

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER DOWN AGAIN.

BEATEN AT CHELTENHAM BY FOUR POINTS.

For this return match at Cheltenham, both Clubs suffered from absentees, Gloucester especially so. Voyce, Dix, Millington, Ayliffe, Kerwood, Webb, and Hughes were all away, whilst the forwards were further weakened by Hall, Evans and Mountford being unable to turn out. Cheltenham had Statham and Fellows (three-quarters) on the injured list, and played two St. Paul's College men in their places. Despite the disorganised sides a large crowd of Gloucester supporters undertook the journey to Cheltenham by train and char-a-banc, and the Town Club were certain of a good "gate."

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. H. James.

THREE-QUARTERS: S. Brown, G. Harris, T. Burns, and N. Daniell.

HALF-BACKS: T. Gough and F. Meadows.

FORWARDS: S. Smart (capt.), G. Holford, C. Mumford, Major Roderick, J. Harris, G. Bishop, H. Collier, and S. Bayliss.

CHELTENHAM.

BACK: W. Watson.

THREE-QUARTERS: W. Fennell, E. Moore, R. A. Riley, and R. Brocklebank.

HALF-BACKS: A. Fitz, and B. S. Bloodworth.

FORWARDS: H. T. Stephens (capt.), H. Wixey, T. Harry, W. Burford, W. Jackson, W. Morris, F. Bell, and H. Cooper.

Referee : Mr. J. T. Curtis.

THE GAME.

Stephens kicked off before a large crowd. Within a couple of minutes Cheltenham opened the scoring, the forwards rushing the ball over the visitors' line, and Fits racing up touched down, for Stephens to goal.

Gloucester got the ball from the scrum on the restart, and Meadows took it nicely, but Fennell upset him. Gloucester then forced their way to the home line, and Cheltenham had to resort to defensive tactics. Gough worked the short line, but Brown did not get far. Some good footwork by Holford and Smart was assisted by a kick to touch by Burns. Cheltenham, however, came away, though they were brought back for off-side. Then Harry, with a magnificent kick, sent the oval over the visitors' line, and a fine race for possession resulted in James saving. Gough now opened up nicely, and some exciting play ensued, the home tackling being very fine. A free to Cheltenham gave Stephens another opportunity, but the distance was too great.

A lovely return was made by Burns, and the play developed considerable keenness, Gloucester making desperate efforts to equalise the score. Gough and Meadows set Harris in motion, but he could not get the ball away to Brown. Fitz next secured from the scrum, and Bloodworth kicked well but Burns sent it back, and then some splendid footwork by the Cheltenham forwards took the ball right to the visitors' line. The defence, however, prevailed, but not for long. The visitors gave Watson a chance of dropping a goal, which he promptly seized, amid enthusiastic cheers.

The home side were now on particularly good terms with themselves, being nine points to the good. They had, however, the wind behind them, and this had helped in the kicks. A passing movement on the left gave the ball to Brown, who made a strong run to the line, being pulled down only just in time. The ball now came over to the other side, and Daniell made a fine burst, but was unable when collared to pass to Burns.

The home side were penalised in their own 25, and it looked like a certainty for points, but though Burns set the ball in the right direction, the wind would not allow it to cross the bar, and Watson relieved with a fine kick.

Gloucester continued to get the ball among their backs, but the tackling was too sure for any of them to get away, and in the loose the Cheltenham forwards proved their superiority. Brocklebank was also a thorn in Daniell's side, and found touch with good lengthy kicks. Rushing tactics by the Cheltenham forwards gave them a footing in Gloucester's 25, where James had to kick to the line to prevent Wixey, who followed up at rare speed, from scoring.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
CHELTENHAM 2 goals (1d)
GLOUCESTER Nil

Cheltenham had done much better than their supporters expected in the first half, and on the run of the play fully deserved their advantage on the scoring board. The only question was whether they would last through the second half against their heavier opponents and against the wind.

Gloucester had only just re-started the game when the visiting forwards came away, not stopping till half a dozen of them crossed with the ball at their feet. Roderick fell on it and was awarded a try, which Burns had no difficulty in converting from the easy place-kick.

Further disaster at once awaited Cheltenham, as helped by the wind the visiting forwards again got down to the goal line, where from a cross-kick Daniell gathered and ran over with a try, which Burns could not improve upon.

Only one point now divided the teams. Stephens had a chance of increasing the home lead from a penalty in Gloucester territory, but the wind prevented the ball from going over the bar.

