

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER OUT-PLAYED BY CROSS KEYS.

WELSHMEN DECISIVE WINNERS BY 16-3.

CITY BACKS DISORGANISED.

With the captain and vice-captain on the injured list – Millington was damaged in the match at Stroud on Thursday – and David fulfilling a promise to assist the Old Alleynians (old Dulwich College boys) in their opening game, Gloucester was severely handicapped for the important fixture with Cross Keys, who last season held a record only challenged by Newport.

The absence of Millington and David behind the scrimmage necessitated a reorganisation of the back division, and experiments had to be made.

Meadows, originally chosen for the vacant centre position, was brought up to partner Dix at half; Brown played inside three-quarter; and Crowther was introduced at left wing.

Forward the City had the same eight as appeared against Bath, and the home front fully recognised they would have to be at their best to hold the powerful contingent from Cross Keys.

Tom Voyce burnt his hand badly in catching hold of the exhaust pipe of his motor cycle before coming to the match, but he decided to turn out, though the injury gave him considerable pain.

Cross Keys brought full strength and about a hundred supporters.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. H. James.

THREE-QUARTERS: S. R. Crowther, S. A. Brown, E. H. Hughes, and N. Daniell.

HALF-BACKS: W. Dix and F. Meadows.

FORWARDS: G. Holford, Major Roderick, T. Voyce, A. Hall, S. Smart, M. Evans, S. Bayliss, and J. Harris.

CROSS KEYS.

BACK: W. Burnett.

THREE-QUARTERS: T. R. Benson, A. Lewis, Sam Jones, and D. Williams.

HALF-BACKS: B. Lorrimore and F. Reeves.

FORWARDS: S. Morris (capt.), J. Thompson, Sid Jones, S. Winmill, G. Hathaway, R. Pettiford, T. Jones, and A. H. Evans.

Referee : Mr. H. W. Vanstone (Bath).

THE GAME.

There was a good crowd present when the rival teams took the field, and the players were accorded a hearty reception. Holford kicked off, but there was no response, and a City forward kicked on a few yards. Off-side by a visitor, however, checked, and a scrum followed. Gloucester heeled, and Dix got the ball away to Meadows nicely. Hughes and Crowther in turn handled, the latter punting well to touch in Cross Keys' 25.

The City again got the ball out, and Daniell punted high to Burnett, who made his mark. The kick was returned by Brown to another visitor, who also marked. Cross Keys changed the venue with a good rush, and play was contested in the home half.

The Welshmen, playing well together, set up a warm attack, but Daniell picked up and ran round in good style. The visitors, however, worked back, and Gloucester were hard pressed. In a sharp burst on the left the ball was taken over the City line, but only a minor was recorded, though the Welshmen thought they had scored and brought the ball out.

Resuming, the visiting forwards, with bustling tactics, rushed the home men off the ball and got very dangerous, but Crowther saved. It was a hard fought struggle with honours in favour of the Welshmen, who were playing very keenly and full of vim. A splendid dribble by Evans relieved for Gloucester, but the ball went straight to Burnett, who replied with a good touch-finder.

The game continued in favour of the visitors, whose backs threw the ball about in clever style and few mistakes were made in handling. Well-judged kicks, too, kept Gloucester on the qui vive, and the City were kept hard at it. A penalty to Gloucester gave the home men breathing space, but it was only temporary, for Cross Keys almost immediately got back. The ball coming out Hughes punted straight to Burnett, who replied well and Gloucester gained no advantage. Then a free to Keys saw the ball well placed to touch on the City 25-line, and Gloucester were on the defence again.

So far Cross Keys had proved decidedly superior forward and behind. Inside the home half Reeves opened out, and some clever handling ended in Williams racing away. He beat Daniell and another smartly, but, forced to pass, the transfer was captured by Dix, who kicked to touch beyond the quarter flag – a lucky get-out for the City.

Soon afterwards a long kick by Benson forced a minor. On the drop-out the Gloucester backs were set going by Dix and Meadows. The movement was partly checked, but Daniell later snapped up the ball and ran down the field, when he passed to Holford. The latter was tackled, and the ball getting loose a visitor managed to send to touch.

After this the Welshmen came under the ban of the referee for infringements, and the official had also to speak to one of the forwards for kicking Smart on the ground. These incidents tended to spoil the friendly spirit of the players, and other tactics indulged in by the visitors did not improve matters.

When the game had settled down again the Cross Keys front showed up with a dashing burst which James checked in great style. Gloucester broke away from a dangerous position with a useful dribble, but they were not allowed to travel far. Williams, with a high kick, sent to James, whose return struck an opponent and placed Voyce on-side. The latter picked up and passed to Roderick, who made a few yards before being tripped, and the movement stopped. From the next scrum Gloucester heeled, but the passing broke down, and Lewis gathering he passed to Benson, who dashed down touch, but fell a victim to a fine tackle by James.

Some hot forward play followed in Gloucester territory, but the attempts of the Welshmen to gain an opening failed. For a palpable foul in the line-out a visiting forward was penalised, but James's kick was well returned, and when the interval arrived play was in the home end.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER Nil
CROSS KEYS Nil

Cross Keys had certainly had the better of the opening half, and they were clever enough in all departments without resorting to tactics which, to say the least, were on the shady side.

