

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

CITY'S FIRST WIN FOR SIX WEEKS.

PROLIFIC SCORING AGAINST LONDON WELSH.

GLOUCESTER'S ALL-ROUND IMPROVEMENT.

Though Dix and Millington were still absent from the team. Gloucester fielded a more representative side to-day at Kingsholm against London Welsh, who visited the City Club headquarters for this fixture on a guarantee.

Gough was given a further trial at scrum half, and he was partnered by A. Hall; whilst Stanley Budd, not required by Bristol, and anxious for a game, filled a vacancy at centre, caused by Meadows' inability to play owing to an attack of the 'flu.

Kerwood, who disappointed last week, was not chosen, the full back position being again entrusted to James.

London Welsh, though not a team of the same class as when R. T. Gabe, E. T. Morgan, H. T. Maddocks, Willie Llewellyn, A. F. Harding, and Wallace Watts figured in the ranks, have enjoyed a fairly successful season, and on Gloucester's recent form were expected to put up a good contest. The visitors were short of L. J. Evans, Glyn Francis, and I. R. K. Jones.

The afternoon turned out fine, but the attendance was moderate.

Teams :

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. H. James.

THREE-QUARTERS: S. A. Brown, E. H. Hughes, Stanley Budd, and N. Daniell.

HALF-BACKS: T. Gough and A. Hall.

FORWARDS: G. Holford, F. Ayliffe, T. Voyce, M. Evans, Major Roderick, H. W. Collier, J. Harris, and S. Smart.

LONDON WELSH.

BACK: R. Trevor Howells (capt.).

THREE-QUARTERS: E. Gethin, H. Rees, E. L. J. Reason, and O. Osborne.

HALF-BACKS: Glyn Williams and H. W. Richards.

FORWARDS: W. L. Michael, H. L. Phillips, H. Giles, Idwal Jones, Noel Rhys, D. Horn, T. Hudson, and R. A. E. Wood.

Referee : Mr. Walter Hale (Bristol).

THE GAME.

Gloucester lost the toss, and Smart kicked off against the brilliant sunshine. He, however, failed to send the ball the necessary ten yards and a scrum followed at the centre. The Welsh early kicked down to James, who replied well, and later there was another exchange of kicks which left the game at midfield.

From a loose scrum a home forward opened out to Hall, who fed Hughes, the latter punting ahead to Howells, who ran the ball to touch. Then from some loose work Brown kicked ahead, and in a scramble near the left corner Harris scored the first try, which James failed to convert.

The Welsh resumed, and Gloucester tried to open out, but Hughes' kick went behind him and the visitors broke away. James checked nicely, but with some smart work the Welsh pressed. From a mark a visitor had a shot for goal, but it was a poor attempt and Gloucester kicked out.

Back the visitors came with a smart run and pass, and the home lines were in danger, The situation was saved for the moment, but from a drop at goal by Howells Gloucester conceded a minor.

On the drop-out there was some fast forward play with the advantage resting with the Welshmen. Twice the visitors intercepted cleverly and looked dangerous, but the final transfer was not accepted. A big burst by the Gloucester forwards gained nearly half the length of the ground, and then the ball coming out to Budd, the latter raced to the full back and passed to Daniell, who sprinted over with a good try. James again missed the goal points.

On the resumption there were several mistakes in handling by the home players, with the result that the Welshmen benefited. A lucky flying kick by Williams after Gough had spoiled Richards at the scrum took the visitors to the City 25, where they were awarded a penalty. A shot for goal was taken, but the ball went wide of the posts.

The Welsh confined play to the home quarter till the City forwards broke clear, and Voyce, following up a kick, tackled Howells, who lost the ball. Gloucester dribbled on, but a visitor got back and sent to touch in the nick of time. Well inside their own quarter the Welsh backs started passing, and after some brilliant handling Osborne Jones was sent away with a clear field. Brown, however, came across from the other wing, and brought his man down, thus saving what looked a certain try.

Clever work by Harris at midfield gave Gloucester a fine opening, and Roderick gathering on the run went hard for a score. Being backed up by Daniell he essayed a pass, but the wing man failed to take. Immediately after, however, Gough burst over with the third try from a scrum close in. Voyce this time took the shot for goal, but met with no success.

Gloucester had the better of the exchanges on the restart, Harris being to the fore with some capital dribbling, whilst there was a passing move which promised well until Daniell missed.

Working hard the Welsh gained an advantage, and following some neat exchanges Michael secured and dashed over behind the posts with a try, which Howells converted.

Gloucester showed up with some creditable footwork on the restart, but behind there was a lack of finish in handling, and mistakes were numerous. At length Gough got the ball out to Hall, and Budd, cutting through nicely, made a fine opening for Brown, but the wing man could not retain the pass with a clear run home.

