed with the conversion once more, but still had plenty to celebrate – his team-mates had promised him a pint for each try he scored !

WILMOTT STARS

SALISBURY 9 Pts., GLOS. UTD. 18 Pts.

Gloucester United were 9-nil down after 15 minutes, trailing by a try, a conversion and a penalty.

But they settled down and began to take a foothold inside the Salisbury half. Scrum-half Rob Wilmott crossed for a try which Parsloe converted and a second try from Wilmott put Gloucester ahead 10-9.

In the second-half United turned on the pressure and after good work by Paul Williams and Rob Phillips, flanker Paul Wood crashed over.

Lock Dave Watling added a try for United near the end, while John Brain had an excellent game, winning good line-out possession. Scrum-half Wilmott was their other outstanding player.