

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S SPLENDID WIN AT LEICESTER.

VIGOROUS AND EXCITING STRUGGLE FORWARD.

MILLINGTON'S GOAL-KICKING DECIDES THE ISSUE.

For their first match in the New Year, and against Leicester – one of the strongest opponents on the City Club's card – Gloucester were unfortunately placed as regards fielding a representative side. The final English trial at Twickenham claimed the services of Dix, Voyce and Ayliffe (the latter being in attendance as reserve); Kerwood and Lawson are on the disabled list; and Fred Webb could not get up from Carmarthen to make the journey.

Thus more than a third of the regular team were not available, and a big draw had to be made on the reserves. H. R. James (who did splendidly against Bath during the holidays) filled the vacancy at full back; T. Burns and S. R. Crowther came in at three-quarter; G. Poole was given a further chance at half-back; and the vacancies forward were filled by H. W. Collier, M. Evans, and S. Bayliss.

Leicester were short of Day, Smallwood and Craigmile – all engaged at Twickenham – and Lawrie, but the "Tigers" have generally the call on ready-made first-class players, especially for their home matches.

With the City team more or less experimental behind, form was not reliable to go upon, but the visitors had hopes of putting up a good contest.

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : H. R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS: N. Daniell, E. H. Hughes, T. Burns, and S. R. Crowther.

HALF-BACKS: G. Poole and T. Millington.

FORWARDS : S. Smart (captain), G. Holford, Major Roderick, A. Hall, J. Harris, H. W. Collier, M. Evans, and S. Bayliss.

LEICESTER.

BACK : J. Wilkinson.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. Haselmere, Norman Coates, W. Pollard, N. Usher, and W. C. Wilkins.

HALF-BACKS : G. J. German and F. M. Taylor.

FORWARDS : G. Ward, F. Taylor, C. W. Cross, D. J. Norman, W. Buckler, F. Lawrence, and T. Thorneloe.

Referee : Major Wilkins.

THE GAME.

The weather was wet and misty, and with the English Cup-tie as a counter-attraction, the attendance was on the small side for a Leicester gate.

Leicester kicked off, the ball going to Holford who threw out a long pass to the backs. Hughes fielded, and cutting straight up the centre, made thirty yards before being forced to transfer – a promising opening.

The Gloucester forwards, wheeling a scrum, got away well, but off-side cost them a penalty, and Leicester sent to the centre. James was early prominent with a good touch-finder, but the Tigers' forwards, using their feet well, set up a warm attack. The ball getting across to Haselmere, the latter ran down touch and passed inside to Pollard, who yielded to Cross, who scored in a good position. Wilkinson missed the goal points.

Resuming, Leicester had the better of the exchanges, the forwards playing a strong rushing game. James defended well, and twice cleared cleverly under great pressure. Harris with a nice dribble enabled the City to ease the pressure, and the good work was carried on till the home 25 was visited. A lucky kick sent the ball to James, who had his kick charged down, but Millington got back and recovered.

Dashing work by the Gloucester forwards promised well, but Coates saved in good style. In some fast loose work Leicester had the advantage, and the Gloucester line was in danger. The defence, however, held out splendidly. Pretty footwork by Burns brought Gloucester out, and then Poole, Millington, and Daniell continued a nice passing movement on the right. The latter tried hard to break away, but was overwhelmed. Each side in turn were awarded frees, and Leicester gained a slight advantage.

Gloucester got the ball out a few times now, but with the backs well placed once, a forward transfer was given. Poole again serve Millington, who punted down the field. Wilkinson missed, and Smart being well up, gathered and went over with a good try. Millington converted, giving Gloucester a two points' lead.

On the re-start the City showed up splendidly, Burns being prominent with good footwork. Leicester were fortunate in warding off a fine burst by the City forwards, who were only checked right on the line. The visitors worked gallantly to increase their lead, but they were eventually beaten off.

