

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER WIN AT CHELTENHAM.

A POINTLESS FIRST HALF.

CITY AGGRESSIVE IN SECOND STAGE.

With eight players away assisting the County at Bristol, Gloucester had to make a big call on the reserves for the first of the two annual fixtures with Cheltenham on the latter's ground. A useful side, however, made the journey, and on the Town's performances this season was regarded as quite good enough to record a victory. Cheltenham have had rough luck in getting their best players out, and have lost the services of Statham and Loveluck (three-quarters) but to-day the team was stronger all round, Fellows, Bloodworth and Wixey reappearing.

GLOUCESTER.

FULL-BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : R. Loveridge, F. Meadows, R. Miller, and N. Daniell.

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

FORWARDS : G. Manns, J. Merry, T. Coulson, H. Collier, P. Carter, A. Rea, W. Hemmings, and J. Webb.

CHELTENHAM.

FULL-BACK : T. Harry.

THREE-QUARTERS : W. Fellows, W. Hart, E. A. Moore, A. Goddard.

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

FORWARDS : B. P. Rees (capt.), C. W. Morris, V. Statham, W. Burford, F. Bell, W. Febrey, H. Wixey, and G. A. McMeekan.

Referee : Mr. P. Burman (Bristol).

THE GAME.

The teams took the field as selected, except that S. Smart's place was taken by G. Manns in Gloucester's first line.

There was a stiff frost overnight, and the ground was a bit hard at the start. A fog hung over the field, preventing anything like a clear view of what was happening at the other side of the ground or near the goal posts. A fairly good number of spectators came over from the city, but local supporters were in none too goodly numbers considering the importance of the match.

Gloucester kicked off eight minutes after time. Rees took the ball and opened a passing movement, but the transfer to Goddard was not a good one, and Daniell secured and kicked to Harry, who fielded to touch. The ball again went to Harry, who mulled, and things looked dangerous for Cheltenham. The visitors' rush, however, was checked, and play came back to mid-field, where Gloucester had a free-kick, which yielded nothing.

Ground was gained by a free awarded to Cheltenham, and the ball now coming out of the scrum to Fitz, he made a quick transfer to Bloodworth, who slipped and lost the ball, which then found its way to Fellows. He, however, was promptly floored by Loveridge, and play then settled for a few moments in the home 25. Here Harry fielded well, but was collared in possession, and matters again looked dangerous until the Cheltenham forwards relieved with a rush to mid-way. Here the home side were given another free, which took them twenty yards further, and Gloucester being again penalised for legs up, Moore took a shot for goal, the effort falling short.

The first quarter of an hour had been fairly evenly contested, with a slight advantage to the visitors in territory. A passing movement by the home backs broke down when it looked promising, and a good line from another free was the next feature.

Gloucester were not for the first time cautioned by the referee for improper packing. They got the ball from the scrum, however, and a nice movement on the left wing gave them hope. It failed before Loveridge got possession, however, and the home forwards then rushed into the City 25, where the ball was kicked to Hart, who returned it with a good liner.

The visiting front line now got the ball at their feet and could not be checked until the home line was reached. One of their number appeared to go over, but a touch-down was the verdict – a lucky save for Cheltenham.

While play was in the home 25 Cheltenham were penalised, and James took the kick, but failed to put it over the bar. A smart bit of play by the home backs raised a cheer, in which Hart and Moore were prominent. The transfer to Goddard, however, did not quite come to hand, and a possible chance of finishing off a good movement was missed.

In the visitors' 25 Cheltenham had an excellent chance for points, which only narrowly failed, Moore's kick from a penalty being wide of the post only by inches. Gloucester were also unsuccessful with a free kick, and the game continued to be contested on even terms.

Mistakes were frequent on both sides, a result attributable to the slippery state of the ground. Picking up in the loose, Bloodworth tricked his opponents with the dummy, but when he did throw back the pass was intercepted. Nothing, however, was done when with the chance which this gave[sic], and the whistle shortly after went for half-time, the teams playing only half an hour each way. While Gloucester had been on the attack more often than Cheltenham, the first half gave neither side the advantage.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER Nil
CHELTENHAM Nil

On the re-start Cheltenham rushed to the Gloucester end, but soon came back. The home forwards heeled out, and Fitz sent the ball to Bloodworth, who got in a good kick, as also did Moore. The Gloucester backs now took a turn, and handled nicely till the ball reached Daniell, who was floored by Moore. A long kick by Goddard took play to near the visitors' line, but disaster was averted.

Getting the ball from the scrum, Fitz dribbled it nicely, helped by Fellows, but they could not get past James, who not only fielded well, but extricated himself when surrounded and got in his kick. James' effort fell short, but Moore's return was charged down, and this gave Gloucester a chance they were not going to miss. Collins made an attempt to cross, but was held up, and then from the ensuing scrum the ball came to Hughes, who pushed his way through with a try, which James was unable to convert.

Gloucester at once resumed the attack, and a fine bout of passing left the ball with Meadows, who carried on until he reached Harry, and then gave a neat transfer to Loveridge. By this time, however, Moore had come across the ground and brought down the City wing man with a fine tackle.

The Cheltenham men now got going, and the ball coming to Hart, he made tracks for the line in his best style. The effort, however, was not crowned with the coveted points. Moore also had a fine chance of notching points by a penalty kick right in front of the Gloucester goal, but the ball went wide.

Just after this Gloucester obtained a goal as the result of a foul by Harry. Miller was given the ball at about the midway line, and was making for the line with a pace which looked like giving him a try, when the home full-back unable to collar him, unfortunately put his foot in such a position as to trip him. For this the referee awarded MILLER a penalty try, from which James landed a goal. The end came shortly afterwards, with Gloucester victors by eight points.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal 1 try (8 pts.)
CHELTENHAM Nil

REMARKS.

Gloucester deserved their victory on the run of the play. The game was not a particularly bright one to watch, and it was chiefly confined to the forwards, and such back play as attempted on either side was for the most part ineffective.

The home forwards, who were strengthened by the inclusion of McMeekan, held their own in the scrums, and there was not much to choose between them and the opposing eight in the loose. Behind the scrum Gloucester had an apparent advantage, but they found some good tackling barring their way to the goal line.

James was a sure defence in Gloucester's last line, whereas Harry's slip cost his side a goal, because although Miller had beaten the home full back, both Moore and Goddard were gaining ground on him and might have prevented him crossing. In any event, however, Miller's effort was a fine one and deserved reward.

Fitz gave a good display behind the scrum and was well supported by Bloodworth, the pair giving nothing away to Collins and Hughes. Moore was the pick of the home three-quarters, both in attack and defence, with Hart a good second in attack.

We understand that at the close of the game Harry expressed his deep regret that on the impulse of the moment he so far forgot himself as to unfairly interfere with Miller who at once accepted the apology, and asked Harry to think no more of the incident.

GLOUCESTER A v. CHELTENHAM A.

This match which was to have been played at Kingsholm was abandoned owing to frost and fog.