

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S OPENING WIN.

LYDNEY DEFEATED BY ELEVEN POINTS.

KEEN GAME, BUT MANY MISTAKES.

Gloucester opened the season at Kingsholm to-day, with Lydney as opponents.

The City had practically last year's team doing duty, the only exception being at centre three-quarter, where A. M. David, the Oxford University player, appeared for the first time in the Gloucester ranks. David is staying in the district for a few weeks prior to going up to Oxford, and the offer of his services to the City Club for the opening matches was gladly accepted.

Lydney brought a very useful side, the team with a few alterations being the same as made such a close fight with Gloucester at Lydney, last Easter.

The weather was beautifully fine, and the ground was in splendid condition.

The new City captain (Frank Ayliffe) received a cordial greeting from a fairly large crowd on leading the home players into the enclosure, and the visitors were also accorded a good reception.

Teams : –

### GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS: S. A. Brown, A. M. David, H. Hughes, and N. Daniell.

HALF-BACKS: W. Dix and T. Millington.

FORWARDS: F. Ayliffe (capt.), T. Voyce, G. Halford, S. Smart, J. Harris, Major Roderick, A. Hall, and M. Evans.

### LYDNEY.

BACK: R. Wildin.

THREE-QUARTERS: A. J. Kerwood, G. Probert, E. Howells, and W. Probert.

HALF-BACKS: T. Biddle (captain) and T. Wellington.

FORWARDS: F. Fletcher, E. Darters, P. C. Morris, H. Jones, P. C. Hicks, L. Gardiner, T. Parry, and H. Watts.

Referee : Mr. E. Browning.

### THE GAME.

Lydney lost the toss, and were deputed to kick off with the sun in their faces. Roderick received and started passing; but though the ball was handled by several players, little ground was gained. A fine touch-finder by Kerwood put Lydney well down, and from the line-out the ball got amongst the visiting backs. G. Probert put in a short punt to James, who was closely pressed, but he saved nicely.

Hughes brought relief with a timely punt, and Gloucester made still further progress. Following up a long punt at a fast pace, Voyce just knocked on with practically an open field. A reverse pass by Dix set the home backs in motion, but Brown was well collared.

A minute later, however, Roderick opened out from the loose to Dix, who sent to David. The latter cut through smartly and, feeding Daniell at the correct moment, the right winger dashed over in the corner with the first try. Millington missed the goal-kick, though the attempt was a good one.

Restarting, Millington came into prominence with a judicious kick to touch under pressure, and this was followed by some good work in the open by Voyce, who forced Wildin to kick straight to touch just outside his 25. Gloucester attacked with a neat passing movement, but David's pass was not accepted. A free to Lydney for legs up brought the visitors slight relief, but they could not get beyond the half-way.

Some fast play followed, with both sides showing great keenness. Gloucester heeled, and Dix and Millington opened out, but the tackling was very sound. A loose rush by the City forwards gave the home team a good slice of ground, and Lydney were hard pressed. From an erratic pass David gathered beautifully and broke through finely. A few yards outside he passed to Ayliffe, but the latter was hauled down.

Some close work ensued in the Lydney 25, ending in the ball coming to Brown. The latter essayed a drop at goal, but it was charged down. He, however, recovered the ball and sent to touch. By strong forward play Lydney changed the venue and confined play for a few minutes to the City half. Holford relieved with a fine punt, and then Gloucester set up a warm attack. It failed to fructify, and Lydney got out of danger.

Back Gloucester came with a sharp passing movement, David being prominent. He missed Hughes and sent out to Brown on the wing; but though the latter made headway he was forced to kick. The ball was misfielded by Wildin and went over the line, where Evans, coming up very quickly, dropped on it, but the referee ruled for a knock on outside. David was nearly through just afterwards, but some loose play allowed Lydney to clear, and Kerwood further improved their position with some big kicking.

Ensuing play was fairly even, and though Gloucester tried to open out success did not attend their efforts. Loose rushes by the visiting forwards transferred play to the home half, where both sides were in turn penalised for scrum infringements. This left matters pretty level.

Gloucester at length gained the ascendancy, and following a clever reverse pass by Dix, the home backs handled smartly. Hughes punted ahead, and Daniell, robbing an opponent of possession of the ball, dashed for the corner and scored a good try. Millington placed a lovely goal, and Gloucester were eight points up.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
GLOUCESTER ..... 1 goal, 1 try  
LYDNEY ..... Nil

Though Gloucester held an eight-points' lead at the interval, their superiority had not been very pronounced. The Lydney forwards had played a keen, vigorous game, and with the backs kicking well they had a fair share of the actual play. Ayliffe resumed, and the first few minutes were contested at the centre.

