

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1984

GLO'STER FALL TO OLD ENEMY

THERE'S A LOT TO DO – REDWOOD

GLOUCESTER 9 Pts., BRISTOL 16 Pts.

The wry comment that Gloucester are at least going to be stronger on County days this season was one Cherry and White supporter's backhanded compliment to the efficiency and superiority of the old enemy. Bristol were worthy winners and the scoreline hardly reflects their long periods of control.

Gloucester were unable to match Bristol's teamwork and fluency. They were beaten in most aspects of play and are now badly in need of an impressive victory to restore confidence.

"We are simply not playing together as a team at the moment. Bristol out-thought us and made very few errors," reflected Gloucester's coach Bob Redwood afterwards.

Redwood was pleased with some of Gloucester's line-out work, disappointed with the scrummaging and frustrated by the remainder.

"There is a lot do and we will be talking things over in training tomorrow," he said.

Llanelli, who have troubles of their own, will present a considerable problem on Wednesday evening and, though it is early days yet, there is some private alarm that the form of Bristol and Bath may frustrate Gloucester's Merit Table aspirations and their ability to qualify for next season's John Player Cup.

Optimistically, Gloucester will get things right. They play in fits and starts at present and at least had the satisfaction of finishing strongly against Bristol, rounding off Saturday's performance with an excellent try.

Bristol's forwards were in great form and were generally tighter and more efficient than Gloucester's, with Hesford enjoying an outstanding game.

They won the better ball and in half-backs Harding and Barnes had the match-winning partnership. They played superbly and must be in the running to be England's next pair.

They were hardly ruffled by Gloucester's back-row and selected their options wisely, making good use of the wind to keep Gloucester pinned down.

Hannaford tried hard with some teasing little breaks but his partnership with Evans was nothing like as fluent and the backs as a whole gave a stuttering performance.

Bristol made a dream of a start, scoring a splendid try round the blindside after only two minutes' play.

Barnes made the first run, continued by Morley, and when the move broke down Bristol won the ball for Harding to put Hesford over in the corner.

A Barnes penalty put Bristol in control and the domination continued when Hesford picked up from the back of a scrum and fed Harding who walked in unopposed for a try, converted by Barnes.

Gloucester missed a string of penalties to begin the second half but pegged back three points with a kick by Evans until Bristol restored their advantage with another goal by Barnes.

It was all over bar the shouting but Gloucester showed greater urgency towards the end and scored a neat try with Andy Richards beating Morley on the inside to touch down near the posts for Evans to convert.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Stuart Barnes. . . the complete footballer.

JC