

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 1985

GLOUCESTER CUP TONIC

GLOUCESTER 29 Pts., RICHMOND Nil

Gloucester served up their first John Player Cup win for three years with a stylish performance against Richmond at Kingsholm. After a shaky start Gloucester ripped Richmond's spirited defence apart and ran in five well constructed tries.

The display underlined the power and flair Gloucester produce in home matches. They have scored 498 points in an unbeaten run of 17 matches at Kingsholm – an average of almost 30 per game.

Every department did their job efficiently and Richmond were bundled firmly out of the competition and Gloucester deservedly claimed their place in the last 16.

It was a welcome victory. After failing to qualify last season and losing in their first cup game during 1982-83, Gloucester had to look back a long way to their last win.

It was good to see the commitment of skipper John Orwin, who gave no indication he was a week away from his Five Nations championship debut for England against France.

Props Richard Pascall and Malcolm Preedy were in determined mood and played a big part in the loose, justifying their selection ahead of England's Phil Blakeway.

The tenacious play of back row men Jeremy Bennett, Mike Teague and Ian Smith kept Richmond under pressure, while the service from Marcus Hannaford at scrum half and the line kicking of fly-half Mike Hamlin were key factors.

Among the threequarters Paul Taylor and Richard Mogg were powerful figures as they tried to battle through the heavy mud and on the wings Nick Price and Derrick Morgan were always dangerous.

The major criticism which could be levelled at Gloucester is that they took a long time to find their rhythm. After half an hour there were only three points on the scoreboard – Gloucester were all pressure and no penetration.

But after that Richmond were comprehensively beaten. The score moved to 29 points with more than a quarter of the game left and Gloucester comfortably held on without really extending themselves further.

Richmond really had only two chances in the entire 80 minutes, both kickable penalties which Simon Smith missed.

A penalty by full-back Tim Smith put Gloucester ahead after 22 minutes and 10 minutes later Hannaford went over. Teague picked up at the back of a scrum and fed Hannaford, who barged through for a try.

BEWILDERED

Smith missed the conversion, but more points came seconds before the interval. A beautifully worked penalty left Richmond bewildered and Preedy powered to within inches of the line before releasing for Teague to collect and set up Pascall for a try.

Tim Smith added the extra points and at half-time Gloucester led 13-nil. Within minutes of the restart Morgan scored after good work by Ian Smith with the conversion kicked by Tim Smith.

By this time Richmond were a well-beaten team with Bennett scoring a try and Tim Smith converting to make it 25-nil before Gloucester produced the most spectacular try of the afternoon.

Mogg collected inside Gloucester's own 25 and burst clear of frantic Richmond efforts to stop him. The ball was fed back to Price and then Ian Smith as Gloucester broke quickly and Price was given the pleasure of scoring his 17th try of the season.

MAN OF THE MATCH

Ian Smith. . . his aggression and determination was the key to Gloucester's back-row domination.

JC