

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER DEFEAT BRISTOL.

A THREE POINTS' VICTORY.

MILLINGTON'S FINE PENALTY GOAL.

A KEEN AND EXCITING GAME.

In meeting Bristol at the Memorial Ground, Filton Avenue, this afternoon, Gloucester were engaged in the biggest test set them so far this season. In the long series of fixtures between the premier clubs of the county, Gloucester can claim a large percentage of victories – of the 18 matches played since 1910-11 Bristol have only won two (in 1910-11 and 1920-21, both at home), as against 13 defeats, two games being drawn, and the other abandoned at half-time owing to a terrific storm of rain with Gloucester leading by 9 points to nil. But in the majority of games Gloucester have had to fight desperately hard for winning points.

The form of the rival team promised another great struggle for supremacy, with little in it at the finish. After opening in disappointing fashion against Cinderford – the Foresters might easily have won with a good goal-kicker – Bristol jumped into their best form, and in successive weeks beat Cardiff (5-3) and drew with Newport (no score). To more than hold their own with opponents of such character, stamped the Bristolians as a side to be reckoned with, and the Gloucester men needed no reminding of the heavy task set them. The City entered the contest with a record of four victories over Lydney, Bath, Northampton, and the Harlequins, and there was further encouragement of past achievements against their old rivals and the fact that the club's full strength was available.

Two changes were made in the team which triumphed over the 'Quins – Stone (recovered from his injury) reappearing at centre, and Holford displacing Carter in the forwards. The old International was chosen for his experience, and was deputed to lead the pack. Bristol selected the same fifteen which did so well against Newport, though there was some doubt about one or two of the players, who were knocked about last week.

The Bristol match is always a popular one with Gloucester supporters, and a goodly contingent took advantage of the half-day excursions run by the two railway companies, whilst others made the journey by the motor char-a-banc trips arranged by the Bristol Tramway Company. The weather turned dull after brilliant sunshine. The conditions generally were favourable for fast, open football. The attendance was about 12,000.

The following were the teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : N. Daniell, S. Stone, T. Millington (capt.), and S. Brown.

HALF-BACKS : W. Collins and E. Hughes.

FORWARDS : A. Hall, F. Ayliffe, T. Voyce, G. Holford, S. Bayliss, H. W. Collier, J. Merry, and T. Coulson.

BRISTOL.

BACK : B. S. Chantrill.

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

HALF-BACKS : E. Tucker and S. H. Budd.

FORWARDS : J. S. Tucker, M. V. Shaw, A. T. Hore, F. Cummings, E. A. Richardson, A. S. Prowse, E. Sullivan, and S. H. Carey.

REFEREE : Mr. A. E. Freethy (Neath).

THE GAME.

Holford kicked off, and there was a sensational opening, for Prowse, taking the ball, broke through and passed to Shaw, who punted high to James. The latter misfielded, and luckily the ball went to touch ten yards from the line. Bristol were thus early dangerous, but loose passing enabled Gloucester to kick down the field.

Millington and Daniell took play further on, Quick just getting the ball to touch in time. The Gloucester forwards heeling, there was a nice bout of passing, until Millington threw forward to Brown.

Exciting play followed, Bristol clearing with a loose rush and a long kick which sent the ball past James. Stone, however, got back and cleared nicely. Hughes did good work with a pick up and a punt out to Pickles, who tried a drop at goal.

Gloucester did well in subsequent play, the forwards working successfully, but Chantrill was very safe at full-back. The contest raged strenuously at midfield, where both sets of backs tried to open out, but without success.

From a line-out Daniell secured and kicked out. Corbett gathered, though he was immediately upset. Then Hughes picked up cleverly and made a brilliant short burst, but his pass was not accepted, and Pickles securing, he punted well down the field and followed up. James, however, was there first and found touch nicely.

Bristol were dangerous with a loose dribble, but the final kick was too hard, and the ball was dead. On the drop out Bristol had a sharp round of passing, but Ayliffe got across and effected a fine tackle of Spours.

The football was terribly keen, with Bristol having slightly the best of matters territorially. Splendid footwork by the Gloucester forwards, with Coulson leading, made good headway, but Bristol checked at midfield.

