

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1921.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S EASY VICTORY.

COVENTRY COLLAPSE IN SECOND HALF.

In November last, when Gloucester met Coventry, they were in much the same position as to-day, having to rely upon the services of ten reserves, and they were defeated by 6 pts. to 3. There was one vital difference, and that was that the match was played at Coventry. In their second match with the Midland team last season, at home, the City were victorious by 25 pts. to 6. The visitors were without the services of Pemberton, Rae, Morris, and Carter, injured in a recent county match. There was considerable anxiety as to whether Gloucester's weak team would be able to retain the ground record. The attendance was small.

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : J. C. Collett.

THREE-QUARTERS : N. Daniell, W. Washbourne, S. R. Allen, and S. A. Brown.

HALF-BACKS : T. Gough and E. H. Hughes.

FORWARDS : J. Harris (captain), A. Wright, S. Bayliss, J. H. Webb, W. F. Warde, C. Mumford, M. Evans, and E. Richardson.

COVENTRY.

BACK : J. Morton.

THREE-QUARTERS : J. Mallam, G. L. Moss (capt.), R. H. Clarke, and H. Holbrook.

HALF-BACKS : A. P. Wayte and A. Elton.

FORWARDS : E. Blowers, W. Windridge, A. Dale, S. Bones, L. Williams, A. Hill, H. Cruickshank, and G. Poppe.

Referee : Mr. J. T. Curtis.

THE GAME.

Gloucester kicked off, but Allen fumbled the return. He, however, recovered and kicked to touch, thereby gaining some ground. Hughes picked up cleverly from the feet of the visiting forwards and put the home team well down. A penalty against the visitors was taken by Collett, but his shot for goal failed to cover the cross-bar.

Morton checked a dangerous rush by the home pack with a good kick to touch, but the City came again and a scrum took place well inside the Coventry 25. Gough was penalised for off-side, but Brown fielded the kick and sent play back to the visitors' quarter. Here Daniell picked up in the loose and made a fine run. He was tackled by Morton, but Allen had come up on the outside, and being in close attendance took Daniell's pass neatly and scored amidst cheers. Brown failed to add the goal points.

Following this early reverse Coventry played up better, and Mallam made a great run. He would have done better to have let the ball go, but stuck to it and was eventually overwhelmed by the opposition. Collett found touch with a nice punt, and soon after stopped another movement by the visitors. Elton was penalised for off-side, but little ground was gained with the kick, and play continued at mid-field.

The Gloucester pack heeled cleverly, Gough sent to Hughes, to set the threes in motion, but Washbourne was tackled in possession and the movement ended with Coventry near the home 25. A mark was made by one of the visitors, in a good position, but Wright charged down the kick, and saved the situation. Another fine bout of handling by the home threes saw Brown sprint down touch, but his swerve failed to carry him past Morton, who pushed him into touch. The visiting backs now came to the fore, but the home defence was keen and they rarely got properly going. However, Coventry were now having a fair share of the game, and succeeded in reaching the Gloucester 25, when Elton was penalised for an infringement at the scrum, and Collett changed the venue with a lengthy kick to touch.

A strong burst by Holbrook looked promising, but he was bored to touch. Then the Gloucester forwards broke away to the other end, and Hughes, picking up, dodged cleverly, but could not clear the opposition. A nice movement, in which all the visiting threes took part, gave Mallom an opening, but the pass to him was ruled forward.

After Elton had again come under the notice of the referee for picking the ball out of the scrum, the visitors' right wing were again dangerous, and but for a minor infringement might easily have scored. The opening of their account was not long delayed, however, for Morton kick[ed] a goal from a penalty with a beautiful effort.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 try
COVENTRY 1 goal (p)

Play in the first half had been pretty even, and it was evident that if the home team were to gain victory they would have to put more vigour into their work. Exchanges on the resumption went in favour of Coventry, and they got the ball away nicely from the scrum, but their threes were still fumbling rather badly.

Holbrook was dangerous with a dribble, but he picked up and kicked wildly over Brown's head, and the ball went dead. Then Gloucester gained relief with a strong forward burst, but they were again penalised, and play settled at midfield for a time.

A determined effort by the home forwards, led by Harris, took the ball to the Coventry goal-line, where a group of the visitors over-ran the ball, and Wright touched down with Gloucester's second try. Harris took the kick and goaled with a fine kick.

Coventry came to the attack again, and their threes handled nicely after their pack had controlled several scrums, but they were still unable to round off their movements.

After some anxious minutes in the home quarter, Washbourne gathered in the loose and gained a good slice of territory with a lengthy punt, and Harris at the head of a forward rush carried on the good work.

A period of even play with good touch kicking on both sides gave way to a strong Gloucester attack, Daniell carrying the ball to within inches of the visitors' line. Failing to gain relief from a penalty Coventry continued on the defensive, and Washbourne, picking up in the loose, landed a fine drop goal with a nice left foot kick.

Nine points ahead, all gained in the second half, was a good indication of the falling off of Coventry's play, Gloucester's superiority being seen in all departments, but principally in the front line. Still Gloucester were not having the game all their own way territorially, but the visitors were never really dangerous.

Mellor picked up from the feet of the home forwards and put in a good kick, but Collett's counter effort put Gloucester well up and then Washbourne ran strongly only to give a forward pass to Brown who had a clear run in. Another addition to the score was not long delayed for Brown fielded a long punt and dodging cleverly cut inside and comfortably dropped a goal.

Coventry made another effort, but Webb, who had several times shone with similar efforts, picked up, ran round and sent to touch, and the game ended in another substantial victory for Gloucester.

RESULT :

GLO'STER 3 goals (2d) 1 try (16 pts.)

COVENTRY 1 goal (p) (3 pts.)

REMARKS.

Gloucester's easy win was a surprise to many, and was all the more gratifying seeing that such a substantial victory was gained by a side largely composed of reserves. True, Coventry had three of their county men absent, but they were expected to put up a better fight.

In the first half there was not much to choose between the teams, but it was quickly evident that the Coventry threes were off form. They were quite unable to round off their movements, and failed to take advantage of what openings there were.

In the later stages they were quite outclassed in all departments; their forward play lost its sting, and the fumbling of the backs became more noticeable.

The Gloucester forwards put up a splendid fight, and maintained their vigour throughout. The Coventry pack was, perhaps, the heavier, and they pushed with good effect in the early scrimmages. In the loose, however, the home pack were always superior, both in attack and defence. Joe Harris, Wright, Webb, Warde, and Mumford were the pick. Gough and Hughes worked splendidly together, and although Elton was nippy, he spoilt much of his work by questionable tactics.

The home threequarter line fully justified their selection. Daniell and Brown, on the respective wings, were at the top of their form, and were well fed by the centres. Washbourne made some quite brilliant efforts, although his passing at times was a bit hurried. Allen put in some good solid work, his score as the result of Daniells' opening being the result of useful headwork.

Collett again played well, his kicking, fielding, and tackling leaving nothing to be desired. Morton had the harder task, and generally rose to the occasion. His penalty kick was a splendid effort.

Next week : Pontypool at Kingsholm.

J. H. H.