

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1954

GLOUCESTER TEAM WERE OUTCLASSED

The loss of Gloucester's unbeaten record was far from being an inglorious affair. Richmond triumphed at Kingsholm by 18pts-6 simply because they were the more finished side.

But if effort and determination counted for anything, then Saturday, October 9, should be remembered by Gloucester club as Reserves Day.

For what could the most optimistic of the 5,000-strong crowd really expect of Gloucester, drawn upon so heavily for the Bristol county game, against the powerful and successful Londoners ?

They hoped, it is true. They were impressed by the gallant fight of the Gloucester men, But that was all.

In a word, Gloucester, for once, were outclassed.

Territorially, for the most part, they had the advantage largely due to the splendid efforts of the pack in which half were reserves and all put up a tireless and unrelenting fight with Bob Hodge, the captain, setting a shining example.

But this was not a game in which territory was of great importance.

The Richmond defence, in which Nim Hall, the international full back and one of the four internationals in the team, gave a striking performance as well as kicking half his side's points, remained steady in the face of Gloucester's less stylish attack.

THEIR ONLY TRY

Only once did it break, just after half-time when Blair took the final pass from Terrington and Long in one of Gloucester's few, fast and clean threequarter movements, for their only try.

Then, when Richmond attacked with their many breakaways, Gloucester were too often quickly in trouble.

It was so in the first six minutes when Gray ran through cleanly on the left and then ran round to touch down behind the posts.

Though this initial shock steadied Gloucester sufficiently to turn their defence into attack, the danger was always there and succeeded again early in the second half when a well-judged pass from a scrum by scrum-half Peters enabled his partner, Rowland, to go through.

It was Peters again who towards the end found himself well backed up running hard for the line and only one man to beat.

As he went down he sent over a pass to Gill which enabled that player to run through without difficulty.

ANXIOUS MINUTES

This last try, nevertheless, was the only one which came from a number of dangerous thrusts in an anxious few minutes for Gloucester defenders towards the end.

A few minutes which, in addition to his success with a penalty goal just after halftime, was Trevor Jones' most spectacular.

More than once he found himself in that unenviable position of everything depending upon him.

UNITED'S BACKS STARVED

The lack of a hooker was undoubtedly the main cause of Gloucester United's defeat by Cleve at Downend by 4 goals (2p., 1d.) 1 try (17 pts.), to a try (3 pts.).

Possession from only three scrums throughout the whole match tells its own story. Their sadly depleted side were the equal of Cleve in other respects.

United backs, strengthened at centre by the first appearance this season of former Gloucester wing Charlie Crabtree, and with Alan Holder and young Peter Meadows making the utmost use of their limited opportunities, looked capable of great things.

On the first of the three occasions when the visitors heeled, Holder cut through beautifully, sold two perfect "dummies" and sent Charlie Crabtree over for United's try.

In the loose and lineouts there was little to choose between two virile packs, and Geoff Wilce, John Bowdler, Dave Jones and Len Pickles worked tremendously hard for United.

Brian Sibery gave another cool display at full back but wingers Noel Crabtree and Peter Lewis were little more than onlookers except in defence.

Cleve's star was outside-half Bray, who scored both their tries, besides dropping a magnificent 40-yards goal. Full back Preen landed two penalties, besides converting the first try.

All very sad for plucky United, for oh, what a different result there might have been had they won a fair share of the ball !