

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1924.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S DECISIVE WIN.

UNITED SERVICES BEATEN BY FOURTEEN POINTS.

SID BROWN'S FOUR TRIES.

With the exception of T. Coulson (forward), Gloucester fielded their best team at home to-day for the return match with Portsmouth Services, Voyce appearing for the first time for the Club since Newport on November 17th. In previous matches at Kingsholm Gloucester had beaten the Services well and the City had great hopes of adding another success to their record this afternoon.

Ideal conditions favoured the match, and with two good sides fielding, there was every promise of some fast and exciting football. Lieut. Commander Davies, the old English captain, did not appear for the Services, but the team included the two Irish Internationals – H. S. Stephenson and C. F. Hallaran.

The attendance was fully up to the average of late, about 5,000.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. James.

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

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

FORWARDS : A. Hall, T. Voyce, F. Ayliffe, S. Bayliss, H. Collier, J. Merry, P. Carter, and A. Rea.

UNITED SERVICES.

BACK : H. R. Graham.

THREE-QUARTERS : H. W. V. Stephenson, S. H. K. Spurgeon, G. N. Dolphin, and M. W. Fly.

HALF-BACKS : F. E. Chevallier and W. L. Murman.

FORWARDS : R. S. Benson, C. F. Hallaran, F. A. Haines, T. C. Crick, R. D. Fricker, C. E. Robinson, J. E. Leech-Porter, and R. B. Hunt.

Referee : Mr. W. Wicks (Bristol).

THE GAME.

Gloucester lost the toss, and Ayliffe kicked off, and from the return the ball went to touch inside the visitors' half. The Services opened up from the throw-out, but Meadows made a fine tackle of Fly and no ground was made. From the ensuing scrum Gloucester heeled, and the ball went smartly along the line to Brown, who dashed away down touch, but fell a victim to a grand collar by Stephenson. Gloucester were penalised early, but the resultant kick only gained a few yards.

A fine rush by the Services' forwards carried play to the home half, where James had to run the ball out of play. The Gloucester front replied with similar tactics, and centre play followed. From a scrum Chevallier fed Stephenson on the right, but Voyce tackled the Irish International and threw him into touch.

Subsequent play was fast and keen. Collins was stopped in trying to break through, and the ball getting loose, Spurgeon gathered and cleared a couple of defenders, but punting ahead James gathered and saved. Gloucester made headway with a useful rush, and Collins further improved with a useful punt. From a long line-out Hall received and started Hughes on the move. The latter yielded to Millington, who raced on and fed Brown. The wing man cross-kicked cleverly, but the Services managed to save at the critical moment.

Gloucester now attacked, and a try soon came after pretty work. The City half-backs got the ball away, and BROWN coming inside Millington, took a neat pass from his captain and scored. Millington kicked a good goal, and the home team were five points up.

Resuming, Hughes received the kick off, and after running a few yards, passed to Meadows. The centre cut out a nice opening, but passed forward to Daniell, and the movement came to an end. With dashing footwork the Services rushed to the City 25, where Murman had a possible chance, but failed. The ball, however, was got away quickly to Stephenson, who slipped as he was making off. Voyce was twice conspicuous with brilliant footwork, and later Carter also came into prominence with some good footwork.

The visitors retaliated, and in one brilliant burst the opposition was swept aside and the ball taken over the line, CRICK being credited with a try. Spurgeon failed at goal. Gloucester attacked strongly on the restart, and Collins making his mark had a drop for goal, a fine effort just failing.

On resuming, the Services forwards showed up strongly, but James fielded safely and though tackled passed to Millington, who got in a nice touch-finder. Heeling by the visitors saw Chevallier feed his backs cleverly. Stephenson was the last to receive, and he punted strongly, following up and tackling James in possession. The Services went closer, but from a pass by Hughes, Millington kicked out of danger, though the ball went straight to Graham.

Midfield play followed until Voyce, getting possession from Collins, got in a fine kick to touch though partially held. From this point the City forwards carried a loose scrum and rushed to within a few yards of the line, where they were checked. Wheeling a scrum the visitors came right away, and Murman picking up beat a couple of home players and sent to the centre. A strong burst by Voyce put Gloucester well down, the International being pushed to touch in the nick of time.

