

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1924.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER PILE UP POINTS AGAINST CHELTENHAM.

TOWN PLUCKY BUT BEATEN IN CLEVERNESS.

Cheltenham's moderate form this season – the record showed 15 defeats as against 11 wins and three drawn games – did not invest the return match with Gloucester with any great interest, and there was only a moderate crowd at Kingsholm to welcome the Town team. Gloucester were short of Collins and Hughes at half, and Bayliss and Carter forward, but the side was fairly representative, and included a new centre three-quarter in L. E. Saxby, who has been doing well for Hereford this season. Saxby wrote offering his services, and being well recommended was given a trial. Cheltenham had Fellows, Rees, Wake(?) and Febrey away.

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. Brown, T. Millington (capt.), L. E. Saxby (Hereford), and S. Crowther.

HALF-BACKS : G. Poole and F. Meadows.

FORWARDS : A. Hall, T. Voyce, F. Ayliffe, J. Merry, T. Coulson, H. W. Collier, F. Ford, and I. Armstrong.

CHELTENHAM.

BACK : V. Ingles.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. D. H. Grimley, E. A. Moore, A. Dyer, and W. Hart.

HALF-BACKS : A. Fitz and W. Fennell.

FORWARDS : V. Statham, C. Morris, F. Gardner, F. Bell, A. G. S. Triggs-Herbert, C. Goldthorpe, T. P. Shaw, and A. Cooper.

Referee : Mr. A. J. Lock (Bridgwater).

THE GAME.

Cheltenham lost the toss, and started the game against the wind and sun. Gloucester opened out at once, but after several exchanges a forward pass was given and the movement was checked. From the first scrum the City half-backs initiated a bout of passing, but Millington was upset directly he received and no ground was gained. Crowther, fielding from the loose, ran right across the ground, but his pass went astray, and Cheltenham dribbled away.

Mistakes by the City backs let the Town close to the home line, and Gloucester had an anxious time. Once the Town forwards burst over the mark, and there was a loud shout for a try, but the referee ordered a scrum five yards out.

Gloucester cleared by the aid of a kick to touch by James, and later further headway was made. Millington, with a clever run, tried hard to secure an opening, but a high pass to Crowther went wide and nothing resulted. Cheltenham worked back, but a short run and punt across gave Brown a chance on the left. The latter raced hard and secured the ball, but being pressed he passed inside to Saxby, who made a fine though unsuccessful effort to reach the line.

Ensuing play was keen and fast inside the Cheltenham half. Here the Gloucester backs received, and Millington sending to CROWTHER, the right winger put on a fine turn of speed, and beating Ingles scored a splendid try, which Millington failed to convert.

Cheltenham restarted, and Armstrong being tackled in possession there was no reply. Play settled in the home half, the forwards being chiefly engaged. A fine burst by Brown, who nearly cleared the opposition, gave Gloucester a nice slice of ground, and then from passing Millington slipped the defence cleverly and fed Crowther, but Hart pulled his man to touch.

Some Gloucester handling going astray, Cheltenham returned to beyond the centre, where Poole was penalised for picking out of the scrum. Moore had a long shot for goal, but though the aim was well directed the ball fell some yards short of the posts, and James punted out to touch. A strong forward burst by the Town tested the City, Crowther eventually saving.

Heeling by the City front saw Poole open out, and Meadows, Millington, Saxby and Brown in turn handled. The last-named had a good opening, but was ruled back for a forward transfer. Fast play on both sides followed, ending in Cheltenham breaking away on the right. A cross-punt put the forwards in possession, but the opening was not accepted.

Meadows, Coulson and Crowther took part in a neat bit of combination, and the latter punted high to Ingles. The latter was closely pressed by Voyce, but he managed to get in his kick. Brown replied well, and Gloucester held the advantage. A long kick down by Moore placed Cheltenham in the ascendancy, and then the Town had a splendid chance of equalising, a forward pass losing a certain try.

Gloucester cleared effectively through Brown and Millington. The captain kicked down the field with the Cheltenham players out of position. Voyce was yards off-side, but after waiting a few seconds he picked up and dashed away. The International was upset, and it appeared the City would lose the try; but FORD picked up and, beating Ingles, ran round behind the posts. Voyce missed the easy place-kick, the ball being charged down.

