

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1984

GLOUCESTER'S TRUE GRIT

PONTYPOOL 19 Pts., GLOUCESTER 3 Pts.

Gloucester faced up to the awesome task of tackling Pontypool away last night and emerged with their pride intact. Welsh hosts Pontypool were the better side and deserved their win by two goals, a try and a dropped goal to a penalty, but Gloucester earned respect with some tenacious defensive work.

The tackling from Gloucester players, both forwards and backs, was ferocious and for 56 minutes they stopped Britain's best club side from scoring.

After three consecutive wins Gloucester needed a good display at Pontypool Park to keep their improvement going. This is a season of transition for the Cherry and Whites as they strive to produce a team capable of taking them back to the top.

They battled well as a team and there was a gritty determination running through the side. The Welsh front row, with prop Graham Price in brilliant form, dominated and the Gloucester eight were shoved backwards at almost every scrum, although hooker Steve Mills still managed to strike swiftly and effectively from his team's own ball.

And there were several other outstanding individual displays.

AGGRESSION

Among the forwards, who were always under pressure from a technically magnificent Pontypool pack, number eight Mike Teague, at times showing the speed of a winger, was again in fine form.

Gloucester did not gain enough possession to ever worry Pontypool's 11-match winning sequence this season, but determination and aggression in all departments kept them in touch.

RUSH

Pontypool were 12-0 ahead inside 13 minutes. Hooker Steve Jones burst over from a maul for a try after six minutes and full-back Peter Lewis, who scored 472 points last season, converted from close to the right-hand touchline.

Soon after Lee Jones took advantage of a tremendous forward rush. Two rucks saw Pontypool gain a lot of ground and Jones went over after good work by lock John Perkins.

Lewis obliged once again with the conversion.

Gloucester overcame the disappointment at conceding those two early tries and for almost an hour Pontypool points dried up.

The score was unchanged when Gloucester were awarded a penalty 12 minutes from time and full-back Paul Ford took his first kick at goal. He made no mistake from 35 yards and it seemed that Gloucester had carved themselves an outside chance of producing a shock.

No sooner had that thought crossed my mind, though, than Pontypool restored their 12 point advantage. Mike Goldworthy dropped a goal from just inside Gloucester's 22.

Near the end Pontypool, by now back in charge after Gloucester's spirited attempt at a recovery, drove in for their third try. Former Wales captain Eddie Butler picked the ball up from the base of a five yard scrum and forced his way over.

Pontypool: Lewis; Parry, Faulkner, Lee Jones, Hayes; Goldworthy, Osborne; Staff Jones, Steve Jones, Price, Perkins, Moseley, Brown, Huish, Butler.

Gloucester: Ford; Price, Ellis, Taylor, Richards; Hamlin, Hannaford;
Preedy, Mills, Pascall, Scrivens, Orwin, Gadd, Teague, Smith.
Replacements: White, Wood.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Mike Teague; for the second successive match.

JC