

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S BRILLIANT TRIUMPH AT KINGSHOLM.

BRISTOL BEATEN FOR SECOND TIME.

FAST AND EXCITING GAME.

Ideal weather prevailed for the return match between these old and keen rivals at Kingsholm, and the attendance was the best (with the exception of Newport) since Christmas.

Gloucester had hoped to have the services of Stanley Cook, but the Old Cryptian could not get away from Cambridge. The home team also had to deplore the services of Holford, the County captain having injured his shoulder again on Thursday.

With Daniell not in the original selection, and declining to play for the Reserves, the vacancy in the home three-quarter line was filled by Crowther, who played on the wing to Fred Webb. Evans came into the pack vice Holford.

Bristol fielded full strength, Hale standing down of the nine forwards selected.

The teams were accorded a hearty reception on entering the enclosure.

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. H. James.

THREE-QUARTERS: S. A. Brown, E. H. Hughes, F. Webb and S. R. Crowther.

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

FORWARDS: S. Smart (capt.), M. Evans, T. Voyce, F. Ayliffe, Major Roderick, A. Hall, J. Harris, and H. W. Collier.

BRISTOL.

BACK: B. S. Chantrill.

THREE-QUARTERS: R. G. B. Quick, L. J. Corbett, R. C. W. Pickles, and T. Spoons.

HALF-BACKS: W. J. Wring and S. H. Budd.

FORWARDS: M. V. Shaw, P. J. Williams, A. T. Hore, F. Cummings, F. J. Coventry, H. Haysham, S. H. Carey, and H. J. Willis.

Referee : Mr. T. Joseph (Welsh Union).

THE GAME.

The ground and conditions generally were favourable for fast, open football, and the large crowd looked forward to a keen and interesting game. Shaw kicked off, and early on Wring robbed the Gloucester forwards and got in a timely punt to touch. From the line-out the home front broke away nicely, but they were brought back for some infringement. Bristol heeled from the ensuing scrum, and Wring fed Budd, who yielded to Pickles. Voyce, however, came along with an octopus tackle of the Bristol captain and the movement was checked.

A brilliant dribble by Harris took Gloucester well down, and Chantrill was forced to turn the ball to touch close to his line. Gloucester looked to have scored from a short throw-out, but the try was not allowed, and scrums followed in close proximity to the Bristol line. Twice the City were almost over with desperate bursts, but Bristol saved the situation.

Then from a mis-kick by Dix the visitors were allowed to clear, and they eventually reached midfield. Here Wring opened out nicely, and the ball was handled by all the three-quarters. Spoons, however, lost possession, and James gathering he had an open field. After running some dozen yards or so he cross-punted, but it was a poor attempt and nothing resulted.

Clever play by Quick gained ground for Bristol, but the home forwards recovered, Quick being damaged in stemming the rush and had to retire for attention. Coventry came out on the wing, and Bristol resumed with seven forwards. They heeled from the subsequent scrum, and Pickles punting, Spoons dashed up and gathered neatly. The wing man essayed a pass inside, but it was lost, and a Gloucester man securing he kicked to touch.

A penalty to Gloucester gained a nice slice of ground, but brilliant passing by the Bristol backs sent Coventry away on the left. He, however, lacked the necessary pace to round James, and fell a victim to a good tackle.

Gloucester were hard pressed for the next few minutes, Coventry being nearly over from a line-out; whilst Spoons would have scored easily, after passing, but for a forward transfer by Pickles. Still the visitors kept up the pressure, and the forwards getting the ball out there was a series of sharp, clean exchanges, ending in Quick beating the defence and scoring wide out. It was a clever try, well worked out, and finished off. The place kick failed.

Gloucester resumed with vigour, but Corbett snapping the ball from a line out broke away. He was, however, tackled and a long pass went astray. The home forwards with a big rush, tested Chantrill but the full-back cleverly picked up and got in a good kick to touch.

Strong loose work by the Gloucester forwards carried the home team well down the field, and Pickles being pulled down by Hughes, the visitors were in danger. Gloucester worked desperately to effect a score, and Voyce just lost a score by a touch.