Gloucester got on the attack immediately on the resumption, Brown bringing off a fine dash; but, unfortunately, he stepped into touch. A minute later Millington and Brown passed and re-passed cleverly, and only just failed to beat the defence. Another score, however, came soon afterwards, MILLINGTON crossing easily after a few exchanges. The captain converted, and Gloucester held an eleven points' lead.

On the restart Gardner showed up with a strong run which gave Cheltenham a footing in the home half. The Town forwards worked hard but could not get the desired opening. Gloucester heeled on their own line, and Millington, being tackled, lost the ball. HART was on the spot, and picking up dodged a couple of opponents and scored. Ingles missed the goal.

The City went off with a big dash on resuming, and only keen defence kept the Cheltenham lines intact. The visitors were hard pressed in the next few minutes, but Gloucester were kept out.

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

Cheltenham had done extremely well, the forwards especially playing a keen, hard game. Gloucester got away well on the re-start, but a wild pass allowed the visitors to dribble clear. Cheltenham made further headway by loose footwork, and the City were called upon to defend. Hall led a sharp rush out, and later Ayliffe was prominent with a strong run, but touch was given when he passed to a colleague.

Cheltenham with useful kicks got out of danger, but they were beaten back, and Meadows missed a try close in by failing to gather. Two touchdowns gave Cheltenham temporary relief, but Gloucester were soon on the attack, a smart bit of play by Poole giving his side a good position. From a scrum the ball came out to the home halves, and Meadows serving SAXBY, the recruit beat the opposition by feinting to pass and went over near the posts. Ayliffe converted.

Centre play followed the resumption, some desperate exchanges being witnessed between the rival forwards. Gloucester distinguished themselves with some good passing on the right, and Crowther brought off a dashing run down the touch line, but just stepped over the mark. Gloucester were having the better of the exchanges, and after Brown had been finely upset by Ingles, COULSON scored from a line-out close in. Ayliffe converted with a grand kick.

Despite the deficit against them, Cheltenham played up pluckily, their defence being most praiseworthy. One sharp attack was beaten off, and then from some loose kicking Hart sent past James and beat the home line. Brown, however, got back and tuned the ball to touch in time. The Town struggled hard in subsequent play to add to their score, and eventually succeeded, MOORE kicking a fine goal from a penalty.

Gloucester resumed, and the pace was well maintained. Cheltenham were holding their own forward in the loose, and the backs also kicked well. From some loose play on the part of the City Hart gathered and brought off a splendid solo run. He looked likely to get clear, but was caught just in time by Crowther. Voyce replied with a dashing effort and transfer to Brown, but the pass was forward.

Taking advantage of mistakes by the City, the visiting forwards made considerable headway with a loose rush, and the home line nearly fell. Brown eased the pressure with a nice punt to touch, and then Voyce, Ayliffe and Coulson started a loose dribble, which was not stopped until the centre was reached. A lapse by the City players allowed Ingles to run some 30 yards and kick to James who, in trying to clear, was well tackled by Hart. Cheltenham made tracks for the Gloucester line, but they were pulled up. The Town, however, returned, thanks to a good touch-kick by Moore. It was a strenuous contest for supremacy, but at length Gloucester got out of danger.

Near half-way Meadows, Brown and VOYCE worked the touch-line cleverly, and the International getting the final pass had no difficulty in scoring a try. Ayliffe kicked his third goal, the ball just turning inside the upright.

Gloucester gave the ball plenty of air on the restart, but the movements broke down when going well. Fitz and Hart replied nicely for Cheltenham, which took play to the Gloucester end, but a long dribble completely changed the venue. Gloucester twice looked dangerous, but Ingles managed to save.

In another strong attack, however, the defence was not strong enough, and FORD went over between the posts for Ayliffe to add the goal points. Before the end Cheltenham made a bold bid to score, but were not successful.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 5 goals, 2 tries (31 Pts.)
CHELTENHAM 1 goal (p), 1 try (6 Pts.)

REMARKS.

