

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, APRIL 16, 1984

ORWIN WALKS TALL DOWN QUALITY STREET

GLOUCESTER 15 Pts., NEATH 9 Pts.

Gloucester lock John Orwin showed the courage and character England will need even to survive in South Africa when he proved himself the pick of the Cherry and White forwards against Neath at Kingsholm on Saturday.

It's a personal opinion, but I have yet to see a better all-round forward in English rugby this season.

He may not be the best line-out forward in the game – though he took some useful short ball against Neath – but in every other respect he is an old fashioned workhorse.

He wants the ball from the kick-off, plays like a hungry wolf in the loose and displays the right sort of aggression and drive which strikes fear into the opposition.

Most of all he is consistent. Week in, week out his performances seldom vary. He is forceful and belligerent and the England selectors will have made a wise choice if today he is named in their team to fly south next month.

Orwin lit the fuse which sparked a good Gloucester victory over Neath on Saturday.

With a few minutes remaining and the score deadlocked at 9-9 a draw looked inevitable.

In truth Gloucester had not looked as though they would score a try this side of Easter as they were contained by an outstanding Neath defence.

But a back-row move from a scrummage 22 metres out saw Teague on the charge and a smuggled ball to Orwin set the crowd alight. The big lock thundered away on a lone offensive.

For the first time Neath were exposed and though they gathered themselves quickly the close attention of two defenders could not halt his progress towards the match winning try.

There is no hiding place for the faint of heart when Neath and Gloucester clash. A little warring followed Orwin's invasion and he looked the part with an ugly gash close to his right eye.

Gloucester's most enterprising play came in the remaining minutes and Neath, who had often looked the better side on a limited supply of possession, almost conceded another try when a great Gloucester move ended with a knock-on when a Gloucester forward had the line at his mercy.

Neath's sharp back-row and accomplished backs made things tough for Gloucester in the first half and the Welsh Cup finalists deserved their half-time lead following an excellent try by full-back Harris which he converted himself.

Two penalties by Smith levelled the scores and the full-back eventually put Gloucester ahead with his third successful goal.

Harris levelled the scores and the game was slipping towards a draw when Orwin boldly battered his way to the line and surely booked his place for three weeks leave from the RAF next month.

MAN OF THE MATCH : John Orwin. . . eager and aggressive.

JEFF FOILS FIGHTBACK

BERRY HILL 18 Pts., GLOUCESTER UTD. 15 Pts.

Berry Hill used the strong wind to help them build up the first-half lead that was enough to frustrate Gloucester's second-half comeback.

Full-back Jeff Powell starred throughout for the Hillmen and punished United's indiscretions with three long range penalties. Wing Roger Smith extended the lead with a try after cutting inside to wrong foot the United defence.

Jeff Powell converted with another good kick.

The United made concerted efforts to reduce the lead and succeeded just before half-time when centre Clive Dyke scored in the corner. Full-back Paul Webb converted.

The second-half progressed with Berry Hill defending their lead against a determined United. Paul Webb kicked a penalty but Jeff Powell replied with his fourth successful kick.

Gloucester kept Berry Hill on the defensive but could not pierce the resolute defence until 20 minutes into the second-half. A move up the middle paid off when flanker Jeremy Bennett burst through to score. Paul Webb converted.

Berry Hill looked up against it but their defensive work gave nothing else away and they broke out in the final phases with Malcolm Smith and Royston Morgan coming close to extending the lead.

MAN OF THE MATCH : Jeff Powell – in great kicking form.