Rudd brought relief with a breakaway from a line-out, and Corbett further improved. A long kick down saw James fumble, and he had great difficulty in saving his line. Bristol, however, had secured a good position, and the ball coming out nicely, Quick, Corbett, and Pickles handled, the end being a fine try to the Bristol captain. The place kick again failed. Six points down was bad for Gloucester, but both tries were well deserved.

Gloucester played up finely on the resumption, and Bristol were closely pressed. Passing inside their 25 saw Corbett given possession. He tried the "dummy," but it was not taken. A wild pass followed and Chantrill being at fault, Crowther dashed up and touched down for a try, which Millington failed to convert.

Encouraged by this success, Gloucester restarted in fine style. Voyce was prominent with a strong burst, and the forwards backing up Bristol had something to do in defence. Dix, Millington, Brown and Hughes passed cleverly, but Spoons checked. Then Corbett punted out to James, who, eluding the Bristol centre, took deliberate aim and dropped a lovely goal from 40 yards outside – a fine achievement which aroused tremendous enthusiasm. This score gave Gloucester a point lead and put the crowd on good terms with themselves.

The resumption saw Bristol harassed with a fine dribble by Millington and Brown, but Corbett gathered from their feet and effected a wonderful clearance. Bristol improved their position with smart kicking, and play was contested fiercely in the home 25. Millington twice came to the help of his side with useful punts to touch, and Gloucester, getting well together, rushed out to beyond midfield. Roderick led a sharp attack, and in a rush for the line Harris got hold and dashed over in the corner. Millington failed at goal.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal (d) 2 tries
BRISTOL 2 tries

It had been a fine first half, with some clever back play by Bristol and dashing forward work by the City. The best score, however, was James' dropped goal – a real beauty. Play in the second half opened in the Gloucester half, Pickles putting in a fine punt to touch at the home 25. Gloucester now cleared and dashing work carried them beyond mid-field. Roderick, Harris, Ayliffe and Crowther shone in good play, and Bristol were forced to defend.

From a scrum Dix secured, and clever combination between the inside half, Millington and Brown, in which the players interpassed perfectly, Dix burst over the line with one of the prettiest tries imaginable. Loud cheers greeted this further success of the City, which was renewed when Millington added the goal points with a wonderful shot.

On the resumption the home players shone in some brilliant work on the wing, but Bristol checked at the centre. Here Gloucester were penalised, and Pickles found touch with a grand punt. Gloucester rushed out, and an attempt at passing by the Bristol backs was smothered by the quick breaking up of the home front.

The Gloucester forwards were going great guns now, Voyce and Roderick shining repeatedly. Off-side by the International cost Gloucester a penalty, and Bristol benefited to the extent of 30 yards. Webb, however, recovered with a pretty effort, and then ensued a period of close work amongst the respective forwards. At length the home pack heeled to Dix, who fed Millington, but the vice-captain did not take cleanly, and being hampered he took a drop for goal. He, however, failed to raise the ball, and Chantrill receiving, he kicked well to touch.

Subsequent play was very keen, and now and again the players' tempers were highly tried. Webb, Spoor, and Corbett were conspicuous with some individual work which was heartily applauded, but the result was of little advantage to either side. The players again appeared to get out of hand, and the referee called all the forwards together and administered a general caution.

Millington was limping badly just now, and twice when he got the ball he was unable to do much. A wild pass from Dix from the scrum was well recovered by Webb, whose kick was well returned by Chantrill. Then from a scrum Wring got the ball away, and the Bristol backs handling beautifully, Spoons had a fine opening. Racing hard, Spoons went strongly for the corner, and though partially checked he managed to get the ball down in the far corner – a very fine try. Hore took the place kick but failed.

Immediately on the resumption the Bristol backs were again in possession, Spoons initiating the movement. The ball came right across to Quick, who tried a re-pass to Corbett, but it was ruled forward. Crowther and Brown shone with smart dashes which enabled Gloucester to hold their own, but it was desperate work.

Good kicking by Corbett gave Bristol an advantage, but Voyce dribbled away finely, and picking up tried hard to break through. Being tackled he passed to Collier, who dashed ahead, but threw forward with a good opening. The ball was snapped up by Pickles, who made ground with a useful kick.

