

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1964

LACK OF FIRE CAUSED DOWNFALL OF GLOUCESTER

GLOUCESTER 3 Pts., NEATH 6 Pts.

In the most undistinguished of matches Gloucester lost their ground record on Saturday.

Weather conditions were probably the worst of the season justifying the use of the touch kick perhaps but hardly excusing the dreadful lethargy of both teams in what proved to be the dullest match of the season.

Gloucester's pack had none of its usual fire until stung into action by a score from Neath.

LATE FLURRY

This came about twenty minutes from the end and the remaining minutes of the match had enough fire to eradicate the memory of that dull lifeless quality.

Gloucester luckily have an easier fixture on Saturday when they meet Bath and this will be a chance to recoup some of the goodwill they lost, before the Coventry game at Kingsholm on December 19.

It was Howard Rees, the fast Neath winger, who finally ignited the stodgy Kingsholm turf with a try and Gloucester, who had been losing the match territorially hitherto, were so affronted by this threat to their ground record that they started to play as if they really wanted to preserve it !

AINGE REPLIES

Behind a revitalised pack David Ainge kicked the smartest of drop goals to redress the balance.

But Neath, possessing the fastest backs, went ahead again with a try by their other winger, Bell.

Ian Laine did well enough at full back but the shadow of Don Rutherford fell long and black over the field and though Peter Meadows played an excellent game at scrum-half Mickie Booth's smart tactical kicking was needed more than ever in this game.

HALF-HEARTED

Roy Morris proved a strong tackler, replacing Ron Pitt in the centre, and Phil Lane proved again what a worthy deputy he is to Dick Smith.

It was not so much the talents of those players which was needed. It was more that their absence made Gloucester seem a somewhat half-hearted team.

UNITED OUTPLAYED

PONTYPOOL UNITED 29 PTS.

GLOUCESTER UNITED 6 PTS.

Gloucester United never really looked like winning this game in which Pontypool started off evens favourites after winning their last nine successive matches.

Although superior in the scrum, thanks mainly to some excellent hooking from Mike Nicholls, supported by Mike Burton and Ken Picton, the visitors never looked as though they would prove to be a danger to a packed home defence.

Some excellent play by scrum-half Peter Hanks who after a bad first-half seemed to come to life sent the threequarters on several promising attacking movements, but all but one failed dismally because there was no-one there in support.

John Groves was the only man who crossed the Pontypool line and his try was due more to his own perseverance in chasing a loose ball than the support he got from a three-quarter line which was far too slow.

If Gloucester United hope to avenge their defeat when Pontypool United visit them next January, their whole team will have to be a lot faster and do far more attacking than they did on Saturday.

JC