Only twice previously this season had Gloucester exceeded 31 points against opponents, viz., v. Lydney 43 to 12, and v. Clifton 31 to nil. To-day's score, however, was rather flattering to the City on the play, for territorially Cheltenham had quite a fair share of the game, and at times pressed severely with forward bursts. Hart, too, made one or two praiseworthy efforts to score with individual efforts. But the combination and cleverness of the City team decided the issue, and Ayliffe's successful goal-kicking in the second half helped to increase points to a substantial figure.

It was a fast, keen and well-contested game, and by no means one-sided as suggested by the score. Gloucester had to put out their hardest at times to gain the upper hand, but the home team showed more enterprise and finish, and scoring chances were snapped up in a manner that was lacking on the Town side.

Forward, the contest was very strenuous. In the tight scrums the City pack showed more adaptability in gaining possession, and in this respect the Cheltenham eight were well beaten. But the visitors were a dangerous set in the loose, and with a bit of luck one or two openings might easily have been turned to good account.

The Gloucester front attempted a good deal to-day in opening out the game, and if some of the efforts were muddled, the tactics made the game more attractive.

Fine work was accomplished by Voyce, Ford, Ayliffe and Coulson, and Hall was also prominent on occasions. Gardner was about the best of the Cheltenham forwards, but all played with great keenness and tackled with deadly effect.

At half, Poole and Meadows combined effectively, and the third line could not complain of lack of service. The Cheltenham marking for the most part was well done, and a good many movements by the City rear division were broken up; but there were occasions when the visitors made the mistake of not going for the man with the ball, with the result that they were slipped pretty easily.

Gloucester's new centre, Saxby, shaped promisingly. He is a strong runner, and once or twice went through well; with more experience of first-class football he should easily improve his display all round.

Millington accomplished a lot of clever work, and Brown and Crowther, on the respective wings, ran with rare dash and resolution. Both had hard luck in stepping over the touch-line when well away for scores.

Crowther would seem to be finding his best form just now; certainly in his last two matches at Kingsholm his football has been better than at any previous time.

Both James and Ingles were severely tested at full back, and if neither was free from mistakes the form generally was praiseworthy.

Cheltenham were best served at three-quarter by Moore and Hart. The former did splendid work in defence and kicked well, whilst Hart several times proved a dangerous player in attack. Fitz and Fennel did fairly well with limited opportunities at half-back.

Next week : Devon tour – Plymouth Albion, Saturday; Devon Services, Monday.

GLOUCESTER A v. CHELTENHAM A.

CITY SECONDS' GOOD WIN.

On the Athletic Ground, Cheltenham. The home forwards pressed for the first ten minutes, when the visiting backs relieved and reached the home 25, where E. H. Hughes got away, neatly tricking Fellows. His pass to Hyam was, however, knocked on, and a good chance of a score was missed.

The home forwards were still getting the better of their opponents, particularly in the loose, and after forcing a minor they again got down to the Gloucester line, only, however, to be robbed of a score by the visiting backs.

A Gloucester man kicked into the home 25, and Barnett might have fielded the ball, but on Leonard's request he left it to the full back, with the result that the ball rebounded amongst the Gloucester forwards, for Curtis to snap it up and run in with a try, which Williams failed to convert.

This success put new spirit into the Gloucester forwards, who rushed to the Cheltenham end, leaving it to Loveridge to pick up and run over. The place-kick was unsuccessful.

Cheltenham now took up the attack, and from a scrum near the visitors' line Hampton sent the ball to Fellows, who appeared to have a clear run in. The transfer, however, was not accepted, and the chance was missed.

A good round of passing by the Gloucester backs left the ball with Hogg, who was floored in time.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A	2 tries
Cheltenham A	Nil

Proceeding, Gloucester had no success with a penalty kick, nor with a couple of attempts to drop a goal. They had better luck, however, from a passing movement for a score right in front of the posts, Loveridge taking the ball from Hogg, and scoring in the corner for Williams to place a magnificent goal.

Hyam next got away, but was overhauled by Fellows, and the Gloucester man, who had been complaining of his head all through the game, shortly afterwards left the field.

Receiving the ball from Hogg, Hughes successfully negotiated the "dummy" once or twice, and then rounded all opposition and scored after by far the best run of the day.

A strong burst by Loveridge was the next feature, the wing man easily handing off several opponents before scoring between the posts for Williams to goal.

Result :
Gloucester A ... 2 goals, 3 tries (19 Pts.)
Cheltenham A Nil