

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1921.

FOOTBALL.

BATH'S HARD LUCK.

BAD GOAL-KICKING ROBS VISITORS OF VICTORY.

GLOUCESTER'S FORM NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

For the match with Bath at Kingsholm to-day, Gloucester had to make a couple of changes from the side originally selected, Sid Brown and J. Harris both being on the injured list. In place of F. Meadows, who sustained a damaged shoulder against Lydney, A. Robbins was introduced, and the other vacancies were filled by F. Webb and C. Mumford, of the A team. Mumford, who it was understood would lead the Seconds' pack this term, prefers to be regarded as a candidate for the Premiers on his merits, and being first reserve accordingly came into the side.

Bath accomplished some splendid performances in 1920-21, and succeeded in running Gloucester very close at Kingsholm, the score being 9 points to 6 in favour of the City. A penalty goal decided the issue, but on the play the Somerset men should have won outright. Considine did actually cross the Gloucester line, but was pushed over the dead ball mark and lost the try – and the match.

The visitors had played two matches this season prior to appearing at Kingsholm, losing to Leicester by a narrow margin and easily defeating Teignmouth. Form pointed to another very close contest this afternoon, for though Gloucester were strong forward and at half, the constitution of the third line did not inspire confidence.

Bath played the eight-back formation, A. E. Morgan, the old Newport wing three-quarter, figuring at five-eighth. Gloucester in consequence brought Hall out of the scrum, to co-operate with Dix and Millington.

There were between 3,000 and 4,000 spectators present when the teams took the field. It was seen that Fred Webb, who had come up to Gloucester for the week end, took the place of Phelps, the ex-captain's appearance being greeted with hearty applause.

The teams were as follows : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : E. C. Hartell.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. Webb, A. Robbins, D. J. Brown, and N. Daniell.

HALF-BACKS : W. Dix and T. Millington.

FORWARDS : S. Smart (capt.), G. Holford, F. W. Ayliffe, C. Mumford, T. Voyce, J. H. Webb, A. Wright, and A. Hall.

BATH.

BACK : H. J. Comm.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. A. Meine, J. T. Webster, H. Richardson, and L. V. Burt.

FIVE-EIGHTH : A. E. Morgan.

HALF-BACKS : H. Vowles and S. G. U. Considine.

FORWARDS : F. Russell, H. Loader, W. H. Sheppard, R. S. Chaddock, N. Blake, I. Bingrove, and G. Woodward,

Referee : Mr. J. Vowles.

THE GAME.

Bath started the game, the ball going to Hartell, who sent to touch just outside the home 25. Following a loose scrum, the visitors got the ball away, and neat passing amongst all the backs saw Meine cross-kick near the line. Hartell gathered but was forced to go over the mark where he was collared. A scrum was formed outside, and Millington, with a useful punt, cleared to the quarter mark.

Bath were keen on getting the ball out, and Considine receiving put in a cross-punt, but the ball went to touch. Play hovered in the home end until Voyce broke away finely, shaking off an opponent and forging ahead. He transferred to Hall, and Webb who made headway and passed to Daniell[sic], but the wing man was smothered. This effort led to Gloucester attacking, but the defence was strong.

Exchange kicking between Richardson and Hartell left the game easy. Bath worked down with nice punts, but Gloucester responded with a good forward burst and the contest waged in the visitors' half. Hartell was several times called upon, but he managed to clear successfully, though his kicks had no great length.

A smart effort by D. Brown led to Gloucester making headway, but Considine gathering passed back to Comm, who sent to touch. Following some loose play in the centre Hall picked up and executed a great burst. He was eventually brought down, but the ball rolling away, Millington gathered and dodged over with a clever try. The vice-captain took the shot at goal, but the ball hit one of the uprights and went outside. First points to Gloucester were rapturously received, and the try was well deserved.

Bath resumed, Holford replying with a splendid touch-finder. Play rather favoured Bath, who were very nippy in the backs and kicked well. Millington marked from a shot at goal from a penalty, but Gloucester got in front when the kick was taken, and a scrum was ordered. The City cleared through the agency of a passing bout, Webb finally punting high to Comm. The latter, however, fielded cleverly and returned to Webb and followed up. The Gloucesterian, however, slipped his opponent with a clever side-step and punted back, Considine allowing the ball to roll over the line. He did not touch down, however, and after running out got in a good kick amidst applause. Even play ensued for a time, Gloucester being aided by a penalty. For another infringement Bath were again penalised, and Millington, from a shot well outside the 25 line, landed a fine goal, giving Gloucester a six points' lead.