The Gloucester forwards broke away from a line-out and went over, but they were called back for "not straight." A passing move initiated by Dix saw David dash through, but G. Probert effected a fine tackle. Another movement towards the left broke down, but immediately after Dix, Millington and Brown combined in a nice effort. The wing man ran and punted to the line, where Voyce, always well up, caught the ball and put it down for a try. The place-kick, by Millington, failed.

Resuming, there was more close forward work, and then, from an opening by Dix, David kicked ahead. Kerwood, however, made a good catch and fine return. James slipped in attempting to field, but luckily Evans got back and saved.

Lydney concentrated their energies forward, and in the loose they held their own very well. Gloucester several times opened out, and there was a sweet bit of inter-passing between Dix, Millington and Brown on the left. The latter raced over, but was called back for a forward transfer.

Some close tackling by Lydney brought a promising movement by the home backs to a close, but a little later David put in a long kick which went past Wildin. Voyce dashed over and scored, but he was ruled off-side, and Lydney were awarded a free.

Good work by Kerwood put Gloucester on the defence, and the same player, with a kick across the field, gave W. Probert a good chance, but he failed to pick up the ball, and Hughes sent to touch.

Play continued in the home quarters, but Lydney could not find an opening. The visitors had a man injured, but with fourteen men they did extremely well. Gloucester took risks in passing on the line but fortunately it came off.

Several attempts at passing the City broke down badly with every promise of an opening, the handling being very faulty. Subsequent play resolved itself into a scramble, and was devoid of interest. Mistakes by the home players allowed Lydney to get right down to their line, where Gloucester luckily escaped.

Gloucester eventually cleared their lines, and Ayliffe showed up with a strong run and pass to David. The latter raced down touch in good style, but his re-pass was not accepted. Gloucester made several other attempts to score, but the visitors' tackling was great and nothing resulted. James came into prominence with a dashing burst which gave Gloucester an advantage, but a long flying kick changed the venue.

In the last few minutes Lydney attacked desperately, but they could not pierce the defence. For a scrum infringement by Dix the visitors were awarded a free in a fairly easy position, but Wildin missed the goal, and the end soon afterwards came.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER .... 1 goal, 2 tries (11 points)  
LYDNEY ..... Nil

## REMARKS.

It was a rousing contest for a first match, and if one did not see the finer points of the game displayed to perfection, it served its purpose in fitting the players for the strenuous campaign in front of both teams. Gloucester were not 11 points the better side, for even allowing the City did a good deal more attacking Lydney put up such a magnificent defence that warranted anything but a big margin against them.

If I had to pick out a notable feature it would be the splendid marking and close tackling of the visiting back division, with the brothers Probert, Kerwood and Wellington especially distinguished players. Kerwood we know at Kingsholm as a fine full back; at wing three-quarter this afternoon he did yeoman service for his side, both in kicking, saving and tackling. His colleagues in the third line were all useful, and the half-backs (Biddle and Wellington) a smart, workman-like couple.

I should like to have seen the men given more chances in aggressive movements, for they were triers and have a good knowledge of the game. Wildin, at full back, is on the small side, but he gave a creditable display, and though beaten twice by Daniell for speed, was on the whole very reliable.

Lydney possess a live forward division, and they put in some dashing work to-day against a far weightier pack. Their special forte was in lose footwork, and if the men would cultivate skilful dribbling instead of so much blind kicking they would prove a handful for the best of opponents. Darters, Parry, Morris and Gardiner were conspicuous for sound work, but the whole eight worked untiringly to the end.

Gloucester, from past experience, fully expected a testing in the front, and they got it. The City forwards were prominent with some good play in the open, in which Voyce, Ayliffe, Roderick and Smart shone, but it will take a week or two before the men settle down. The packing in the scrums was none too good, and the heeling was slow at times.

Dix and Millington combined well at times, and opened out nicely, but more than one pass went astray. The vice-captain appeared a trifle too anxious occasionally to let the ball go, with the result that it aided the extremely close and watchful defenders.

At three-quarter the home quartette were not always happy in handling, and some promising chances were allowed to pass in consequence. At centre, David was watched with great interest, and the Oxonian, if what he attempted was not always successful, made some strong runs, and gave Daniell more work to do than the left winger has been accustomed to.

Hughes was nippy and sound, and his tackling was as good as ever. Brown and Daniell both showed plenty of dash on the wings, and the latter's two tries were capital efforts. With a better understanding and safer handling the line should work together effectively.

James, at full back, had plenty of work to do, but he came through the ordeal successfully. His coolness and judgment were seldom at fault, he missed very little, and kicked generally with a good length.

Summed up, it was not a game to send one into ecstasies but the form as a whole was such as to indicate Gloucester should prove a difficult side to dispose of at Kingsholm. Lydney, too, ought to experience a successful season if they can keep to-day's team together.

Next week : Bath, at Kingsholm. Another stiff match for the City.

W.B.