

THE CITIZEN
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

PLYMOUTH ALBION 13 POINTS DOWN.

DISAPPOINTING FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER MISS MANY SCORING CHANCES.

Gloucester were handicapped in meeting Plymouth Albion at Kingsholm this afternoon, injuries preventing both wing three-quarters (Sid Brown and Daniell) and Voyce and Bayliss (forwards) assisting.

In the third line, Meadows figured at centre with the Captain, and Miller and Loveridge filled the vacant positions on the respective wings.

Last year Plymouth were beaten at Kingsholm by 7 points to 3, but won the return by 6 points to nil.

The Albion have experienced a fairly successful season, and against the weakened City ranks were fully expected to go very close if not actually win. The early kick-off militated against the attendance.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

FULL-BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : R. N. Loveridge, F. Meadows, T. Millington (capt.), and R. Miller.

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

FORWARDS : A. Hall, F. Ayliffe, Major Roderick, G. Holford, J. Merry, T. Coulson, P. Carter, and H. Collier.

PLYMOUTH ALBION.

FULL-BACK : E. G. Butcher (capt.).

THREE-QUARTERS : W. G. Glanvill, F. A. Wood, T. Mills, and W. R. Syms.

HALF-BACKS : W. D. Hutchings and H. G. B. Hosking.

FORWARDS : W. H. Wright, F. W. Sanders, ?. Boddy, W. Gummer, R. Sparkes, L. R. Stephens, W. S. Campbell, and J. Clements.

Referee : Mr. J. T. Curtis (Cheltenham).

THE GAME.

There were less than 4.000 spectators present when the teams took the field, Gloucester playing in white jerseys owing to similarity in the Club colours. Mr. Spiers, the old City and County forward, acted as linesman for the Albion.

Plymouth's kick off failed to send the ball ten yards, and a scrum followed at the centre. The visitors heeled from the first scrum, but Hosking's cross-kick was captured by Millington, who punted down the field. Mills, however, made a mark in the face of the oncoming forwards, and with his kick found touch. From the line-out Hall gathered and passed out, but the City were not able to make much ground. Loose rushes, however, resulted in play being taken to the Albion's 25, where some scrambling exchanges resulted.

From a penalty Millington had a shot for goal, but a good kick went wide, and the ball was run out. Play continued to be very scrappy, and a wild pass by Hutchings put the Albion line in danger. Hughes, receiving from Collins, tried a burst through, but he was safely held.

Gloucester had a possible chance on the left, but it was not accepted. Immediately after, however, Collins got the ball away nicely, and Hughes fed Millington, who made a splendid dash for the line, being only tackled a couple of yards outside. Twice the City were nearly over, but the whistle saved Plymouth.

Gloucester continued to do all the attacking, but finish was lacking and the Plymouth line escaped. From a kick out by Butcher, James had a drop for goal, but the kick fell short, and then Miller forced a minor with a punt over the line.

On the drop out Gloucester tried some passing but it broke down, and Mills intercepting had a clear course to James. The Albion centre, however, passed yards before he came to his man, with the result that the ball went behind his wing man. A further attempt by Gloucester to open out play failed badly, and a similar thing happened a little later.

Taking advantage the Plymouth forwards dribbled ahead and reached the home 25 for the first time. Heeling nicely, Hutchings started his backs going, Syms finally punting to near the line, where the visiting forwards were ruled off-side.

Gloucester came away from a dangerous position with a lovely bout of passing more than half the length of the field. Miller gave an inside pass to Millington, who had an open goal, but the Captain let the ball go and it was knocked on.

The City were very close, and a desperate attack followed. Plymouth right under the posts[sic], and there was a bit of roughing which caused the crowd to shout "Send him off." After a brief stoppage, the game was resumed, and the Albion getting the ball out started passing. MILLER, however, intercepted cleverly, and cutting inside Butcher scored a good try, which Millington converted.

From the kick-off Loveridge got in a splendid touchfinder 20 yards down the field, and later, with a Soccer-like turn of the ball, made further ground. The game hovered in the Albion 25, but the football was of a poor quality.

Butcher conceded a minor as the result of a kick over the line, and on the drop-out the visitors had more of the play. Hughes, with a clever individual effort, put Gloucester on the attack, and Hall had a good dash which placed the visitors' line in danger.

In some loose work Collins sent out a pass to Millington, who took a sharp drop for goal. There was a loud shout from behind the posts indicating it was a goal, but it was a false alarm and only a minor was given.

Gloucester held the upper hand on the re-start, and after some give-and-take play there was a nice movement started by Collins. Hughes, Millington and Meadows handled in turn. The latter gave the "dummy" to Mills, and on reaching Butcher transferred to LOVERIDGE, who went over with a try. Millington added the goal points.

Loveridge again replied nicely to the kick off, and Gloucester confined operations to their opponents' end. From a round of passing Loveridge punted, but did not get sufficient screw on the ball and it went over the line for a touch-down. Gloucester pressed to the interval, but there was no further scoring.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 2 goals
PLYMOUTH ALBION Nil

Gloucester restarted, and play opened at mid-field. A kick down aided the visitors, and Butcher, with a lovely kick from a penalty, found touch ten yards from the home line. Matters looked anxious for the City, but fumbling by the Albion allowed Gloucester to clear to near half-way, Collier being prominent in the rush.