On the restart Hall, after misfielding, dribbled for some ten or a dozen yards, and a little later Meadows and Hughes did a bit of useful work which ended in Voyce putting in a strong dash to the centre line. Play hovered at mid-field for a couple of minutes, and then Reeves twice opened out to Lorrimore. The latter fumbled the first pass, but in the second instance he secured the ball at the second attempt, and after some sharp exchanges Williams received and, swerving past James, scored in the far corner. Thompson took the shot at goal and hit the upright.

Three points down, Gloucester resumed strongly, and Dix was prominent with a tricky run on the right. He was eventually brought down, and a lucky flying-kick sent to James, who returned well to touch.

A clever cross-kick by Lorrimore put Gloucester on the defence, James only getting in a poor kick to touch. From the line out the visitors were nearly over, but a minute later, from a loose scrum, there was some fumbling by home players, and Evans touched down for a try. Thompson kicked the goal, and Cross Keys held an eight points' lead.

Gloucester restarted, and for a few minutes the City had the better of the exchanges. From passing Brown kicked down, the ball rolling to touch in the Welshmen's 25. The City were in a good position, and, Dix opening out, there was a series of passes which looked promising. Brown got a reverse transfer and shook off an opponent, but he was held, and though letting the ball go again, "forward" was given.

Another possible chance ensued almost immediately, but Hughes missed and the visitors cleared to James. For an infringement Gloucester were awarded a free, and from a long distance Voyce made a splendid shot for goal. The visitors kicked out, but Gloucester got on the attack again, and after some fine combination, in which Evans and Voyce shone, Crowther snapped up the ball and scored amidst demonstrations of delight. Voyce made a poor attempt at goal.

Play on the resumption was keener than ever, both teams putting in all they knew. It was a terrific struggle, but neither side was able to claim any advantage. Once Meadows made a determined effort to break through, but he was upset. Play continued fast and exciting, with the tackling very deadly. A loose forward rush by the Welshmen carried them close to the home line, but a penalty brought relief to the City. The Welshmen, however, worked back, and from a penalty for legs up Thompson placed a neat goal.

This settled the issue, and Thompson adding a further converted try before the end, Cross Keys gained a handsome victory.

RESULT :

CROSS KEYS ... 3 goals (1p), 1 try (16 pts.)

GLOUCESTER 1 try (3 pts.)

REMARKS.

Gloucester were a well-beaten side to-day, and it is no use minimising the fact. Cross Keys held the advantage in practically every department, and on the football displayed by the rival teams this afternoon the Welshmen would win every time. The only regret one feels is that the visitors resorted to tactics at times which were unnecessary, for the players possessed cleverness and individual ability sufficient to carry them through without infringing the rules. The referee was very firm and penalised the Welshmen frequently, but it was impossible for him to observe all that was going on.

Cross Keys had a brilliant run of successes last season, and on to-day's showing it will take a very hot side to take their number down. The forwards are splendidly equipped in every way – strong, vigorous, keen and well versed in all the finer points of the game. Except on few occasions they held the City eight at all points, and their all-round display set the foundation to the handsome victory recorded. At half-back Reeves, the Welsh International, was a hard worker; but he had a way of his own in putting the ball in. He and Lorrimore combined well, and behind them there was a smart line of players who exhibited pace, dash and clever kicking abilities, and, withal, handled very cleanly. Burnett, at full back, too, was excellent, and proved an admirable successor to Maile.

Although Gloucester were level at half-time, the City never inspired confidence. The forwards had a terrific contest with a powerful opposition, and on the whole did well, but the support behind was not good enough. Voyce, despite his handicap, played a dashing game in the open, and worked desperately to give his side the advantage. Evans again distinguished himself, and of the others Roderick and Holford came most under notice; but the City front were up against a superior force, generally speaking.

Dix, of the Gloucester backs, was the most successful individually, though Meadows made a brave show and by no means did badly. Millington's experience naturally was missed, and the absence of the vice-captain no doubt affected the general display of the backs.

At three-quarter the players did not scintillate as a line; there was a lack of understanding, and the attacks had not the snap and finish necessary to beat down a strong defence.

Brown was not altogether a success at centre, and I prefer him in his proper place on the wing. Hughes was fair – his best work was in defence – and the same may be said of the two wing men, Daniell and Hughes.

James was severely tested at full back, especially in saving and tackling. He gave nothing away – one save of his was particularly daring – and his kicking on the whole was creditable.

Gloucester will not meet many stronger opponents than Cross Keys; but the form of the City to-day was not altogether satisfactory. David, Millington and Ayliffe will, it is hoped, be back in the side for the Harlequins next week, which will strengthen the combination, but the Committee will need to look round for another centre when the Oxonian is not available. And the pack might be improved with the inclusion of a couple of younger forwards.

To-day's defeat certainly gives food for thought.

Next week : Harlequins, at Twickenham; Gloucester A v. Broms-grove, at Kingsholm.

W.B.

GLOUCESTER A WIN AT DRYBROOK.

At Drybrook. Gloucester A had Charles (Tredworth) for Crowther at three-quarter. Coulson and Collett scored tries for the City Seconds, but neither was converted. Drybrook obtained a penalty goal.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 2 tries (6 pts.)

Drybrook 1 goal (p) (3 pts.)

JC