

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S LAST HOME MATCH.

WEAK PONTYPOOL TEAM EFFECT A DRAW.

A DISAPPOINTING DISPLAY.

For the last home match of the season Gloucester had an attractive fixture in the visit of Pontypool, who captured the City's ground record last season by a try to nil. Gloucester fielded at full strength, but owing to injuries during the holiday matches the visitors had to make seven changes from the original selection. Previous to the match the home team and officials were photographed.

Teams :

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : J. C. Collett.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. A. Brown, T. Millington, S. Stone, and N. Daniell.

HALF-BACKS : W. Collins, and E. H. Hughes.

FORWARDS : F. Ayliffe (capt.), G. Holford, S. Smart, A. Hall, T. Coulson, S. Bayliss, T. Voyce, and M. Evans.

PONTYPOOL.

BACK : E. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : C. Richards, P. J. Skym, G. Morgan, and T. Probert.

HALF-BACKS : C. Jerman and T. Jones.

FORWARDS : G. Williams, W. Martin, E. Oliver, E. Bullock, C. Harvey, A. Evans, T. Morgan, and S. Jolliff.

Referee : W. Fear (Somerset Ruby Union).

THE GAME.

The Gloucester player wore white jerseys owing to the similarity in the colours of the two clubs. The toss favoured the home team, and the Pontypool kick-off sending the ball to touch a scrum followed at the centre. Gloucester heeled, and Collins serving Hughes, the latter punted ahead, the ball going to touch a few yards from the visitors' 25 flag. Gloucester again got the ball away, and this time Stone put in a short kick, from which Richards made his mark. The kick sent play to mid-field, where the Pontypool forwards rushed well for 20 yards before being checked.

From a scrum Jerman opened out, and Skym took a drop at goal, but the shot was wide. In subsequent play Jerman broke away on the short side of the scrum and passed to Richards, who raced on and gave an inside pass. This, however, was captured by Hughes, who punted to touch nicely.

Pontypool had the better of the exchanges until a long kick by Collett caused E. James to run the risk to gather. From a loose dribble Voyce picked up and put in a good dash, but Hughes, to whom he transferred, was immediately collared.

Failing to field allowed Pontypool to dribble well down, but an offside tackle lost them the ground gained, Collett recovering with a splendid touch-finder. From a pass from Hughes Millington punted straight down the field, and James misfielding he was closely pressed by Voyce, but managed to get clear and get in a short kick to touch.

Play was scrappy, and mistakes by Gloucester gave the visitors a large slice of ground. A penalty fell to 'Pool and later a forward made his mark, but the kicks were well responded to, and Gloucester maintained a position near the centre. Here neat play by Stone and Millington beat several opponents, but the centre's pass inside was ruled forward with a possible chance.

The City attacked with another movement, and Daniell was only just robbed of possession of the ball in front of goal. Bullock, in saving, was injured, and the ambulance men were called on the field to give attention. He was subsequently led off with a damaged head.

Resuming, Pontypool were soon awarded a penalty, but Gloucester worked back, Millington taking a drop for goal which fell short. The visitors relieved with a loose rush, and then Gloucester twice failed in attempts to open out by faulty handling. The football just now was dull and unprofitable and the form of both sides was very moderate.

'Pool utilised the loose rush to advantage and pressed, but they failed to make any impression. Inside his own 25 Collins fed Hughes, and Stone and Daniell handled in turn. The latter cross-kicked, but the ball was received by Skym, who kicked to touch.

Gloucester quickly lost the ground, Skym intercepting and racing down to Collett, when he passed, but the ball was lost. Collett brought the City out by the aid of a penalty, but it was only a momentary relief, for 'Pool were soon back again. Probert and E. James had now changed places, and the former, from the full-back position, early took a drop for goal, but it missed its mark and Collett punted back to touch.

The City were beaten in the lines-out several times, and the home defence was tested again. A fine kick by Millington gave Gloucester some 30 yards; but the City never looked like settling down to any decent movement.

The play continued of the poorest possible description, and devoid of incident. Neither side was able to organise a successful attack, and when the ball did get amongst the backs it was generally mulled. At the interval no score had been recorded.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER Nil
PONTYPOOL Nil

The game as played was no improvement on that witnessed during the holidays, the City team especially being off-colour in nearly every department. Even with an extra man in the scrum the home forwards failed to display any advantage, and were well beaten in the loose.

Ayliffe restarted and there being a poor return Gloucester gained a footing in their opponents' 25. A penalty brought no relief to 'Pool, and Gloucester worked back, where Collins had a fruitless drop at goal. Pontypool now cleared effectively to mid-field, where dropped passes by City players spoiled a couple of efforts to open out.

