

## THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1954

### PACK SAVED LIFELESS GLOUCESTER XV

A by-no-means-brilliant Bedford side nearly robbed Gloucester of their unbeaten record in a rather featureless game at Kingsholm.

For the greater part of the time the Red and Whites seemed to be playing at only half speed and, until 20 minutes or so from the end, few supporters could have given a great deal for their chances of pulling the match out of the fire.

Then – thanks mainly to the efforts of their pack – Gloucester succeeded in getting on top, and a late penalty goal enabled them to share the honours at 6pts. each.

With Michael Baker indisposed and David Jones still on the injured list, the Red and Whites were forced to do a last minute re-shuffle which moved Amos into the centre, with Derek Morgan on the wing, and brought in Doug. Perks at outside-half.

### LITTLE THRUST

It was a combination which did not achieve a great deal of success. Gloucester's midfield triangle was singularly lacking in thrust and seldom looked capable of penetrating Bedford's defence.

The centres often resorted to punting in an effort to make openings, and once again Gloucester's wingers had very few real opportunities.

Gloucester's most determined back was undoubtedly Roy Blair, on the left-wing. He was unfortunate not to have more scope, for on the few occasions when he did get the ball he usually gave Bedford something to think about.

The Red and Whites' back play was all the more disappointing in view of the fact that Cyril Thomas was in excellent form as hooker and won the ball three times out of four in the set scrums.

### SLOW ON BALL

It was not until the last quarter that Gloucester's pack really began to master the opposition in the loose. Yet for much of the game Bedford's pack as well as the Gloucester eight had often been guilty of slowness on the ball.

Bedford's back division – with far fewer opportunities than Gloucester's outsides – were dangerous on occasions.

But although they proved capable of developing more thrust than Gloucester, their play was often faulty and they did not look the force that they have been in previous seasons.

### QUICK FOLLOW-UP

Sound displays were given by both full backs, Trevor Jones for Gloucester and F. Brookman for Bedford.

Gloucester opened the scoring when an attempted Bedford clearance was charged down, and Peter Ford was quick to follow up for a try.

Bedford replied through a good penalty goal by Brookman, and went ahead before the interval when Micklewright rounded off a quick-handling threequarter movement with a try, following a loose scrum near Gloucester's goal line.

The equalising points were gained by Gloucester late in the game after a strong forward attack by the Red and Whites had almost crossed.

A defender was penalised for obstruction and Jones landed an easy goal.

## OH, WHAT A RELIEF FOR UNITED !

It was with mixed feelings that Gloucester United players lined up under the posts a few minutes from no-side while the Bristol Aero Company place-kicker made an easy conversion attempt.

United's skipper, Ivor Jones, gallantly led the charge. Sighs of relief and groans of despair mingled as the kick unexpectedly failed. Bristol Aero had to be content with a draw of six points each.

Yet Gloucester United were so clearly the superior side in a dull, scrappy game that defeat would have been gross injustice.

Hooker Mervyn Burford – who seldom meets his match these days – again won the set scrums with monotonous regularity. Geoff. Wilce was the best forward on view in the line-outs, while David Jones, Len Pickles and Ivor Jones worked tirelessly in the loose.

Behind the scrum Howard Terrington and Billy Nield had a happy understanding, and Brian Sibery was a tower of strength at full-back.

But how United lacked that thrust in the centre necessary to make the best use of so many chances !

Hollingsworth and Burford crossed for United's tries, Andrew and Hammond replying for the home team.