

THE CITIZEN

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1954

POOR FINISHING GLO'STER'S DOWNFALL

The Universities' Athletic Union's 14pts.-3 defeat of Gloucester at Kingsholm yesterday was a tale not only of fast enterprising play by the visitors but also of many wasted chances on the part of the Red and Whites.

Once again Gloucester found themselves up against a team whose speedy, clever outsiders held the key to victory. And – just as in the O.M.T.'s match on the previous day – the Red and Whites were taught an object lesson in the matter of effective backing up.

Gloucester certainly tried hard enough – the pack, in particular working like Trojans – but they never managed to press home their attacks with the skill and determination shown by the opposition.

KICKING FAILURES

For though the U.A.U. defence was often extended – usually through the efforts of the home forwards – Gloucester's poor finishing frequently frittered chances away at the last minute. Neither was the run of the ball very kind to the home side.

The Red and Whites also suffered through being without a regular place-kicker. Three quite simple penalties and a fairly easy conversion shot were all missed.

One of the most telling factors in the University players' favour was their ability to gain possession of the ball from the loose rucks. They were well served by their half-backs, B. L. Mordike and G. T. Reay, and the policy of catching the Gloucester defence out of position with long, quick passes to the wing men was one which sometimes paid good dividends.

THRUSTFUL BURSTS

With Gloucester's reserve hooker John Lowe, winning the strike more often than not, the home backs could not complain of lack of scope.

And David Jones at outside half made some lion-hearted attempts to split the visitors' defence with thrustful bursts, but effective support from the three-quarter line was generally lacking.

Outstanding in the Red and Whites' pack were Henry Wells, Roy Parry and Peter Ford.

The match opened in an unfortunate manner for Gloucester.

Five minutes from the start Crooks put the U.A.U. ahead with an easy penalty goal, and very soon afterwards the Red and Whites had a try disallowed because of a forward pass.

Good backing-up and slick handling then brought the Universities a try, through Jenkins, which Crooks converted.

SEVEN RESERVES

Shortly before the interval Wells was awarded a try when the ball was kicked over the U.A.U. line.

Clever, thrustful handling movements, initiated from the loose, gained the Universities two very fine tries in the second half – one scored by Emere and the other by Staines.

Gloucester's team contained seven reserves. The visitors were also somewhat below full strength.