

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S SPLENDID WIN AT COVENTRY.

BRILLIANT MOVEMENTS BY THE BACKS.

HOME TEAM GIVEN LITTLE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTACK.

The Rugby Union game has fluctuated considerably since Gloucester first had fixtures with the Midland Club. In the nineties [3 or 4 words illegible] powerful opponents for [1 or 2 words illegible] English side, and in Ben Tuke (the Irish International half-back), Arthur Frith, A. Rotherham, Slater and others their ranks included some of the best-known exponents of the game at that period. A slump followed later, but there has been a decided revival since the war, and Rugby bids fair to fully regain its old-time popularity.

Coventry were off the Gloucester list for some years, but fixtures were renewed a couple of seasons ago, with honours easy as regards victories – two each. On each occasion Gloucester visited Coventry, however, the team was practically composed of reserves, the date clashing with a County championship match. To-day there was no interference, and the City were able to command the services of a fairly strong fifteen, though the side did not include Collett (full back), Daniell and Stone (three-quarter), Voyce, Roderick, Holford, and Bayliss (forwards). The latter has been out of the team during the holidays, having joined the noble army of Benedicts.

Coventry have enjoyed a fairly successful season, and at home are regarded as a warm proposition. Gloucester, however, were good enough for a win if the players could produce their real form, which it must be admitted was not in evidence in the holiday games.

Teams : –

### GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. James.

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

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

FORWARDS : F. W. Ayliffe (capt.), A. Hall, S. Smart, T. Coulson, A. Rea, H. W. Collier, F. Mansell, and T. Taylor.

### COVENTRY.

BACK : C. M. Davies.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. Lee, F. W. Berry, R. Baker, and W. Glover.

HALF-BACKS : A. Elton and H. J. Pemberton.

FORWARDS : T. Carter, H. Morris, N. Pugh, G. Poppe, A. Hill, S. R. Bones, J. Grubb, and A. Dilnot.

Referee : Dr. Eric Lindow (Northampton).

### THE GAME.

Coventry escaped the heavy rain of the morning, and the weather was fine at the time fixed for the kick-off. The ground, however, was sloppy in places. A big "Soccer" match affected the attendance, which only numbered a few hundreds.

David had not appeared at the start, and Gloucester opened with a man short, Hall playing outside half and Millington centre. The opening play favoured Gloucester, and early on there was a nice bout of passing, Meadows being pushed to touch near the 25. A good touch kick by Brown put Coventry on the defence, and clever back play by the City nearly resulted in a score.

Elton relieved with a nice kick from the line-out, but James fielded well and sent to touch at the centre. Loose footwork aided Gloucester, but the turf was very treacherous, and mistakes in fielding were frequent.

The Gloucester forwards were getting the ball in the tight, and the backs tried to open out, but without much success. Coventry cleared with a good rush, and Lee made a good attempt to beat the defence on the left. Gloucester came away with a passing run, Meadows finally punting across, but Baker gathered and sent out of play.

From near the centre the Coventry forwards broke away and the ball was kicked past James. Grubb followed up keenly and, taking the ball over the line, scored a good try. Morris failed at goal.

Gloucester resumed strongly and had the better of the exchanges, but the slippery state of the ball and ground spoiled a possible opening. A fine kick by Pemberton from a penalty put Coventry in the City quarter, where the forwards were keenly engaged.

David now put in an appearance. At the same time Ayliffe was penalised for off-side. Morris, however, failed in the attempt at goal from a favourable position.

Gloucester were penalised again for tripping, and Pemberton punted over the Gloucester line, but James pluckily ran the ball out and found touch thirty yards up the field. Keen forward play followed, until Gough opened out to Millington and David cut through brilliantly and made a fine opening for Hughes, who ran over near the posts. It was a splendid movement and beautifully carried out. Millington converted, and Gloucester secured a two-points lead.

Coventry resumed with vigour, but David checked a dangerous rush with a clever pick up. Millington led a nice dribble up the field, and later the City backs again handled smartly, but "forward" called a halt. Gloucester continued to attack and Brown had a chance, but was collared in trying to cut inside two men.

