

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1964

STROUD MADE GLO'STER FIGHT HARD FOR THEIR 6-0 WIN

STROUD NIL, GLOUCESTER 6 PTS.

In contrast to their experience on the same ground a year ago, Gloucester were made to fight desperately hard for their narrow win over Stroud at Fromehall Park last night and for their success they owed much to the grand touch-finding of their full back Don Rutherford who repeatedly put them in an attacking position.

If the spectators went expecting to see any dazzling displays by the backs they were disappointed, for good concerted movements by either side were few and far between, but they were treated to a keen and interesting struggle which maintained interest at a high level.

Gloucester, who deserved their win, scored once in each half, a 30 yards penalty goal by Rutherford giving them the lead in the 20th minute and a charge down try by Peter Ford when the second half was 22 minutes old, doubling their score.

Had they scored all their points in the first half, the trend of the game would have been more accurately reflected for they had at least 75 per cent of the play up to the interval, neat work between Ford and Mickie Booth in the lines-out contributing to this.

But handling failures by their backs, due to some extent to the wet state of the ball resulting from a shower which fell at the start of the game, plus first class defensive play by Stroud, kept them at bay.

It was a different story in the second half when Stroud, although never looking so dangerous as their visitors when in possession, hit back vigorously and were able evenly to share the play.

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That this was so was as much because of John Spalding's tireless efforts as anything and once or twice it seemed possible that the Town were going to spring a surprise on their formidable opponents whose three points lead at this stage seemed very tenuous.

Actually Gloucester could have increased their lead before they did for they were awarded a penalty close to the posts but Booth chose the short kick in the hope of getting a try, the effort failing when Bayliss was smothered as he tried to burst over.

On another occasion Arthur Murphy saved a try by diving on the ball as it went over the line with several opponents racing in menacing manner for a touchdown. At the other end Graham Phillips and Chris Shipton went within inches of scoring.

From Stroud's point of view Gloucester's second score was unfortunate. Russell Hillier safely gathered a long punt but instead of attempting to side step the advancing Ford he chose to pass outside to John Pratt whose attempted clearance was charged down, an easy try resulting.

In the tight there was little to choose between the two packs and in the loose Stroud's Dennis Childs was as good as anyone but there was more guile in the work of the Gloucester backs whose centres John Bayliss and Ron Pitt always needed close watching by Stroud.

A good debut was made for Stroud by Fijian Mike Ratumenecena who tackled as well as anyone and was lively in attack.

THE TEAMS

Stroud: R. Hillier (capt.); M. Ratumenecena, R. Williams, J. Pratt, C. Shipton; G. Phillips, J. Spalding; G. Moore, A. Moore, G. Rowling, D. Childs, D. Bashford, A. Murphy, F. Venn, D. Shipton.

Gloucester: D. Rutherford; N. Foice, J. Bayliss, R. Pitt, R. Smith;
D. Ainge, M. Booth (capt.); A. Townsend, K. Taylor, B. Hudson,
R. Bassi, P. Ford, D. Owen, R. Smith.

Referee: Lt.-Cdr. R. Titchem (Wiltshire).

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