

THE CITIZEN

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1922.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. OLD MERCHANT TAYLORS.

DELIGHTFULLY OPEN GAME.

CITY SCORE FREELY IN LAST QUARTER.

This annual Boxing Day fixture attracted a large holiday crowd to Kingsholm. Gloucester made two changes from the side beaten by Swansea, Ronnie James and J. Harris taking the places of Collett and Roderick respectively. The O.M.T.'s, who were badly beaten at Bristol on Saturday, were without the services of Cove-Smith, the International, who did not arrive in time from Torquay.

Teams : —

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS: S. A. Brown, S. Stone, A. M. David, and E. H. Hughes.

HALF-BACKS: T. Gough and T. Millington.

FORWARDS: F. W. Ayliffe (capt.), G. Holford, A. Hall, S. Smart, T. Coulson, H. W. Collier, A. Rea, and J. Harris.

OLD MERCHANT TAYLORS.

BACK: G. Sanders.

THREE-QUARTERS: W. McGregor, A. W. Shenton, W. I. Cheeseman, and A. C. Abbott.

HALF-BACKS: F. H. Collier and D. O. N. Hodson.

FORWARDS: R. K. Melliush, R. F. Bryant, G. H. M. Earle, E. C. Archer, A. T. Sketchley, H. H. Fagnani, R. F. Tebbutt, G. E. King-Turner.

Referee : Mr. J. T. Curtis.

THE GAME.

The Taylors started the game, and from the first scrum, following a penalty against the visitors, Gough opened out, but the passing broke down. The Londoners almost immediately replied with a series of exchanges, Abbott punting well down and beyond James, who had to run back to gather. This he did successfully, getting the ball well to touch. The Taylors worked back a few yards, where David was prominent with a clever clearance. Gloucester made further headway, and the ball being kicked into the open David fielded and broke clean away. Timing a nice pass to Brown, the right wing sailed away and scored a good try, which Millington converted with a good kick.

Holford fielded from the restart and passed back, but though Millington cleverly evaded a couple of opponents the ball was subsequently lost and no ground was gained. James being collared in possession, the Taylors gained a footing in the home half, but the City quickly changed the venue, Brown aiding with a good touchfinder.

Millington took a very difficult pass from Gough in fine style and started passing, but Hughes was not allowed to travel far. Then a forward opened out from the loose, and Millington shot through and secured a fine opening, but his transfer went astray and nothing resulted.

The Taylors were to the fore with some sound tackling when matters looked dangerous for the side, but later a great rush by the City front took them very close. Sanders managed to gather, but he was immediately pulled down. The Taylors relieved by the aid of a penalty, and a couple of minutes later another free warded off severe pressure. Gloucester were trying to make the game open, but the handling was not effective.

Scrambling play followed, in which the Taylors showed up well in the loose. From a line-out the visitors opened nicely, and after clever handling there was a chance on the left wing. Shenton held on too long and was collared.

Gloucester replied with a brilliant round of passing, the ball coming back from the wing in pretty style. A forward transfer, however, spoiled the movement. At this stage Cove-Smith arrived and took his place in the forwards, Collier retiring – an unusual incident, and against the rules, but apparently the arrangement was a mutual one between the rival captains.

Archer led the Taylors' forwards in a fine dribble which took some stopping, and then Gloucester came right away, Hughes dribbling well and kicking past Sanders. The Gloucester man was racing up for the touch when he was impeded by Sanders, who was penalised, but Millington failed with his attempt at goal.

On the drop-out Shenton intercepted a Gloucester pass and dashed up the field. A series of exchanges followed, forwards and backs taking part, and it looked certain for a try, but Gloucester saved at the critical moment. This fine bit of play by the visitors evoked loud cheers. The City relieved from a dangerous position with a useful kick, and Smart following up, sent to Sanders, who, however, got in his return.

Play hovered in the Gloucester half, until the City broke away with a passing run. Brown received and dodged his way clear and then raced for the line. But being pressed from behind he passed to Coulson, who scored in the corner. But all the work was of no avail, as the touch flag was up away back in the home 25, and the game was ordered back, to the amusement of the crowd.

Ensuing play was fast and even, and the ball being given plenty of air the display greatly pleased the spectators. The Taylors gave some bright interludes, and several times looked dangerous. The forwards were pretty fairly matched in the tight, but the Londoners were smarter in getting the ball away, and their backs were more certain in their handling.

Up and down the field play went, and from one loose rush the visitors compelled Gloucester to save, a performance the City had to repeat a couple of minutes later, owing to Brown, in trying to turn the ball out, being collared.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal
O.M.T.'s Nil

During the interval a collection was made on the ground for the Dix testimonial fund.

The game in the first half had provided some bright football, in which the Taylors had fully contributed their share, and on the play the Old Boys deserved at least to have been on level terms. Gloucester, as on Saturday, were good in parts, but the team were not playing with their usual dash and finish.

