

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1954

GLOUCESTER FAILED TO LAST THE PACE

After an encouraging first-half exhibition of Tiger-taming, Gloucester failed to stay the course at Leicester's Welford-rd. ground on Saturday and had to resign themselves to another defeat – their fifth in a row.

With the Tigers three points down and the Red and Whites so far looking the more impressive side, Gloucester's hopes of victory were running high at the interval.

But Leicester had other ideas. In the second half they rallied strongly and put on three tries and a penalty goal – Gloucester's sole reply being a penalty goal – to make the final score 12pts.–6 in the Tigers' favour.

The game was played under atrocious conditions. . . steady rain and an already sodden ground making constructive rugby difficult.

And to quite a large extent it was Leicester's ability to adapt themselves better to these conditions that ultimately brought them success.

FORWARD BATTLE

As was only to be expected on such a day most of the game consisted of a fierce battle between the packs and plenty of the boot !

In the first half the superiority of Gloucester's forwards was quite marked.

With Ford and Ibbotson again in outstanding form, and good supporting work coming from the rest of the pack, particularly Parry, they were faster on the ball and more dangerous in attack.

In the second half, however, the Red and Whites lost this "edge" and the Tigers became increasingly lively.

It was at this stage that Leicester showed a greater readiness than Gloucester to seize their opportunities, and on one or two occasions they handled quite effectively.

FEW CHANCES

But it was definitely not a day for backs, and the Red and Whites' former skipper John Taylor had few chances to show his paces against his old team-mates.

Despite the bad conditions, half backs John Hobbs and David Jones got in quite a lot of useful work for Gloucester.

It was Jones who gained the visitors' try in the first half with a clever run from just outside Leicester's 25 which split open the home defence.

Early in the second half a penalty goal by Hazell brought Leicester on level terms.

The Tigers went ahead when Thorneloe crossed for a try following a scrum close to Gloucester's line.

When Gloucester failed to clear their line following a sudden Leicester breakaway, McCormack pounced on a loose ball for a further try.

Gloucester replied through a penalty goal by Jones, but almost on time a very nice handling movement was rounded off by McCormack for Leicester's third try.

NO LACK OF ACTION AT KINGSHOLM

Once again Gloucester United served up some fine, action-filled rugby at Kingsholm when they drew 11 points–11 with Leicester 'A.' It wasn't copy-book play by any means but it was exciting for all that with the favour switching from one team to the other with lightning rapidity.

At half-time most of the spectators would have placed a confident five bob bet that United would win comfortably, being three points ahead at that stage through an unconverted try by Derek Morgan and rarely letting the Leicester team out of their own half.

What a rude awakening the home side had when the Tiger Cubs mustered their forces and, with the second half only a few minutes old, crashed through the United defence for second row man Baker to score an unconverted try.

United were stunned and annoyed and set about putting the Leicester men in their place when Herbert scrambled over for the home side's second unconverted try.

The Midland team were not to be kept down, however, and shortly afterwards replied in like fashion through centre threequarter James.

Gloucester tried to finalise the matter with a try by Mike Jones converted by full-back Ray Smart who found last week's kicking form at last. But still Leicester wouldn't stay down and back they came with a try by Squires, converted by Baker.

Most of the second half was packed with excitement with the play fast and open but rarely skilful. Some of the blunders made by both teams were shockers and on many occasions tackling was feeble.

After all the excitement and changes of fortune a draw was, on reflection, the fairest possible result.