Working well together the City gave the defence an anxious time. The Gloucester forwards once were nearly over in a body, but the Services managed to hold out. In trying to clear a visitor sent the ball against the flag in touch-in-goal. It rebounded over the goal-line, and COLLIER being on the spot dropped on it for a try. Millington's shot for goal from the touch-line hit the cross-bar – a very fine effort though unsuccessful.

Play on the resumption favoured the Services, but there was little in it. Good work by Hughes and Meadows, and later by Rea and Voyce, gave Gloucester an advantage, and the Services were again hotly pressed. Fielding in the loose Collins started a round of passing, and Brown made a great dash for the line, but was tackled outside by Stephenson. Gloucester were nearly over in the next minute, but they were beaten off. Off-side by Chevallier gave Gloucester a penalty, but Millington missed the goal.

Ensuing play was remarkable. The Gloucester forwards and backs handled repeatedly, the ball going from one side of the field to the other, but in the end Spurgeon intercepted and cleared. Gloucester, however, were not to be put off, and after another clever movement Millington gave BROWN an easy try in the corner. The goal-kick failed.

From the restart the home players started passing, and the ball went through several pairs of hands until a forward transfer was given. The Services replied with a strong loose rush, and the Gloucester line had a narrow escape.

Whilst attacking a visitor threw out a wild pass and Brown had an open field, but the City wing failed to gather and lost a glorious opportunity of a fine sprint home. The Services attacked to the interval, but could not score.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal, 2 tries
SERVICES 1 try

The first half had been productive of some fine football, which was greatly appreciated by the crowd. Voyce replied to the kick off, but the return was muddled between Daniell and Collins, and the Services at once got dangerous.

For a scrum infringement Gloucester were penalised, but Spurgeon's kick for goal was wide. Voyce took the ball, and though hampered punted out to Murman, who knocked on, and a scrum followed outside the 25. The Services, however, had the better of the exchanges, and after a clever bit of combination Fly beat Daniell and James and scored wide out. No goal resulted.

On the re-start there was some desperately keen work forward, both sides tackling very deadly. Gloucester gradually gained the upper hand, but the Services forwards with an irresistible loose rush regained a position at the centre, where Hughes checked them in daring fashion. The visitors, however, carried further scrums, and Daniell being at fault the Gloucester line narrowly escaped. The City worked out a few yards, but Murman, picking up the ball from them, burst through and passed, but forward was given.

Gloucester were penalised just after, but the kick at goal was charged down. Then from a drop at goal by Graham, Millington and Brown broke away with clever passing and inter-passing. Thirty yards were made before a forward pass spoilt it.

The play just now was kept very close, and the football was not so interesting. The Gloucester forwards shone in a series of clever exchanges, but the final pass went astray. Then from a kick by a visitor Collins fielded, and giving the "dummy" twice, went right up to the line, where he passed to Hughes, but forward was ruled.

The City having secured a good attacking position, struggled hard to add to their score. Their efforts were eventually rewarded by MERRY plunging over in the left corner. The position proved too difficult for Millington to convert.

Fourteen-six was the score now, and with Gloucester going strongly, there was every promise of adding to the lead. This hope was soon realised, as from a passing bout initiated by Hughes, Millington served BROWN nicely, and the right winger notched his third try of the match after a fine dash. Voyce missed the goal points.

Following the restart the Services gained a footing in the home half, but the City backs breaking away, Daniell sprinted well and kicked, but Graham saved in time. The struggle continued desperately, with each side in turn claiming the advantage. At length the Services took up the attack, and the Gloucester defence was pretty well tested. It held out, however.

In the last two minutes Gloucester added to their score with a great try. From inside their own 25 the City forwards broke clear with the ball at their feet in great style. The visiting three-quarters were beaten, and then Collier picked up, and sending a pass to BROWN, the latter raced away from Graham and scored a fine try in a good position, but Voyce sent wide of the posts with his kick. The Services re-started, but soon afterwards the end was whistled.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ...	1 goal 5 tries (20 pts.)
SERVICES	2 tries (6 pts.)