Following strenuous forward work in the Leicester half, the home forwards broke away brilliantly to the other end. A hot attack followed on the Gloucester line, but the defence was superior. James eventually cleared to the centre.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal
LEICESTER 1 try

The first half was very exciting, the forwards being well matched. The Leicester backs were smarter in combinations, but the City tackled and saved splendidly, all the men shining in this respect. Millington was ever to the fore with good work, and Burns was smart with his feet. James on the whole had acquitted himself creditably, being very cool under the greatest pressure.

Smart re-started, and Poole sending out a wild pass, German came through and kicked down the field, where Crowther sent to touch. It was a dangerous position for Gloucester, but the City front came right away with a brilliant rush to midfield.

Even play followed for a time, until Taylor punted across, when Haselmere raced up and took the ball nicely in the air and passed inside to Taylor. The latter gave up to Pollard, who scored in the corner. Wilkinson failed at goal.

Following the resumption the Gloucester backs opened out nicely, but with a chance the movement broke down. Leicester cleared by the aid of Taylor, and a City player getting a kick charged down, trouble looked ahead. James, however, came to the rescue with a wonderful pick up and kick to touch.

Forward, the struggle continued very vigorous, with the visitors quite holding their own. Twice Gloucester were penalised for scrum infringements, but James returned the kicks splendidly. Gloucester working well together, the City attacked, and after good work Daniell beat Haselmere for pace and scored a try. Millington landed a lovely goal, and Gloucester again took the lead.

Smart was conspicuous on the restart with a nice solo dribble, but a little later Leicester had a slice of luck in half-a-dozen players being put on-side through the ball touching a visitor. The City saved almost a certain try miraculously, but Leicester gained a good attacking position, and from the next scrum a nice bit of passing sent Wilkins over in the corner. Coates missed the goal, and Gloucester were still a point ahead.

The scoring had increased the excitement, and subsequent play was full of incident. Daniell shone in a dazzling run through a host of opponents, but was pulled down in time. The last five minutes were fought out with desperate vigour.

For a time Gloucester held the advantage, but in the concluding stages Leicester gained the upper hand, and forced a couple of minors. For off-side Gloucester were penalised in a favourable position for a goal, but Coates missed. Leicester attacked to the end, but failed to score.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 2 goals (10 points)

LEICESTER 3 tries (9 points)

REMARKS.

Gloucester's victory was as welcome as it was surprising. A solitary point, thanks to Millington's goal-kicking, did the trick, and considering the City's weakened ranks the performance was a fine one. The game was one of the best and most exciting I have seen this season, the play fluctuating up and down the field at a terrific pace. Those last five minutes were specially thrilling, with Leicester struggling desperately to pull off a win and Gloucester equally determined to hold on to their lead.

Forward the contest was keen and vigorous, with both packs doing fine work in the loose. Holford, Smart, Harris, and Roderick were great in all phases, and the recruits worked up to them in gallant style. Poole was fair at the scrum, whilst Millington rendered yeoman service all round.

The three-quarters were mostly engaged in defence, few passing bouts being attempted. Burns was very useful, and Daniell scored his try very smartly. James gave a capital display at full back, exhibiting every confidence and rarely being at fault.

Next week : Gloucester v. Moseley; at Kingsholm.

W.B.

KEEN STRUGGLE AT KINGSHOLM.

WHITECROFT GIVE CITY RESERVES GOOD GAME.

Gloucester A were at home to Whitecroft at Kingsholm, but owing to the calls of the Premier team several recruits were played. The Foresters brought a representative team, and a keen struggle was anticipated.

Teams : –

Gloucester A. – J. C. Collett; S. Langston, F. Hopcroft, S. R. Allen, and T. Currie; J. Hawker and F. Meadows; A. E. Taylor, J. Rea, S. Coulson, C. Mumford, A. Bishop, G. Curtis, T. Bridges, and J. H. Webb.