The end was drawing near, but the pace did not relax. Weak play by the visitors allowed Gloucester to get away with a big rush, and Spoons, who gathered the ball, was floored immediately. Bristol were severely pressed now, and Dix was nearly through once from a characteristic burst. Gloucester were kept out a minute later very luckily, and then the end came.

RESULT :

GLO'STER ... 2 goals (1d) 2 tries (15 pts.)
BRISTOL 3 tries (9 pts.)

REMARKS.

A splendid game and a fine win for Gloucester, who are to be congratulated on making such a magnificent recovery after being six points behind.

Bristol, recognising that their one chance of winning was to get the ball to their backs as often as possible, opened in a style that presaged success, and the tries obtained by Quick and Pickles were the outcome of pretty combined passing, which completely beat the defence. From this point, however, Gloucester got the measure of their opponents, and though the visitors were oftentimes dangerous with clever attacking movements, the City's superb defence ruled the situation. The main home attacks were left to the forwards; again and again the Bristol line was assailed. That it was only pierced on three occasions great credit is due to Chantrill, who showed ability and resource of a high order.

It was an exciting game to watch, and the keenness was intense at times. Now and again the players got "too warm," but I do not think for a moment there was any intentional roughness. Men on both sides were tackled and put down without ceremony, but very rarely did the players overstep the legitimate.

To the forwards Gloucester were mainly indebted for their triumph. They were beaten for the most part in heeling, but in the loose they asserted superiority, and by quick breaking up assisted the backs repeatedly in defence. Voyce was a brilliant opportunist, and always on the ball. He dribbled with great effect at times, and tackled like a demon. The International's best supporters were Roderick, Ayliffe, Harris, Hall and Collier, though Evans and Smart bore their full share and were very little inferior.

The Bristol pack were a determined lot, and they played with splendid dash all through, but were not so effective in footwork as their opponents. Williams, Shaw, Coventry, and Hore struck me as being the pick of the pack, but in a game fought out so strenuously there was no room for passengers, and every man put out his stoutest and best.

Behind the scrum Bristol had the pull in combination, and some of the movements in the first half were brilliantly carried through. Wring and Budd combined nicely, and the four three-quarters acted in perfect concert when the tries were scored.

Corbett and Spoors were perhaps the shining lights, though later in the game the centre was at fault on one or two occasions. Spoors brought off several fine runs, and his try was a lovely effort. Pickles was too well marked to be very effective in attack, and Quick, apart from his try, was not seen to any particular advantage.

The Gloucester men did not get the chances that fell to their opponents, but there were several bright movements which were highly meritorious. The try worked out between Dix, Millington and Brown was one of the best of the afternoon, for it was accomplished in a confined space with plenty of opponents to beat. Dix was ever on the alert to take advantage of the slightest opening, and towards the end he came very near slipping the defenders on two occasions.

Millington was handicapped with lameness in the second half, but he played a very safe game, and was most useful when his side was being pressed. The three-quarters' best work was in defence, Hughes and Webb both doing well in this department. Brown played a very serviceable game, and Crowther, too, gave a very creditable account of himself. He has not yet mastered the finer points of the game, but with a good centre he ought to get tries with his pace.

The full back play on both sides was excellent. James was given plenty to do, but except for one or two errors he gave nothing away, and his dropped goal was a splendid effort. Chantrill has style and finish, and if he retains his position of custodian he should go further. He is very quick on his feet, kicks strongly, and has a sound defence.

Gloucester's victory should do the club a lot of good, and more performances of this character should bring back the crowds to Kingsholm.

Next week : – Pontypool, away.

W.B.

GLOUCESTER A DRAW AT MONMOUTH.

BRILLIANT TRY BY HOPCROFT.

Played at Monmouth. In the opening stages the Gloucester backs handled cleverly, Gough and Burns opening out well. Though Gloucester failed to score in the first half, their three-quarters played strongly and were several times pulled up within inches of the home line.

In the second half Collett miskicked and J. Wills, the Monmouth left wing, gathered smartly and scored a try which T. Arnott converted.

Following this reverse Gloucester A pressed strongly, and Gough had hard lines in not scoring. At last Gough sent to Burns, who in turn sent to Hopcroft, for that player to score one of the best tries seen on the Monmouth ground this season. Burns converted.

RESULT :

Gloucester A	1 goal (5 points)
Monmouth	1 goal (5 points)