

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1955

RED AND WHITES JUST REVELLED IN THE BATH SNOW

Out of the blue – or, to be strictly correct, out of Saturday's snowstorm – came Gloucester's biggest win over Bath at the Recreation Ground for many years.

The Red and Whites' 21pts. to nil victory also gave them the season's "double" over Bath, and was only their second success at the Recreation Ground in seven years.

Following a coach journey through heavy snow, which was especially thick on top of the Cotswolds, Gloucester arrived at Bath half expecting to find that the game had been called off. But the "go ahead" signal was given and the match started nearly 40 minutes late in a blizzard. The snow ceased, however, before the game had been in progress very long.

Gloucester themselves had not managed to reach their destination until seven or eight minutes after the scheduled kick-off time and two of their number, Derek Morgan and D. A. Jones were still missing when the game started.

Bath rallied round and loaned the Red and Whites two very capable reserves in wing threequarter B. French and second row forward A. Meek, who both served the Red and Whites well.

MORE AT HOME

Gloucester quickly demonstrated that they were far more at home on the snow-covered pitch than Bath, and it was their ability to adapt themselves better to the Arctic conditions that was primarily responsible for carrying them through to such a resounding victory.

As was only to be expected under such conditions, much of the play was farcical in character. Yet in spite of this the game did not lack brightness and some surprisingly good movements did emerge from time to time.

It was, however, nearly always Gloucester who shone when anything of this nature was seen – even though Bath did a fair amount of pressing.

While the Somerset men slithered and skidded, fumbled the snow-slippery ball and made all manner of defensive blunders, Gloucester faced up to the conditions confidently and were ever alert to seize opportunities of demoralising the home side with lightning rushes.

Peter Ford, who is always in his element when advantage is likely to be gained by quick following-up, played an outstanding game in the Gloucester pack and was particularly well supported by Hodge and Lewis.

BEST OF MATCH

In addition, the Gloucester backs were much surer in their handling than the Bath men, and outside half David Jones was the springboard for several of the Red and Whites' most promising attacks.

The best try of the match was initiated by Jones when he set the Gloucester threequarter line going after one of his elusive breakaways.

The ball was flashed out to French and the "borrowed" winger slipped a well-timed pass inside to Blair, who burst over for a grand try.

Jones had earlier made the running for a try scored by Michael Baker.

Gloucester's other tries were gained by Meek, Lewis and Ford. Baker made three good conversions.

SCRAMBLE IN THE MUD AT KINGSHOLM

Snow, mud, and a scrambling, midfield forward maul were the chief features of Gloucester United's home game with Bath United which they lost by two penalty goals (6pts.) to nil.

The cold, muddy conditions and the greasy ball did not assist open play but the threequarters of both sides were outstanding in any case for their lack of fire and imagination.

The weak link in Gloucester's side was outside half Perks who took over after Lewis Morgan had gone off in the first half with a head injury. For the remainder of the first half he persisted in cross-kicking when opening out would have yielded better results.

During the second half he did make more efforts to open up but without success – Nield's service from the scrum not being particularly brilliant.

One good point for the threequarters however – the efforts of the visiting backs came to nought due to good tackling by their Gloucester counterparts.

In a forwards' game the Gloucester eight acquitted themselves well and just about shared the honours with Bath.

Bath's full back, Hardy, kicked both of his side's penalty goals from over 30 yards. Gloucester's full-back, Smart, had two or three chances but missed them all – only one being in a really likely position.

United can console themselves with the fact that their line was not crossed but altogether it was one of those unimpressive displays that are soon – and best – forgotten.