Coventry eased the pressure by the aid of a penalty, but Gloucester worked back with loose footwork, Lee just saving in time from Hughes. Immediately after David was nearly through after a pass from Millington, but better luck came from another movement initiated by the vice-captain, Hughes sending Meadows over with a corner try. The place kick failed.

After this there was a spell of even forward play at the centre, but eventually Baker forced a minor with a kick over the line. Following the drop-out Coventry had a chance with David tackled under the posts, but Millington effected a remarkable clearance. Then the Gloucester forwards dribbled more than half the length of the ground, Baker saving at the critical moment.

Gloucester had the better of the subsequent play, until Coventry broke away with a dribble to the visitors' 25. Gloucester relieved with nice passing, David punting down and Berry being collared in possession. Play was in the Coventry half at the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
GLOUCESTER ..... 8 points  
COVENTRY ..... 3 points

Gloucester well deserved their lead, for they had played bright football despite the conditions. Forward, matters were fairly even, except in the tight, where the City pack asserted control over the ball.

Play on the restart favoured Coventry, who, taking advantage of a mistake in passing, kicked past James. The latter failed to gather, and the ball was only turned to touch a couple of yards from the line. Gloucester were penalised [at] the succeeding scrum, and from a good position Morris placed a goal.

The ensuing play was confined to the forwards, with good kicking by the respective backs. The Gloucester forwards at length got away in dashing style, only to be effectively stopped by Davies. Still Coventry could not get out of their half. Hughes brought off a brilliant dodge through a host of opponents, but was eventually brought down.

Gloucester went very close after this, and Gough opening out Millington served Hughes, who raced over the line in the corner. Millington goaled splendidly.

From the kick-off Gloucester came along in irresistible style, but the ball was knocked on when a good opening had been secured. With fine kicking James kept Coventry confined to their quarters. Here David shone with a lovely run and wide pass to Meadows, but the right wing just failed to beat the defence, though the effort was a praiseworthy one.

A penalty came to the relief of Coventry when the visitors were right on their line, but they failed to pass the centre line. Hall with a strong burst started a passing bout, but it came to a stop with a knock-on. Next David was to the fore with another good effort, but his pass inside was captured by an opponent.

Gloucester, however, were playing a winning game, and from an opening by James, who started his three-quarters going, David raced over with a clever try. Millington missed the goal.

The City were now leading well, but they did not relax their efforts. After the restart Coventry gained a footing in the Gloucester half, but they were quickly beaten back. A mistake in [8 or 9 words illegible] considerable ground, and James and Brown being collared in turn the City were hotly pressed. The defence, however, proved equal to all occasions. The visitors cleared, and Collier charging down Davies' kick he dribbled more than half the length of the field and scored a capital try near the posts, for Millington to convert.

This try was a solo effort absolutely, and showed judgment and pace on the part of Collier. Gloucester showed up prominently with more delightful passing, and only a keen and watchful defence kept the visitors out. Gough was outpointing Elton at half-back, and his service to Millington was a great improvement. The Gloucester backs were getting the ball continually from the scrum, and there was clever passing witnessed, but things did not finish as intended.

With useful forward bursts Coventry made an incursion into the Gloucester half, and ten yards from the line the visitors were penalised. From an easy position Morris kicked a goal, making their points 9 to 21.

From the restart Gloucester attacked, but could do nothing but force minors. Just before the end the City just failed to add to their lead, a forward pass being given.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ..... 3 goals, 2 tries (21 points)

COVENTRY ..... 2 goals (p), 1 try (9 points)

REMARKS.

Gloucester won handsomely and deservedly from the play. They were far the cleverer side. The City forwards did well in all departments, more especially in the tight scrums, where they got possession nine times out of ten. Gough played a clever game at the scrum, and Millington, well served, was enabled to open out continually. Considering the conditions. the handling of the winners was excellent. All the men behind were in capital form, especially David and Hughes at centre. James played a sound game at back, making few errors, kicking well, and displaying keen initiative in opening up for his three-quarters.

The Coventry forwards were good in the loose, but Baker alone of the backs was seen to any advantage. Altogether the game was bright and interesting, and productive of some really smart football.

W.B.

GLOUCESTER A v. CHELTENHAM A.

The match between Gloucester A and Cheltenham A., which was to have been played at Kingsholm this afternoon, was abandoned owing to the state of the ground.