Whitecroft. – F. Vedmore; T. Davis, A. James, D. Clements, and W. Probert; H. Lawrence and E. Wildin; P. Moore (capt.), L. James, F. Fletcher, C. Moore, C. Walker, H. Berry, H. Jones, and E. Dufty.

Referee : Mr. F. T. Lawrence.

Gloucester A started, but the visitors had the best of the initial scrums and penetrated to the home quarter. After Collett had stopped an ugly forward dribble the Reserves were awarded a penalty, but the home back's kick failed to bring relief, and only a timely dash by Allen prevented one of the Whitecroft backs dropping for goal.

Whitecroft continued to get the ball away, and their backs handled prettily but the movement broke down. The City were, however, forced to defend, and when the home three-quarters did at last handle A. James intercepted and gained a good slice of ground. Then Gloucester attacked, Meadows kicking to Vedmore, who slipped and lost the ball, and Langston secured and sent back to Meadows, who crossed but was recalled.

The Foresters cleared, but Collett kicking strongly kept Gloucester well up. Hawker and Meadows combined well, but after a short period of pressure the visitors cleared and again attacked. Collett had a fruitless kick at goal from a penalty, and then Davis and Wildin gave a useful exhibition of passing, the last-named being pushed into touch.

The home team were playing much better now, and a score was not long delayed, Allen receiving in the Whitecroft quarter and, giving the dummy nicely, romping over for Collett to convert.

The visiting forwards continued to play a dashing game, and a useful burst up the touch-line by Probert looked dangerous, but he was stopped near the corner. Davis tried to drop a goal, and then Hawker got away with the ball at his feet. Vedmore fumbled, and Meadows racing up ran up with Gloucester's second try. Collett failed to convert.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 1 goal 1 try
Whitecroft Nil

The resumption was marked by a clever cut through by Allen, but he was pulled down. Gloucester attacked, but Wildin, who had been playing a good game, initiated a Whitecroft burst, which however found Collett well prepared. Hawker was badly off-side, but Collett fielded the ball and neutralised the mistake.

A useful mark by Curtis spoilt a forward burst, and then Gloucester were accredited with a try under amusing circumstances. The Gloucester men had knocked on unseen by the referee, who also overlooked an obviously forward pass to Webb, who stopped for a second, as all the other players had, but not hearing the whistle he dashed away alone and planted the ball behind the posts. Collett again failed to majorise.

Whitecroft were by no means done for, and again they attacked hotly, but lacked finishing powers, and midfield play followed. Then Whitecroft made a dash, and Collett was passed with a useful punt, which Wildin followed up and touched down in the corner. Vedmore failed with the kick.

This was a well-deserved score, and had the effect of livening the Seconds up, Hopcroft being tackled on the line. Jack Webb stopped a couple of dashes by the visiting forwards by falling on the ball in characteristic style. Whitecroft were pressing strongly now, and from a punt across the field by one of the home backs T. Moore fielded and raced over with a fine try. There was no conversion.

Lawrence got the ball away nicely, and after the visiting threes had handled Wildin put in another useful run, and Gloucester were forced to touch down. The drop-out was a failure, and Gloucester were again hard pressed.

RESULT :

Gloucester A ... 1 goal, 2 tries (11 points)

Whitecroft 2 tries (6 points)

REMARKS.

Whitecroft gave the City Seconds a very good game, and had they played up all through as they did in the second half Gloucester would have been hard put to to secure a victory. Gloucester's weakest spot was in the scrums, the Foresters getting the ball most of the time; but in the loose the home forwards were superior.

Wildin was about the best man in the visiting team, but their backs were quite good and several times handled very well. Hawker, who appears to be the Gloucester stand-by, was not experienced enough at the base of the scrum, and the home backs did not have the chances they deserved, but they shaped very well. Collett again kicked with great strength, but Vedmore was not seen to advantage.