

THE CITIZEN

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 1955

FRY'S TRY WAS LYDNEY'S VICTORY BLOW TO GLO'STER

LYDNEY 3 Pts., GLOUCESTER NIL

A solitary try, gained after about 23 minutes' play, enabled Lydney to beat Gloucester at Regentsholme yesterday evening and avenge the home defeat which the Red and Whites inflicted on them a year ago.

Lydney's opportunity came when scrum half Roland Adams – who had hitherto been somewhat erratic – slung out a very nice pass near the Gloucester 25 and sent the home backs away in full cry.

Cooper handed on to Owen James and the left centre cut through with a clever swerve. Just as he was tackled he whipped the ball out to Lydney captain John Fry, and the winger dashed over wide out for a try which Brian Kear was unable to convert.

It was one of the very few clear-cut movements in the game which was distinguished more by its keenness and ferocity than by the quality of its rugby.

DEFENCE HELD

Territorially Lydney had much the better of things until the last quarter of an hour. Then, with the Gloucester pack really beginning to assert itself, the fiery Severnsiders at last showed signs of cracking.

Lydney's line came under heavy pressure and as the game drew towards its close there were some anxious moments for the home supporters, several of whom began to shout to the referee to "watch the clock."

But Lydney's defence held. And then, less than a minute from the end, tension mounted to fever pitch.

A scrum infringement by Lydney led to a penalty kick being awarded against them at a spot about 40 yards out.

It was not an easy shot, and home supporters held their breath as they watched Michael Baker take the kick which might have brought Gloucester the equalising points.

His effort was a good one, but the ball sailed just wide of the posts and Lydney were the winners !

QUICKNESS

So ended a game in which most of the exchanges were contested between the forwards and in which neither back division had very much chance to get into its stride.

Lydney's pack – with Ted Biddle, Ian Harper and Rex Porter – always in the forefront played up like terriers.

They were tremendously quick to pounce on Gloucester mistakes and some of their tearaway rushes had the Red and Whites in serious difficulties.

But Gloucester's forwards, bitterly contesting every inch of ground, hung on grimly and towards the end it was they who were forcing the pace.

The Gloucester back row of Peter Ford, Bob Hodge, and Dennis Ibbotson showed up particularly well in the loose, while Brian Green got in some good work in the lineouts.

Taking the game as a whole, the hooking duel between Gloucester's John Lowe and Lydney's George Carpenter broke fairly even.

TOO TOUGH

In the closing stages Gloucester half-backs John Hobbs and David Jones worked like Trojans in varying their tactics to try and provide the Red and Whites with a way through Lydney's defence. But the home side's marking and tackling proved too good.

Lydney's threequarters worked rather better together than Gloucester's on the few occasions when they did have a chance to open out. But apart from their one scoring movement they too found the opposing defence too tough to crack.

A liberal supply of penalties went to both sides – principally for scrum infringements – and Michael Baker's shots for goal – not from easy positions – generally came very close.

The 2,000 crowd was the best of the season at Regentsholme.

TEAMS

Lydney: B. Weston; John Fry (capt.), Owen James, A. Cooper, A. Jones; B. Kear, R. Adams; J. Newlove, G. Carpenter, T. Biddle, I. Harper, S. Betterton, R. Charles, M. Hook, R. Porter.

Gloucester: B. Sibery; M. Baker, R. Sutton (capt.), G. Cumming, R. Blair; David Jones, J. Hobbs; R. Parry, J. Lowe, M. Burford, B. Green, J. Varney, P. Ford, R. Hodge, D. Ibbotson.

Referee: Mr. T. Burrough (Bristol).

NOT SPECTACULAR

Barnard Newman writes: Lydney's forwards did all and more than was expected of them, and it would be most unfair to single out any of the Severnsiders' gallant eight for specific mention. They all put up a magnificent show.

The threequarters were very evenly matched, and rarely did any openings they made have positive results. This was mainly due to the very keen and accurate tackling by both sets of backs, but on the other hand they made the most of what chances they did get to open the game up.

The match was not spectacular to any degree, but was full of incidents from which scores for one side or the other could have all too easily developed, and settled the issue decisively.

Bernard Weston made some particularly fine pick-ups on the run, and his kicking was, for the most part, extremely accurate.

All in all a draw would have been the fairest result, but Lydney must [be] given full marks for putting up such a splendid show against a side who were always capable of springing a nasty surprise at the most unexpected moments.

JC