Ayliffe resumed, but an attempt to open out by the visitors from the kick off failed, and Gloucester benefited. Bryant led the Taylors to the centre with a loose rush, but Gloucester retaliated, Harris dribbling cleverly, but the final kick was too hard, and went over the line for a minor.

On the drop-out the Taylors had the better of the exchanges, the forwards playing with rare dash and abandon. The City twice tried to open out, but something went wrong, and ground was lost. In some loose kicking the ball got across to the right, where Shenton secured and cleared Hughes, but fell a victim to a fine tackle by David.

The Taylors, however, kept things moving and they were better together and smarter in all phases. Twice the visitors took part in clever open movements, but forward passes checked. Then from a kick and cross-kick by Brown, a home player fielded and passed to Stone, who raced hard down the field. He reached Sanders and then gave to Hughes, but the transfer was too high and was not taken.

From this point the Londoners came clear away with a passing run. Abbott received and punted, but Cove-Smith, who fielded, was brought low by Gough. He let the ball go, and only a knock-on spoiled a possible try.

The game continued fast and open. David and Hughes made capital runs for Gloucester, but though good headway was made the desired opening was not obtained. The Taylors, not to be outdone, shone with a brilliant bit of combination, but Abbott's repass to Cheesman was forward. Next Ayliffe started Millington going, and Hughes and David handled, but the next pass was forward.

The next item of interest was a fine loose dribble by the visiting front. Three players got right away and past James, but Hughes ran back and effected a capital save. From inside their own 25 Gloucester started passing, and Stone effected a splendid dash through and transfer to Hughes. The wing man tried hard, but could not escape the attention of two opponents. The Taylors quickly transferred to the other end, where play waxed keen and strong.

Gloucester were prominent with a fine burst, which landed them well down. Here the City halves got the ball away to Stone, who cut inside his man brilliantly, and beating all opposition scored a great try between the posts. Millington added the goal points.

Another try came immediately from the re-start. A forward received, and after a sharp dash passed to Gough, who shot out into the open and punted ahead. The forwards came along on the run, and Sanders losing possession the ball was taken over the line and Coulson credited with a try, which Millington failed to convert.

The Taylors resumed, and in less than two minutes they had opened their account. From a kick down Brown had to run back, and the best he could do was to send the ball to touch a few yards from the line. A quick throw out took place, and Earle securing scored in the corner. The kick at goal failed.

Subsequent play showed no falling off in pace, both teams playing with vigour and dash. Gloucester worked the left wing cleverly, and after a splendid effort by Brown, Millington accepted a re-pass and scored cleverly. The goal kick was a failure.

On the restart the Taylors had a short spell of attacking, but Gloucester came again, and fine work by Hall only just failed in a score in the corner. Then from a scrum Millington failed to hold a pass from Gough when he was through. The next minute, however, the vice-captain, with a clever bit of footwork, took the ball over the line and scored his second try. This time he converted, and Gloucester led by 21 points to 3.

The game remained exciting to the end. Hughes and Gough, from a sharp line-out, broke away, the latter punting and sending the ball in front of the posts. A try seemed certain, but somehow it was missed. Gloucester, however, added to their lead from the subsequent scrum, Millington sending out a wide pass to Brown, who crossed in the corner. Millington landed a great goal, and the game ended.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER	4 goals, 2 tries (26 pts.)
O.M.T.'s	1 try (3 points)

REMARKS.

A delightfully open game, with plenty of exciting incidents. The Taylors played far better than the score would suggest, and it was only in the last quarter that Gloucester obtained a real mastery over their opponents. Both teams set themselves out to give the ball air, and during the match there were some brilliant passing movements witnessed.

The Old Boys marked and tackled very keenly, and their gathering of the ball off the ground was very smart. The forwards were well matched in the loose, Holford, Ayliffe, Harris and Smart being very prominent, whilst Bryant was an outstanding performer for the Taylors.

Gough did much better at the scrum to-day, and Millington, as a result, was seen to distinct advantage. At three-quarter the City also did well. Stone's try was a beauty, and he made several other strong runs. David, too, was very much in evidence with dashing bursts, and Brown and Hughes accomplished a lot of good work on the respective wings. Sanders gave a sound display at full back for the visitors, and James was little inferior.

The Taylors exhibited real cleverness behind at times, and the men showed pace and good combination.

To-morrow : Gloucester v. Bath, at Bath; Gloucester Boys v. Bristol Boys, at Kingsholm.

W.B.

GLOUCESTER A v. WAGON WORKS.

At Tuffley on Boxing morning. F. Rose (2), S. Crowther (2), and F. Meadows scored for Gloucester, and H. Charles kicked the goals. H. Hook and W. Wells scored for the Works.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 2 goals, 3 tries (19 pts.)
Wagon Works 1 goal, 1 try (8 pts.)