The visitors, in subsequent play, did not allow for the wind in their kicking, and consequently only a touchdown resulted. Riley and Brocklebank next handled nicely, but could not get through. The additional power given to the ball by the wind bamboozled Watson, and the position looked dangerous for Cheltenham. Relief, however, was coming from the forwards, who came promptly to the rescue. Bloodworth next got away, only to be called back for a knock-on.

The visitors attacked strongly at this stage, Brown doing a clever in and out run manœuvring for a place to drop a goal, which, however, did not come off, a successful tackle bringing him down. More passing by the Gloucester backs looked dangerous, but there was too much individuality about it to be effective.

The wind played a great game for Gloucester this half, and kept the home team pressed in their own quarters practically all the time. The gusts were, however, very erratic, and carried the ball too far for business purposes. Great cheering encouraged Cheltenham, when at last they got a foothold in the visitors' territory. Helped as this was by a kick by Fitz, the excitement was greatly increased as Bloodworth kicked to the corner, and the ball came flying from the ensuing scrum along the home three-quarter line into Riley's hands. This player made a bold bid for a try, but was held up on the line, and James retrieved the situation with a long kick out.

This excellent bit of back play was much to the taste of the spectators, who were given another exhibition just afterwards, Riley being again the most prominent figure in the picture. Cheltenham continued to press, and when within a dozen yards or so of the visitors' line, Bloodworth made a tremendous burst, thrusting off three or four opponents before crossing with a magnificent try, which raised the enthusiasm to a great height. Stephens' kick was unsuccessful. Just on time Brown was given the ball and made a desperate effort to cover the distance, but was overhauled by Moore and pushed to touch.

RESULT :

CHELTENHAM 2 goals (1d), 1 try (12 pts.)
GLOUCESTER 1 goal, 1 try (8 pts.)

REMARKS.

Our Cheltenham correspondent writes : —

The Cheltenham team covered themselves with glory by vanquishing the redoubtable Gloucestersians in a fashion which left no doubt that the better side won. The Garden Towners have a knack of rising to the occasion, and this they did to-day in no half-hearted manner. They not only showed determination, but the skill to utilise the opportunities which their vigour produced for them.

Where all did so well it would be invidious to particularise, but Bloodworth will be a hero for many a day for having brought off that magnificent dash which, in the last few minutes of the game, made Cheltenham's victory secure.

Both the half-backs played their best game of the season, and though Fitz had nothing like so many chances as Gough he was very quick to use all that came his way. As to the three-quarters Brocklebank and Riley on the left wing were a very capable combination, and Riley only narrowly missed scoring more than once, his pace being as good as his judgment was faultless.

Moore must be credited with the finest piece of tackling amid a lot of the right sort when he overtook and brought down Brown a couple of seconds before the whistle blew. Fennell was not so prominent as usual. Watson was all that could be desired until the wind baffled him in the second half. That he did not let his side down must be accounted one of the miraculous escapes Cheltenham had to be thankful for.

The home forwards were beaten in the scrums, but were irresistible in the loose. Stephens, Wixey and Harry particularly were smart in following up, and indeed the whole eight played a champion game making the ground both in the first and in the second half which enabled the two Cheltenham tries to be gained.

The Gloucester forwards had the advantage in weight, and there were moments when their open play was of a brilliant description. When, however, they deserted footwork for handwork – well, they simply could not get away, the home tackling being too good for them. The same remark applies to the visiting three-quarters, who made little headway when they got the ball.

The City owed both their tries largely to the way the wind backed up the forwards, amongst whom Roderick, Holford, Mumford, and Smart were the pick. James played a sound game at full-back. Gough and Meadows were clever in getting the ball among the threes, who, however, as already said, were disappointing handlers.

The two wing men got but few opportunities beyond those they made for themselves, or a different tale might have had to have been recorded in view of the form shown by both Brown and Daniell when they had a fair chance. The weak spot were the centres.

Over £150 was taken at the gate.

DRYBROOK BEATEN AT KINGSHOLM.

CITY RESERVES' TWO-POINTS WIN.

Gloucester A were at home to Drybrook at Kingsholm. The Foresters brought a representative team, but the home side were weak and had to obtain the services of several local men. There was a very small attendance.

Gloucester A. – S. Williams; J. C. Collett, F. Wadley, A. E. Hopcroft, S. R. Crowther; E. Abbey and F. J. Burley; E. Curtis, F. Mansell, J. H. Webb, A. Wright, A. E. Taylor, T. Bridges, P. C. Carter, C. Nelmes.

Drybrook. – J. Stephens; C. Annetts, B. Greening, R. Boseley, C. Brain; T. Pegler, C. Boseley; Colin Boseley, A. Burford, A. Stephens, A. Harris, W. Meek, C. Meek, F. Meek, and Reg. Burford.

