

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

ABERTILLERY'S DOUBLE OVER GLOUCESTER.

WELSHMEN'S TRIUMPH AT KINGSHOLM WELL DESERVED.

CITY AGAIN DISAPPOINTING.

For the first of the holiday matches Gloucester had Abertillery for opponents at Kingsholm. The Monmouthshire Club team was the first to check the City's victorious career this season, winning at Abertillery by 13 points to 6.

Gloucester had several reserves out, but were hoping to reverse the former result, with a bit in hand. Voyce, Ayliffe, and Daniell were unable to play owing to injuries, Miller again filling the position on the wing.

There were several late changes in both teams, Merry and Hall dropped out of the City forwards, Rea and Triggs-Herbert filling the vacancies, whilst on the visitors' side Hill played outside half in place of Percy Williams, and Phillips came in at forward vice S. Saunders.

Teams : —

GLOUCESTER.

FULL-BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : R. B. Miller, F. Meadows, T. Millington, and S. Brown.

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

FORWARDS : G. Holford, A. Rea, S. Bayliss, Major Roderick, E. Triggs-Herbert, W. Hemmings, P. Carter, and H. Collier.

ABERTILLERY.

FULL-BACK : R. Pritchard.

THREE-QUARTERS : B. Elliott, H. Bates, S. Cecil, and J. Bird.

HALF-BACKS : B. Fisher and A. Hill.

FORWARDS : W. Hale (capt.), W. Morris, M. M. Evans, R. Saunders, "Duff" Lewis, J. Fear, F. Greenough, and H. Phillips.

Referee : Mr. J. Southby (Bristol).

THE GAME.

The attendance was very poor at the advertised time of starting, but the ground was filling rapidly when the teams took the field. Gloucester lost the toss, and Holford started for the home team against the wind. Opening play was contested on the visitors' side of the half-way line, but the proceedings were very quiet. Meadows was twice to the fore with useful kicks, and then Collins, securing from the scrum, opened out, but Millington failed to take Hughes' pass and the movement broke down.

Heeling by the 'Tillery forwards saw Fisher send out a wild pass to his partner. Collins dribbled away nicely, but Pritchard picked up and got in a fine kick, the ball being carried by the wind to the Gloucester 25. Collins relieved with a good punt, and Pritchard being collared in possession the game was transferred to beyond the centre.

Gloucester lost their position owing to a mistake by Meadows, and the visitors found touch close to the home line. A strong burst by the City forwards brought relief, but off-side gave 'Tillery a free, "Duff" Lewis making a fine effort to land a goal.

Abertillery attacked from the next scrum, and neat passing gave Elliott a chance on the right wing. Holford, however, got across and effected a grand tackle a few yards from the goal-line. The wind was of great assistance to the visitors, and they took every advantage.

More neat handling gave Gloucester an anxious time, but the final transfer went astray and Meadows turned the ball to touch. The City, however, could not get out of their quarters, play being confined to the home 25. A drop at goal by Fear was unsuccessful, and then Miller, in trying to run round behind his goal, was forced to touch down. A scrum followed ten yards out, and, Abertillery heeling, the backs passed neatly. Bates, however, dropped his pass, and Brown was able to check a dangerous assault.

Gloucester, awarded a penalty for a foul of Miller, eased the pressure with the resultant kick, and later Carter came through strongly with the ball at his feet. A visitor gathered and punted to James, who replied well, only to see "Duff" Lewis make a good mark. Dashing forward work by the visitors looked promising until Brown picked up, ran across the ground, and passed to Millington. Meadows and Miller in turn handled, but the wing man was upset before he could get away.

'Tillery were playing a very lively game, and had the better of the exchanges. Millington marked for a shot at goal from a penalty by Hale, and the City captain found touch with a good kick. The Welshmen, however, returned to the attack, and a splendid effort on the left only just failed. Near the home line Gloucester were awarded a free, and from James' punt Hale again made a mark, but his kick at goal was a feeble one. There was little of incident just now, the chief feature being a couple of nice kicks by Miller.

Gloucester were generally beaten in the scrum; but at length Collins was able to get the ball away to Hughes. Meadows received, but Millington missed with the best opening yet provided by the City. Immediately after Hughes cut through cleverly, but essaying a wide transfer the ball was captured by Bird, who had an open field with the exception of James. He beat the City custodian and raced for the line, but Brown sprinted across from the opposite wing and tackled his man right on the line. Bird lost possession, and a splendid effort went unrewarded.

Gloucester could not make much headway on the restart. The visitors heeled well and the backs handled with good effect. One movement looked all over for a score, but a re-pass was not accepted. The City were strictly placed on the defensive, but the line held out against several warm attacks. From some loose work the ball got across to BIRD who, though at a difficult angle, dropped a clever goal, giving the first points to 'Tillery. And on the play the Welshmen deserved the lead.

