

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1984

GLOUCESTER PACK SPARKS REVIVAL

GLOUCESTER 22 PTS., BEDFORD 10 PTS.

Gloucester have bounced back from a disappointing start to the season with successive wins against Waterloo, Glamorgan Wanderers, and Bedford – and it was Gloucester's forward power that proved too much for all three.

But supporters are still asking if their current standard of performance will be good enough against a side like Pontypool, who Gloucester visit on Wednesday? Certainly a good display at Pontypool Park would do wonders for confidence at Kingsholm.

There is certainly plenty of ability in the Gloucester team, but often teamwork is shoddy and on too many occasions good possession is being wasted.

Against Bedford there were encouraging individual performances to brighten hopes for the future. Former Lydney and Bristol wing Andy Richards scored two tries, taking his total to six this season, and was easily the pick of the backs, while scrum-half Marcus Hannaford produced another solid display.

Among the forwards hooker Steve Mills, lock John Orwin, and number eight Mike Teague were outstanding.

Orwin and Nigel Scrivens, playing his first game of the season and coming out of it pretty well, improved the Gloucester line-out work, while props Malcolm Preedy and Richard Pascal were powerful figures in the scrum.

But lightweight Bedford were too easily brushed aside. Pontypool will pose far greater problems in midweek and it remains to be seen whether Gloucester can rise to the challenge.

The biggest problem for Gloucester against Bedford was the wayward kicking of full-back Peter Wickenden. He managed only one success in eight attempts.

Bedford outside-half Finnie also had trouble. He kicked only two out of seven.

On a windy afternoon the Cherry and Whites ran in five tries, two of them before half-time.

The first came after 12 minutes when a run by Richards was blocked and the ball fed back for Russ Ellis to burst through. Wickenden, who by then had only missed one penalty, added the extra two points.

A marvellous break by Hannaford led to Gloucester's second try. He twice sent Bedford defensive cover the wrong way before passing to Mike Longstaff, who was left with a clear run to the line.

By half-time Bedford had cut the deficit to 10-3 thanks to a Finnie penalty, and soon after the interval they clawed their way back into contention. Right wing Kevin Kenning went over, but Finnie failed from the conversion and the following 55 yard penalty attempt.

A Teague pushover try took Gloucester to 14-7 ahead and then came that Richards double to tie up a deserved victory.

Finnie kicked a penalty to give Bedford their extra points, but really the visitors were never in with a realistic chance of victory.

Now Gloucester must use the confidence gained in three consecutive victories to help them on their daunting trip to Wales.

Gloucester: Wickenden; Breeze, Taylor, Ellis, Richards; Pascall, Hannaford; Preedy, Mills, Pascall, Scrivens, Orwin, Gadd, Longstaff, Teague.

Parsloe replaced Breeze. Other replacement Mann.

Bedford: Key; Kenning, Mackay, Moses, Canning; Finnie, Peck; Porter, Howe, Alcock, Comb, Catling, Bennett, Phillips, Harris.

Whitehouse replaced Porter. Other replacement Glenister.

Referee: W. D. Bevan (Welsh RFU).

MAN OF THE MATCH: Mike Teague. In control at number eight.

BRILLIANT BRAIN

BEDFORD W. 7 Pts., GLOUCESTER UTD. 38 Pts.

United maintained their unbeaten record with another convincing win at Bedford.

The forwards played well, winning good possession from the lineouts, where John Brain excelled. The back row of Jeremy Bennett, Dave Spencer and skipper Paul Wood were always in support.

United played against the wind in the first half and built up a 7-0 lead with a try by Bennett and a penalty by full-back Tim Smith.

In the second half United crushed Bedford to score tries through Paul Wood (2), Derrick Morgan, Nick Price, Spencer, and a brilliant individual try by outside half Mike Evans. Smith added the conversions.