On the restart the Bath forwards showed up with some good footwork and gained a position in the home 25. Here the City were penalised, but Comm made a poor attempt at goal. Holford received the ball, and started passing, but the transfer was obviously forward.

Passing attempted by Bath broke down at Webster, and Voyce dribbled through, but Considine got back and recovered. Voyce tripped his opponent and was penalised in consequence, and the game was centred again. Bath were getting the ball back better than Gloucester, and twice in succession Vowles and Considine set their three-quarters going. On the second occasion the ball was got out to Burt, but Hall came along with a terrific tackle which saved the situation.

Bath went very close after this, and Gloucester had an anxious time. The defence, however, held out. Webster making a mark in a good position had a shot for goal, but failed, and he was equally unsuccessful a minute later from a penalty.

Millington was to the fore with a clever solo effort, but a visitor just touched his heel and brought him down when likely to get clear. The same player was next distinguished with some smart footwork, but the final lift of the ball sent it to touch-in-goal.

Replying to a visitor's kick, Brown punted high, and the ball being missed, the Gloucester forwards pounced on it, and with a combined rush took it over the line, where Wright was credited with a try. Millington missed the goal kick.

On the restart Bath had the better of the exchanges, but spoiled a good opening by wild passing. However, a neat bout later, with a couple of strong dashes, took them close, and Considine receiving dashed over in the corner with a try, which Webster failed to convert.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal (p) 2 tries
BATH 1 try

Gloucester were on the whole fortunate in holding a lead of six points at the interval, for Bath had had quite as much of the play as their opponents. The visitors controlled the ball better in the scrums than the Gloucester front, with the result that the Bath backs were the more often in possession. And Considine and his colleagues displayed some clever football at times, Webster and Meine proving a strong right wing. Six points was not a winning advantage, and local supporters could not feel safe as to the result on the form of the rival teams in the initial half.

Smart resumed for Gloucester, and an attempt by a Bath forward to open out from the kick-off failing, play opened near the centre. Gloucester heeled from the scrum, and the ball came nicely from Dix and Millington to Brown, but the latter failed to accept, and Bath benefited, kicking down to Hartell, who was collared in possession.

The City forwards got the ball out from successive scrums, and Millington tried hard to work the short side, but nothing resulted. A penalty fell to Bath, and Webster had a place for goal, but made a poor attempt. Smart ran the ball out and passed to Dix, but it was ruled forward, and the men scrummed down at the point.

Subsequent play was scrambling and mistakes frequent on both sides. The game, however, was confined to the home half, where Vowles brought off a smart run, but succumbed to a tackle by Voyce. From passing by the Bath backs, Birt put in a screw-kick to Hartell, who failed badly to field, and Meine picking up had an unopposed run over and behind the posts. Vowles took the easy place, but missed badly, and Gloucester were left with a three points' lead. It was a fair give away try.

The teams renewed the struggle with increased vigour, and Gloucester, playing up strongly, worked to their opponents' end. Holford and Ayliffe led a fine dribble which nearly got through, Bath saving in a desperate struggle on the line. Voyce, gathering from the loose, ran right across the field and passed to Webb, who came back to the left, but his transfer went astray.

Bath worked out of danger with kicks and forward rushes, and the Gloucester half was the scene of operations. The visitors were here awarded a penalty, but Webster's shot for goal was a long way wide. Hall ran out and passed to Dix, who fed Robbins. The wing man cross-punted with the left foot to the centre, where the Gloucester forwards were coming up in line, but a visitor managed to save.

Strenuous football followed, the game being very keen and the tackling deadly. Ayliffe was prominent with some dashing work, and then a good kick by Millington gave the city a useful position. Bath however cleared by the aid of a strong run by Meine, who was tackled at the centre by Hartell. The Bathonian, however, managed to get the ball away, and a colleague made further headway.

Back Gloucester came in good style, and Mumford made a mark from a short kick. He took a place for goal, but he did not raise the ball high enough and it was charged down, and Bath cleared easily.