Good kicking by the home backs sent Gloucester back, where Voyce was prominent with a fine clearance from close in. Then weak passing by the Bristol backs allowed Gloucester to change the venue, Daniell bringing off a great run, but eventually falling a victim to Chantrill.

Immediately after the Gloucester backs shone in a clever attack, but Brown's re-pass went astray, and a forward in trying to pick up knocked on.

Bristol, who had lost Pickles, were pressed desperately, and Tucker getting off-side was penalised. MILLINGTON kicked a lovely goal amidst considerable cheering from Gloucester's followers.

Resuming, Gloucester attacked with vigour, but could not pierce the defence. Then Stone had to retire with a twisted knee.

HALF-TIME SCORE ;
GLOUCESTER 1 goal (p)
BRISTOL Nil

Gloucester had played up finely in the last ten minutes, and well deserved their narrow lead. The football had been desperately keen, with honours pretty even, though the Gloucester backs had shown better combination than their opponents.

Pickles and Stone were unable to resume, and Prowse and Hall deputised at centre for their respective sides. Resuming, Gloucester early showed up with clever handling, Hall and Millington re-passing prettily, but the former was brought down in attempting to burst through.

Bristol relieved with a forward rush, and further improved their position owing to a bad pass by Holford. Millington checked daringly, and the Gloucester forwards, with Collins, rushed up to beyond the centre. Here Hughes snapped up an opponent's pass and, working his way through splendidly, the movement continued, and only a wonderful save by Chantrill prevented a score.

Gloucester continued to attack, and the home defence was severely tested. The City forwards heeling, there was a good chance. Daniell kicked through, but Brown unfortunately knocked on with an open goal. This was a lucky escape for Bristol.

A close move ensued. In the hurly-burly Ayliffe was injured and had to retire. During the stoppage Pickles returned, so that Gloucester had to continue two short. The six forwards, however, fought manfully, and for a time held their own. Brown brought off a capital run on the left wing, but he was hemmed in. Then the Bristol backs, well fed, brought off the best passing seen so far from their side, but great tackling saved the situation. Gloucester, however, were sorely tried, and Tucker was only pushed into touch-in-goal after a five yards' burst. It was an anxious time for Gloucester, but the City were saved by an attempt to drop a goal by Corbett.

Following the re-start, Hall and Daniell made headway with passing, and immediately after, from a kick across by a Bristolian, Brown fielded and beat two or three opponents. Finally he sent to Voyce, who had got outside. The International made a great effort to cross, but was caught just in time, and though he got over the line, touch-in-goal was given. The excitement was now intense, as both sides made increased efforts. The Bristol forwards dribbled half the length of the ground, but Gloucester checked.

Gloucester responded with an equally effective effort, and a clever mark saved Bristol. Illegal tackling of Collins by Tucker gave Gloucester a penalty, and Millington found touch well in the home 25. Bristol cleared luckily with a flying kick by Pickles, after passing had broken down, but Gloucester came back beautifully with a passing run in which all the backs handled. Brown tried hard to get away, but was fetched down from behind. The last five minutes was fought out with tremendous energy, but Gloucester held their own splendidly and maintained their three points' lead.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ... 1 goal (p) (3 points)
BRISTOL Nil

GLOUCESTER A v. BRISTOL A.

Gloucester A were at home to Bristol A at Kingsholm this afternoon. Both sides fielded representative teams. Despite the stormy weather the attendance was very good. The start was delayed owing to the non-arrival of Mr. J. Hall (Cinderford), who was to have refereed. Mr. Wood, Gloucester, filled the gap.

The teams were as follow : –

Gloucester A. – A. Manns; R. N. Loveridge, W. Clements, R. B. Miller, and S. Crowther; T. Gough and F. Meadows; F. Mansell, A. Rea, S. Smart, J. H. Webb, H. Evans, Hemmings, F. Rose, and E. Curtis.

Bristol A. – F. Sage; H. Feltham, J. A. Tucker, A. E. Alder, and E. Stinchcombe; A. Smith and G. Bethell; F. Coventry, J. Nash, W. H. Hale, H. L. Boyd, A. C. Kidston, J. Portman, A. G. Haslar, and H. J. Willis.

Referee : Mr. Wood (Gloucester).