Referee : Mr. J. H. Babbage.

Gloucester A lost the toss and kicked off against a fairly strong wind. There was a good return, but the visitors tried passing, unsuccessfully, and the City forwards dribbled to the Drybrook quarter. Stephens saved, and the visitors worked up again. Collett, fielding, put in a long kick, causing Stephens to double back. The Forest full back tried to clear but went to touch in the corner. From the line out Williams made a good attempt to drop a goal, just failing to cover the cross bar. A hot attack was now put up by the visitors, who penetrated to the home quarter. One of their men crossed, but was called back. From the ensuing scrum Drybrook heeled, and C. Boseley very smartly dropped a goal.

Following this reverse Gloucester rushed to the visitors' 25, where the visitors were penalised. Burley kicked well but fruitlessly. The City Reserves were now penalised, and Drybrook gained a good slice of ground. Greening cut through strongly, and sent to Brain, who ran across, but lost the ball. Abbey got the ball away nicely, and started a round of passing, which Wadley failed to carry on, but a moment later Abbey again fed the backs, the ball passing beautifully via Burley, Wadley, and Hopcroft to Crowther, who rounded the opposition in great style and scored behind the posts after running from half-way. Abbey failed to majorise.

The Foresters attacked hotly on the resumption, and the home line was in danger, when Wadley picked up, and running strongly took play to safer quarters. Then Abbey put in a solo effort, which Wright and Webb further improved with a strong dribble. Another pretty passing bout left Crowther without enough room to get away, and the Drybrook backs kicked ahead, Williams being tackled and losing the ball. A dangerous run ensued, but Crowther and Webb got back and saved.

The Foresters continued to press, and there was a strenuous struggle near the Gloucester line, in the course of which Boseley had a drop at goal, this time unsuccessfully. Things looked very threatening when Pegler got off-side, and Collett relieved with a touch-finder,

The City could not work free, however, and the Drybrook three-quarters had a splendid chance, Brain being unmarked on the wing when R. Boseley sent him an impossible pass. At length the Reserves worked down, but Carter kicked high, and one of the visitors made a mark.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Drybrook 1 goal (d)
Gloucester A 1 try

There had been very little between the teams in the first half, the football being only of moderate quality. On the resumption Drybrook rushed to the home end, but Williams sent them back with a useful kick to touch past mid-field. A couple of marks put the Foresters well up, but Wright, Bridges and Mansell indulged in a smart handling bout which successfully changed the venue. The visitors' defence was sure, however, and again play was taken to mid-field.

The Gloucester forwards broke away again, and although they dribbled over they failed to touch down, a minor being conceded. With Drybrook a point ahead this was an unfortunate failure. The home team were quickly ejected from the visitors' territory. The home backs had another chance a few moments later, but neither Wadley nor Hopcroft could hold the ball.

The City were now in the ascendancy, and fought hard to improve their score, but after defending for some time the visitors' forwards broke away, and Williams only just succeeded in turning the ball to touch. A score came at length, the ball going out to Collett, who kicked ahead, and following up robbed Stephens. Wadley carried on and scored after dribbling over. Collett and Abbey muddled the place, the former being prevented from kicking.

Then Drybrook got a soft one, R. Boseley picking up in the loose and passing to Brain when Williams tackled, the wing man ran in unopposed. The kick failed. An injury to one of the Drybrook forwards early in the second half had left the visitors with only 14 men.

Collett knocked on with a fine opening, following which the visitors' backs ran strongly for the line, but Carter tackled, and a scrum was ordered; another narrow squeak for the Reserves. A poor drop for goal by the visitors brought relief for Gloucester. Then Crowther cut in and ran strongly, leaving Wadley to dribble on and score a try, which the same player failed to convert.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 3 tries (9 points)
Drybrook 1 goal (d) 1 try (7 points)

REMARKS.

With a man short (A. Stephens) during the greater part of the second half, Drybrook were unlucky to lose. Gloucester A, represented by a very weak side, gave only a poor display, the only outstanding feature being Crowther's try, which was really worth seeing. In the forward line the home team just about held their own, being if anything slightly inferior in the loose. They managed to get the ball back fairly well at times, and Abbey after a while settled down and did quite well. He should be persevered with. Burley was nothing special.

The three-quarter line made a good many mistakes through hastiness, but, on the whole, did better than usual. Crowther was the best, but Wadley and Hopcroft both worked hard. Collett put up a very fair game, using his head and feet to advantage. Williams was not free from mistakes, but justified his inclusion as second reserve.

The Drybrook halves were nothing extra, Boseley being the better of the two; but R. Boseley and Brain formed a useful left wing in the three-quarter line.