The City forwards later burst down to Butcher, who was bowled over in possession. The ball getting loose, a flying kick changed the venue. Back Gloucester came, Roderick bringing off a strong dash from a pass by Hall. He transferred to Ayliffe, who fed Coulson. The latter only had Butcher in front of him, with Miller on his left. The forward, however, tried to beat the full back himself, and was collared.

Gloucester tried hard to increase the lead, but Plymouth broke clear with a good loose rush and the home end was visited. Hereabouts Glanvill had to leave the field with a damaged ankle.

The Albion, despite this handicap, had the better of the exchanges, and got very close. For "four up" in the scrum Gloucester were penalised, and Stephens placed a fine goal, but a colleague had got in front of the ball when he kicked and the points were disallowed – very hard lines for the visitors. Glanville now returned, but was limping rather badly.

Play in the next few minutes lacked incident, but was in favour of the Albion. Some Gloucester passing going astray, Plymouth carried through, and James was pressed. Collins punted out well to Butcher, who dropped unsuccessfully for goal. The ball went over the line, but Millington ran it out, though he only succeeded in sending to touch a few yards outside.

By dint of a splendid loose rush Gloucester reached mid-field, but they were quickly beaten back owing to fumbling behind. And so the game went on – poor, scrambling football on the part of both sides.

A promising bout of passing by the City was spoiled by a wild transfer by Millington. Later Plymouth were penalised and, James punting high, the home forwards got under the ball before it dropped and, gaining possession, were nearly over.

Plymouth relieved through mistakes by the City but they could not get beyond the centre mark. Here there was a loose dribble, Collier being seen to advantage. Miller snapped up the ball and tried to work his way through, but the opposition was too much and he was brought down heavily, being temporarily laid out.

Continuing, the Gloucester forwards heeled, and there was an attack on the right, but Meadows was pulled down when going strongly. The City just now were outplaying their opponents forward, but though giving the backs chances nothing resulted. Collins and Hughes did their part well, but the movements broke down in the rear.

It was all Gloucester for the next few minutes, but try as they would the City could not beat the defence. Loveridge made one praiseworthy dash, but was well collared, and then some loose kicking enabled the Albion to get out to more favourable quarters.

A breakdown in passing by the Albion saw Millington take the ball down the field at his feet. He tipped it nicely over Butcher's head, but failed altogether to pick up with an easy try in view. Gloucester, however, had secured a good position, and Hughes, going on his own, beat the defence and scored wide out. Millington failed at goal.

Gloucester had the better of the exchanges to the end, but could not add to their score.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 2 goals, 1 try (13 pts.)
PLYMOUTH ALBION Nil

REMARKS.

Gloucester won, as they deserved to do on the play, but the football witnessed was very disappointing. From a City point of view it was a case of missed opportunities.

At only brief intervals were the Albion at all dangerous; for quite three-parts of the game Gloucester confined operations to their opponents' half, but though the forwards and half-backs provided many scoring chances only three were accepted.

Plymouth, as a team, were much below the standard expected. The forwards played keenly and tackled well, but outside the scrum the backs were a very moderate set in combination, and the attempts at passing were very crude and ineffective.

The Albion had their two Internationals – Wright and Sanders – in the pack, but for the most part the Gloucester eight held the advantage.

The scrum work was good, and the visitors (thanks to Holford's hooking) were well beaten in getting the ball, whilst in the loose the City men brought off some powerful bursts and handled well at times. Ayliffe and Roderick were particularly prominent in this department, and Hall opened out on several occasions from long lines-out. Coulson, Merry, Carter and Collier played with splendid dash and determination, the latter being fast on the ball.

Collins had his opponent continually beaten at the fringe of the scrum, more than once robbing Hutchings of possession and dribbling through, whilst his service of passes to Hughes was capital. The outside half was the hardest worker on the home side. He rarely missed a transfer, was a continual thorn in the side of the opposition, and he gave his three-quarters plenty of the ball. Finding his rear men ineffective, he occasionally went on his own, and the City's only score in the second half came as the result of a clever solo effort.

At three-quarter, Millington had an off-day at centre, and the captain's weakness accounted a good deal for the moderate results achieved. Meadows, on the day, was the more effective player, and the opening he made for Loveridge to score was prettily worked out. Miller, in the new position on the wing, shaped extremely well. It was a clever interception that gave him the opportunity of scoring the first try, and he slipped Butcher in the most approved style. Loveridge, too, did a lot of useful work, and is gaining in experience.

James gave a very sound display this afternoon at full back, fielding accurately and getting in some well-judged kicks. In point of length he was not quite so good as Butcher, but the Gloucester custodian was equal to the Devon County Captain in all other respects.

Plymouth experienced rough luck in losing a penalty goal, for the kick was a fine one. An impetuous colleague, however, robbed Stephens of the result of his efforts through getting in front of the mark. The Albion are a better side than their play suggested this afternoon. The visitors never seemed to get the hang of the game, and were a defeated side all the way.

The half-backs were poor, and neither of the three-quarters were in any way distinguished. Butcher kicked splendidly at full back, but his defence was shaky.

Next week : Abertillery, at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A v. HEREFORD.

CITY SECONDS' SUBSTANTIAL WIN.

At Hereford.

RESULT :

Gloucester A .. 2 goals 3 tries (19 points)

Hereford 1 try (3 points)

An open game.

JC