

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1964

IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A BATTLE OF THE GIANTS

BUT IT WAS JUST A MASSACRE

COVENTRY 45 Pts., GLOUCESTER NIL

There will, no doubt, be more than one inquest over this unfortunate – one might almost say ill-fated – encounter.

They will, however, be inquests without a body. Saturday's spectre is still very much with us. County calls will doubtless cripple Gloucester again before very long.

The debacle at Coventry adds emphasis to the arguments of those who have advocated mid-week County fixtures.

A PROCESSION

Not even a side like Gloucester can go to Coventry with eight reserves and hope to get away with it.

The Coventry v Gloucester encounter on Saturday should have been a battle of the giants. Instead, it turned out to be a procession.

There was certainly nothing in it for the spectators, who must have wondered – understandably, in the circumstances – whether or not they were watching the right game.

In all, Coventry crossed Gloucester's line 11 times, with tries, it seemed, from all and sundry (actual try-scorers were: Jenkins (3), Holmes (2), Knott (2), Webb, Wheatley, Dalton, Judd). Cole kicked six conversions.

At half-time, with the score a mere 19pts.-nil, Gloucester's main task was to try and keep the score down to reasonable proportions.

SECOND WIND

For a brief moment, early on in the second half, it did look as though the Red and Whites had gained their second wind.

A flash of fire from Alan Townsend, and an assault on the Coventry line by the Gloucester threes, showed at any rate that the visitors were not just going to stand around while their opponents did the scoring.

Terry Hopson, who came in for David Ainge, preferred, on a number of occasions, to go for the dropped goal; a preference which didn't pay dividends.

If it's any consolation to Gloucester, another well known side – Waterloo – lost by exactly the same margin on Saturday to Harlequins, While U.S. Chatham went down to St. Mary's Hospital by 66pts.–nil !

But look, for a moment, at Bristol's performance on Saturday. With 16 men out on loan to various counties, they visited Saracens, and beat them by 12pts.– 5.

This is the sort of reserve strength Gloucester must have if they are ever to survive the kind of predicament they faced at Coventry.

UNITED'S REAL EFFORT CAME TOO LATE

GLOUCESTER UNITED 11 Pts.
COVENTRY EXTRA 1STS 21 Pts.

The opening minutes set the stage for the rest of the match. Apart from an immediate rush into the Extras half the home side spent most of their time prancing about within a short distance of their own line.

At half-time United's only score was from a Brian Mace penalty.

In fact it was Mace who was largely responsible for the eleven points the United amassed by the final whistle. The exception was one try – by Vallender.

Mace often booted United out of more serious trouble but, sadly, too often muffed penalties. On one occasion he fell short with what looked a "cert" and on another went wide with what the small crowd seemed to think was an easy shot.

Coventry seemed much happier all the time and more certain of their moves. Their threes moved to within inches of the United line on countless occasions.

Ron Millward, two tries, and Walker – who crossed the line once and made certain of several conversions – kept the score bowling along for the visitors.

United never seemed to really settle down until well into the second half – then it was too late.

JC