The Welshmen were playing a bright, open game, and the backs ran and passed cleverly on several occasions. Gloucester retaliated, but again after Budd had made the opening Brown missed the pass. Next Hall broke through on his own, but with a nice opening the ball was knocked on, and the visitors saved. Play was in the Welsh half when the interval arrived.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER3 tries
LONDON WELSH 1 goal

Though Glo'ster had done most of the attacking the City had by no means shaped well, and a number of possible scoring chances were thrown away by failure to handle. The Welsh showed great keenness, and were very nippy in seizing opportunities that came their way.

The restart saw Gloucester early set up an attack through the forwards, but the ball was sent over the line and a touchdown resulted. The Welsh showed up strongly with loose footwork on the drop-out, but James was very safe and stopped them well.

Away Gloucester came, and Hughes punting ahead, Brown came up and gathered the ball on the bounce. Here was a fine opening, and Gough being well up an inside pass sent the scrum half over and round behind the posts. Budd took the easy place and added the goal points, making the score 14-5 in the City's favour.

Ensuing play was fairly even for a time until the home forwards got away with a loose dribble, which Howells checked in daring style. The Welsh heeled from several scrums, but the backs did not travel far, and Gloucester, with long kicks, forced a couple of minors.

The City still attacked, and a clever bit of combination in which some half-dozen players took part, gave Sid Brown a walk-over, but the referee ruled for a forward pass. The Welsh defence was tested a little later, but it stood sound, and in turn they reached the centre. A kick down the field was fielded by Hughes, who cleared a couple of opponents and punted across. The ball was fielded cleverly, and after a series of passes Gough received and registered his third try, which Budd converted.

The Welsh resumed, the ball going to Holford, who punted high to the centre of the field. Here Harris broke away brilliantly with a solo dribble, finally kicking well past the full-back. Daniell came up strongly, and beating the opposition for pace, scored another try. Budd landed his third goal from a difficult place.

Gloucester were now doing all the attacking, and giving the ball plenty of air. Two or three times the defence was clearly beaten, but the final transfer was either knocked on or forward. After this there was a spell of even play, the Welsh exhibiting plenty of dash and keenness. Play was scrambling for a time, with matters fairly level until Hughes shone with a break through and pass to Budd. The latter yielded to Brown, who cut inside and then punted hard. The ball went over the line, and Budd racing up got the touch and scored amidst cheers. Voyce made a fine attempt at conversion.

Play continued to favour Gloucester, and Roderick with a splendid dribble led to a sharp attack. The final kick, by Ayliffe, however, turned the ball to touch. From the line-out Michael got hold and kicked out to James, who manœuvred for position and dropped a good goal. This was the last score, and Gloucester ran out easy winners.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 4 goals (1d) 4 tries (31 pts.)
LONDON WELSH 1 goal (5 pts.)

REMARKS.

Gloucester's substantial win was extremely gratifying after a bad run of defeats, and it is hoped this is a prelude to better things. London Welsh were not outplayed to the extent the score would suggest, and several times they gave the City anxious moments. This was especially the case in the first half, when the City backs were by no means safe in handling, and numerous promising movements broke down through want of a safe pair of hands. In the second portion Gloucester had the game well in hand, and there were numerous bright patches which pleased the crowd.

Gloucester for the most part had the pull forward, though the visitors were a lively lot in the open, Michael especially doing excellent work, and his colleagues following up and tackling keenly. The most prominent forward in the Gloucester side to-day was Harris, whose brilliant footwork was a great feature. He was splendidly supported by Roderick, Voyce, Holford, and Ayliffe, all of whom distinguished themselves.

At half-back Gough and Hall did fairly well considering it was their first time together. Gough did one or two smart things, and with coaching and experience he should improve considerably. He has not yet attained that happy knack of accurately directing his passes, and he is inclined to fight the ball too much, but these are deficiencies he ought to be able to eradicate with practice. But a great deal depends on his own efforts as to whether he will go further. If he is keen on promotion there is no reason why he should not have a good trial. Hall, in the emergency, filled the rôle of outside half with his accustomed wholeheartedness, and did very serviceable work both in attack and defence.

The inclusion of Stanley Budd made for a great improvement in the City three-quarters. The Bristolian played stylish football, and showed keen perception for an opening. Hughes was good in parts, but both the wing men missed passes when there was every chance of a score.

All-round, however, there were signs of a better understanding, and there was more punch in the attacks than seen of late. With Dix and Millington to assist, and the forwards at their best, Bristol will find Gloucester a difficult obstacle to surmount at Kingsholm next week.

James gave another meritorious display at full back, and one or two of his touch-kicks this afternoon were very cleverly judged. His fielding of the ball and saving, too, left little to be desired. Trevor Howells also did well for the Welshmen in the last line of defence.

The visitors' backs were nippy, and they accomplished one or two bright bits of combination, but did not get the best of luck. Rees and Reason, in the centre, did a lot of sound work, and Gethin and Jones ran strongly on several occasions.

Next week : Bristol, at Kingsholm ("The Match of the Season.")

W. B.

JC