Vigorous forward play and close tackling ensued for a period until the City broke away in a sweeping rush. Voyce went ahead with the ball at his feet and sent it past the full back and over the line, but James cut across from the left wing and touched down for a minor.

After this Collett had a long drop for goal, but it fell under the bar and against the post, and a visitor picking up kicked out of danger. Gloucester appeared to have a possible chance on the right, but the defence was too sound, and then a visitor, with a big punt, sent towards the Gloucester goal. There was a race for the ball, ending in Sid Brown kicking dead from the field of play. An anxious moment ensued for the City, but the situation was improved, and the home team finally reached the centre; whilst a huge kick from a penalty by Collett further improved matters.

Hughes, however, missed a pass, and this mistake allowed the visitors to dribble away. Hall, however, gathered and went through in dashing style, but being partly collared he was forced to throw forward. At this point there was a stoppage for attention to another Pontypool forward who was laid out, but recovered and resumed.

Continuing, Ayliffe and Collins brought off a tricky bit of passing, but the latter was pulled down when he got the repass. Pontypool made a good forward rush, but near the centre Hughes was set going by Collins, with his three-quarters well placed. Hughes went very well, but tried to overdo it and was collared.

Collett distinguished himself with some good clearances in subsequent play, and he was the only man on the home side who was doing himself justice. Gloucester continued to heel, but this time Hall, who was playing extra half, missed, and Skym kicking ahead sent to the line. Collett, however, effected a wonderful save – a fortunate escape for Gloucester.

Immediately after the drop-out the Gloucester backs shone in a bout of passing, and Daniell ran and kicked ahead, the ball going to touch inside the 'Pool 25. Here Gloucester struggled hard to score, and Millington once went over between the posts, but was called back.

A desperate struggle ensued near the visitors' line, but the defence was equal to all occasions. There was a stoppage for a damage to a visiting forward. On resuming, Gloucester had a fine chance from a cross-kick by Daniell in front of the posts. Holford took the ball and passed, but it was not accepted, and a visitor punted out to beyond the centre. Collett beat one opponent, but two others went for the tackle, and in the collision one of them was badly winded.

There was little time left for play, and Pontypool made great efforts to pull off the game. Scrums ensued close to the home line, and twice attempts were made to drop goals, but nothing resulted, and a poor game ended.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER Nil
PONTYPOOL Nil

REMARKS.

We have witnessed some poor exhibitions at Kingsholm this season, but to-day's display was the limit. There was scarcely an incident of merit throughout the game, and there was general relief when the final whistle put an end to the contest.

Pontypool were no doubt eminently satisfied with the result, for with seven reserves in the side, and playing a man short for more than half the game, it was no mean performance to keep Gloucester from scoring.

The City have scarcely given a more lifeless, ineffective show. With the exception of Collett, who – apart from the one mistake near the end, when a charged-down penalty kick taken over the line nearly gave the game away – was in capital form, there was not a player on the side who approached his true form.

With individuals failing, combination was bound to suffer, and there were endless mistakes in fielding and handling. The Gloucester forwards were beaten badly in the loose and lines-out, and generally gave a very moderate display.

One could criticise a good deal on the exhibition this afternoon, but no good purpose will be served with the home season ended. Yet one could have wished a more fitting finish for the benefit of the enthusiastic supporters who have followed the team's doings throughout the past seven months.

Next Saturday : Monday, Plymouth Albion; Tuesday, Sidmouth. A party of 22 will be taken on the trip, but one or two regular players will not be available.

GLOUCESTER A v. LYDNEY A.

CITY RESERVES' CAPITAL WIN.

A very even game was witnessed in the first half, and James, the City custodian, was prominent with some splendid kicking to touch. Lydney obtained an unconverted try though B. Porter. The City Seconds then attacked with good passing, and the forwards further helped by useful footwork, Webb eventually scoring a try, which James converted.

James again did well for the City and fielding the ball in his own 25, he set the three-quarters going, and the effort was finished with an unconverted try through Crowther.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A 1 goal, 1 try
Lydney A 1 try

In the second half the homesters attacked and passed very creditably. The defence, however, was very fine. The City were penalised but the resultant kick, by Kerwood, was a "poster," and the ball rebounded into play. The City Seconds were severely pressed, but James relieved with a huge kick to half-way. Kerwood again narrowly missed a penalty goal.

The homesters had the better of this half territorially, but many mistakes were made through faulty handling by several of the Lydney players, and, besides, the Gloucester defence was great, and too good for the attack.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 1 goal, 1 try (8 points)
Lydney A 1 try (3 points)