Bristol kicked off, and after a period of play at midfield their forwards attacked strongly with the ball at their feet and rushed to the home line, where they were repulsed, but with great difficulty. Gloucester worked free, and Meadows put in a useful punt, which enabled his side to penetrate to the Bristol line, where a minor was conceded.

The tables had now been turned, and Gloucester continued to press strongly. A penalty against Bristol for off-side was taken by Miller, who kicked well, but found the position too difficult. The visitors worked up to midfield, where Manns picked up cleverly and put in a fine kick under pressure.

A well-judged passing movement, in which Meadows and Miller showed up well, ended in Clements going over, but he was recalled. Gloucester continued to press, and were awarded another penalty, but the position was still an impossible one.

Gloucester's attack was keen, but they met a sterling defence, and after a while Bristol set up a dangerous movement, Alder and Stinchcombe putting in a run which took a deal of stopping. Then one of the visitors picked up and dropped for goal – a fine effort which only narrowly missed.

Bristol's occupancy of the home territory was short lived, and they were again called upon to defend. Morris helped to maintain Gloucester in the visitors' quarter by good touch finding, and Loveridge stopped an attempt to work out by a timely mark.

Gloucester continued to have the better of the game territorially, but there were few chances of scoring owing to the excellent tackling of the Bristolians. Crowther through fumbling missed one good chance when the ball was kicked across to him, but a moment later Gough picked up in the loose and nipped over with a try which Miller failed to convert.

Morris came in for a round of applause for the well-judged fielding of a high kick and a lengthy punt to touch. Gough showed up with some clever work at the base of the scrum. Loveridge, who had been putting in some good work, manœuvred splendidly for position, but failed to raise the ball when he tried to drop for goal.

HALF-TIME :

Gloucester A 1 try
Bristol A Nil

A three-points' lead just about represented Gloucester's superiority in the first half. On the resumption Gloucester conceded a minor following a long kick over the line, and then the home team worked down.

Play had become rather scrappy, neither side being able to get far without minor infringements. Then Evans gave the visitors an easy try. He fielded and put in a very feeble kick, which failed to go to touch. Feltham rushed him and dribbled on, eventually punting high. Evans, who had got back again, had a chance to field, but missed badly, and Stinchcombe ran round, gathered nicely, and scored. Coventry failed to add the goal points.

With the score even, play became keener. The Gloucester forwards rushed to the Bristol quarter, but they lost the ball. A scrum and a good passing movement put Bristol into a favourable position, and Gloucester had to exert all their skill to keep their line intact. The defence held and after a while Mansell broke away from a line out and dribbled to the Bristol quarter but he was pulled up.

Bristol were penalised but the kick went wide. A nice cut through by Miller and a bout of handling left the ball with Loveridge, who thrust well for the line and ran some distance until the ball was knocked out of his grasp. That was a narrow escape for Bristol, as he had all but beaten the opposition.

Gloucester kept up the pressure until Sage put in a good relief touch and kick. The fielding of a forward punt was muddled through Clements and Manns trying to field and Bristol became dangerous. In the course of a melee in front of goal, Boyd picked up and dropped a neat goal, giving Bristol a four points' lead.

Gloucester worked hard to wipe off the deficit and although they put in some strenuous forward work and one or two passing movements and came very near scoring, they were unable to break through.

Meadows before the end tried to drop a goal but he was hampered and the effort fell short.

RESULT :

Bristol A 1 goal (d) 1 try (7 pts.)
Gloucester A 1 try (3 pts.)

REMARKS.

Bristol are to be congratulated upon having an exceptionally good reserve team this year. The Gloucester Seconds played for all they were worth but were not good enough. They were evenly matched in the front division, having if anything less of the ball in the scrums than their opponents.

Behind the scrum there was little to choose between the halves. Gough and Meadows were perhaps the better pair, the Gloucester scrum worker putting in some particularly good work from time to time.

The Bristolians were very keen and effective tacklers and the home three-quarters found themselves quickly hampered when they tried passing. The Bristol quartette did not get over more than once but they were a dangerous lot when moving and in defence they were fine.

The outstanding feature of Gloucester's play was Mann's performance. He fielded and kicked with good judgment. Gloucester lost several chances through faulty play, especially at the end, when eagerness spoiled judgment.