REMARKS.

Gloucester's fine win to-day should do the Club a lot of good. It was one of the most strenuous games of the season, with plenty of hard knocks given and taken, but, sandwiched between the desperate exchanges forward, there was some brilliant open play, especially in the first half, when the Gloucester forwards and backs combined in some delightful bits of combination. Several of the tries were beautifully worked out, and Sid Brown is to be warmly congratulated on his success in scoring four of the six tries recorded. The Gloucester right winger played with splendid dash all through, and though he was baulked on two occasions by Stephenson – regarded as the finest defensive three-quarter in the four countries – he can well be satisfied with a fine afternoon's work.

It was a keen and very hot struggle forward, with honours on the whole perhaps fairly even. Some of the loose rushes by both packs were as good as anything I have seen this season, the ball being kept under control in wonderful fashion. The Services are noted for these tactics, but whilst fully recognising their ability, dash and cleverness in this respect, they were up against an eight to-day well versed in the art of dribbling. It was rousing football, with the tackling of the most deadly character, and once the referee called for a "cooler."

It was a searching test for the City forwards to-day; that they came out of the struggle so well is a credit to the whole eight. Voyce's presence made a vast difference, and the splendid dash and keenness displayed by the International acted as tonic to his colleagues. The combined footwork was excellent, and both in the scrums and open the work was highly meritorious. Hall's display in the long line-outs was again a feature, and the vice-captain was always noticeable in the close exchanges. Ayliffe, Collier, and Carter also did finely, but the other players all put in their hardest and best, and there was little to choose between them.

Outside the scrum Gloucester's play was a decided improvement. Collins had a worrier opposed to him in Chevallier, who was assisted in his smothering by two or three forwards, but Collins opened out frequently, and accomplished some clever work on his own. Hughes was too closely watched to bring off any sensational runs, but he served his centres when opportunity occurred, whilst his tackling and saving was invaluable on several occasions. The Gloucester third line was better together this afternoon, and brought off some pretty movements.

Millington was something like his old self to-day, and his all-round work gave delight to his friends. He provided Brown with some good openings, judging his transfers well and being always up to take a re-pass. The captain's defence was sound, and he staved off some dangerous attacks with well-judged kicks to touch.

Meadows was a capable and efficient colleague in the centre, though the left wing were not so much in the picture as Millington and Brown. Daniell made one fine dash in the second half, but otherwise he was unlucky in his chances. James, at full-back, had a busy afternoon, but the City custodian accomplished much good work.

The Services had a new back division, with the exception of Chevallier and Stephenson, from the side which so narrowly beat the City at Portsmouth in December. The changes strengthened the team, and against a less sterling defence the visitors would have scored pretty freely.

Chevallier was very nippy at the scrum, and Murman daring and smart in the outside position. In the third line, Stephenson stood out as a class player, though the Irish International was not given much to do in the way of attack.

Spurgeon struck one as being a very useful centre, and Fry, who scored a capital try, was a dangerous runner when fairly on the move. Graham stopped a good many rushes, and proved a very serviceable custodian.

Forward, Benson, Hallaran, Haines and Crick were the pick of a dashing eight, who proved quite at home in the rough and tumble.

Next week : Cardiff, away; Cardiff A. at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A v. WAGON WORKS.

SECONDS WIN COMFORTABLY.

Played at Tuffley. The first half was mostly confined to the forwards, and after some 20 minutes' play, from a scrum inside the Works' 25, G. Poole secured and scored, the kick failing.

Midfield play followed, and S. Williams landed a magnificent penalty from well outside the Works' 25.

HALF-TIME :

Gloucester A 1 goal (p) 1 try
Wagon WorksNil

The second half was a repetition of the first in regard to forward play. A penalty against the Works was successfully taken by Williams. Shortly after the visiting threes got in motion, and Fisher scored wide out, no goal resulting.

Just before the whistle Comley dropped over the line from a melee and scored, Williams converting.

RESULT :

Gloucester A ... 3 goals (2p), 2 tries (17 pts.)
Wagon Works Nil