Ensuing play was in the Gloucester half, Bath working desperately to get on terms. Gloucester as stubbornly fought out the issue and excitement was very great. In mid-field Dix fed Millington, who broke away, and gave an inside pass, but there was no Gloucester man near, and a visitor picking up went through and handed to Considine, who scored behind the posts. A goal would have given Bath the victory, but from one of the easiest places imaginable Webster missed.

Immediately after the end came, and Gloucester retired not beaten, but very lucky in escaping defeat.

RESULT :

GLO'STER 1 goal (p) 2 tries (9 pts.)
BATH 3 tries (9 pts.)

REMARKS.

Bath came nearer to achieving victory at Kingsholm to-day than ever before. In point of fact, the Somerset men, on the actual play, deserved winning points; that they failed was due entirely to bad goal-kicking.

Two tries behind the posts, and both missed ! I can imagine the Bath captain saying things when Webster failed to convert Considine's try right at the end of the game, but I fancy the kicker himself was the most disappointed player on the side. What a chance missed !

Gloucester's form against Lydney was none too good; they were up against a smarter combination all round to-day, and the City team did not do credit to themselves. Forward, the Bath seven had none the worst of the exchanges in any one department. In the scrums they were, if anything, more effective than the home contingent; the work was cleaner, and there was more cohesion and finish.

The visitors were aided not a little by Vowles' method of putting the ball in, and this accounted for the fact that the Bath backs had more of the ball. But allowing for this the City front were not at their best, though at periods some fine work was put in. Holford and Ayliffe were again greatly in evidence; Voyce, as usual, put in a tremendous amount of individual work, and Wright was good all round.

Still the City did not command the play as in the matches last season. Bath never allowed their opponents to dominate them, and by sheer determination, resolute scrummaging, and keen tackling were always able to hold their own. One or two of the visitors showed smartness in the open, and they were not afraid to give the ball air. We had evidence last year of the capabilities of the Bath forwards; they were even better to-day, and on form should take a lot of beating.

Outside the scrum one is forced to admit the best movements came from the visitors. Vowles and Dix had a rare tussle at the immediate rear of the forwards, and on the play as a whole honours were fairly easy. Both did a lot of sound work, and did not miss much in the way of opening out. At fly half, Millington and Considine were also well matched. They again and again came to the relief of their respective sides, and neither lost anything in attack. Considine is undoubtedly a very fine player, and if Ireland can find a better all-rounder for this season's Internationals then they are very fortunate.

It was very gratifying to find Fred Webb at Kingsholm this afternoon and prepared to assist his old team. The ex-captain displayed all his old cleverness and judgment when opportunity served, but generally speaking it was not a day out for the Gloucester three-quarters.

As a quartette the Bath line was the smartest in combination, and one or two passing movements were real class. Hall, playing as extra half for the City, did yeoman service, especially in defence, and it was mainly through his effort that Millington was able to open the scoring. Morgan was nippy in the same position for Bath, and of those behind Meine and Webster were the strongest pair. The Gloucester four never really got going. Daniell and Robbins, on the wings, were not overburdened with chances.

Of the two full backs, Comm easily surpassed Hartell for efficiency and general ability. The Gloucester custodian showed very little improvement on the previous week, and I am afraid, on the form so [word unreadable] displayed, he is not up to the standard the City require. Gloucester will have to seek further for a full back, and there will have to be an improvement generally in the team if the Club are to successfully engage opponents of the highest class.

To Bath I extend heartiest congratulations on their distinct advancement. They are a side capable of extending the strongest in the country, and with ordinary luck should have a rattling good season.

Next week : Northampton, away. Lydney A, at Kingsholm.

W.B.

CITY SECONDS OPEN SEASON WELL.

SPLENDID WIN AT BATH.

Gloucester A opened the season with a visit to Bath A. The visitors almost scored in the first minute. Bath retaliated and scored a converted try. Even play prevailed for a time, and then Gough got over for the visitors, Burns converting. Gloucester handled often, but the defence held out. Washbourne dropped a fine goal just before the interval.

Gloucester A 2 goals (1d)
Bath A 1 goal

Fast play characterised the second half, the visiting forwards rushing well. Both sides missed chances, but Gloucester had the better of the game territorially. Bayliss crossed in the last minute, the try going unconverted.

Gloucester A ... 2 goals (1d) 1 try (12 pts.)
Bath A 1 goal (5 pts.)