From the kick-off 'Tillery again went to the attack, and the Gloucester line was subjected to hot pressure. The defence, however, held out to the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
ABERTILLERY 1 goal (d)
GLOUCESTER Nil

Gloucester's form, even allowing for the handicap of the wing against them, had shown disappointment, and on the play Abertillery were a smarter side all-round. The visitors restarted, and from the kick-off a forward fielded and passed to Hughes, who fed Meadows. The latter punted high, and Bates being collared he threw the ball back wildly to Pritchard, who missed it. There was a fine opening for a try, but a visitor saved right on the line. 'Tillery were hard pressed for a couple of minutes, but judicious kicks eased the situation.

James sent the game back with a big punt to touch, but play came back to the centre, where Brown brought off a fine individual run and pass to Meadows. The latter made progress, and handing at the right moment to MILLER. The latter cut Pritchard neatly and scored in a good position – a very pretty try. Millington's kick for goal hit the upright, and Gloucester were still a point behind. The score, however, put new life in the home team, and they were a different side on the resumption.

James was to the fore with a mighty punt more than half the length of the ground, and the forwards, with Collins and Hughes, went to the line with a dashing burst, but only a minor was credited.

On the drop-out Hughes was conspicuous with a solo effort, which gave Gloucester territorial advantage. The visitors, however, used the touch-line judiciously and kept play out of danger. Gloucester badly wanted another score, but though the forwards worked well in the loose and lines-out, they could not get the ball in the scrums to feed the backs. It was hard, keen football, but nothing much in the way of the spectacular.

For the next few minutes the exchanges were pretty even, being mostly confined to the forwards, with the whistle going continually for infringements. From a passing movement by the 'Tillery backs Miller intercepted, but with an open field he knocked on and was called back.

A penalty enabled Gloucester to reach their opponents' half, but they were quickly beaten back. Gloucester had slackened off somewhat now, and 'Tillery were on top again. "Duff" Lewis was now playing extra three-quarter for the visitors, but with only seven forwards the Welshmen continued to get the ball in the scrums.

A forward transfer lost a good chance for 'Tillery, but later a mistake by Meadows allowed the visitors to get very close. From a throw-out there was a scramble, out of which HALE was credited with a try. The goal kick failed.

Ensuing play was keenly exciting, with Gloucester trying hard to gain an opening but without success. Once there was a promise of something developing on the left, but Brown could make nothing of a high pass by Millington.

Just before the end the home team made one last desperate effort to save the game. Following a high kick there was a dash for the ball, and for a moment it looked as if something tangible might result, but Abertillery closed in and saved at the critical moment. Soon after the end came.

RESULT :

ABERTILLERY ... 1 goal (d) 1 try (7 pts.)
GLOUCESTER 1 try (3 pts.)

REMARKS.

Allowing for their disorganised ranks, Gloucester put up another poor show to-day, and there was no question as to which was the better side all-round. In the first half the City played a lifeless sort of game. The forwards were hopelessly beaten in the scrums, and though the loose work was better and the tackling keen, Abertillery had heaps more of the play.

Gloucester's one score was cleverly worked out – Brown, Meadows and Miller all taking their share – but the backs for the most part were idle in attack. Collins was afforded little opportunity of doing anything, and Hughes, for the most part, had to seek his own work. He tried hard on his own, but the Welshmen were a difficult lot to beat by dodging. Millington was again weak at centre, and could not seem to do anything right. The Captain is certainly having a bad spell just now.

Abertillery were a strong lot forward, with Hale and Morris always prominent. They held a distinct mastery in the scrummages, and in the open the men kept well on the ball and used their feet to advantage. The visitors were frequently penalised for infringements, "feet up" and "four up," and the continued stoppages in the game made the play very slow and dull at times.

The Welshmen had a useful pair of halves in Fisher and Hill, and the three-quarters knew how to handle. Gloucester were lucky on more than one occasion in saving their lines in the first half. At full back, James did sound work and was one of the few successes of the side. Pritchard, too, served Abertillery in a satisfactory manner.

Boxing Day : Old Merchant Taylors, at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A v. TREDWORTH.

CITY SECONDS COMPILE CRICKET SCORE.

Gloucester A visited Tredworth and although playing several reserves in the forward line were successful in compiling a cricket score. The home team were entirely outclassed. Crowther scored three tries, Webb (three), Loveridge (two), and Gibbs (two), Williams kicking two penalty goals and converting seven tries.

Abbey obtained a try for Tredworth, which was converted, and an unconverted try was scored for them during a melee on the line.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 9 goals (2p), 3 tries (50 pts.)
Tredworth 1 goal, 1 try (8 pts.)