

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

CARDIFF DRAW AT KINGSHOLM.

FIVE POINTS EACH.

KEEN AND VIGOROUS GAME.

After going through half the season unbeaten, Cardiff met their Waterloo at the Memorial Ground, Bristol, last month, and this reverse was followed by successive defeats from Aberavon and the United Services (Portsmouth). It was natural, therefore, that the Welsh Metropolitans viewed their visit to Kingsholm to-day with a certain amount of anxiety, for their last success at the City Club headquarters dated as far back as season 1909-10, when they won by 20 points to 8. Since that date the teams had engaged in seven matches at Kingsholm, of which Gloucester triumphed on six occasions, the other game (1912-13) being drawn at 3 points each. In the seven games the City totalled 66 points to their opponents' 24, the best performance being in 1910-11, when Cardiff were beaten by 15 points to nil.

In the match at Cardiff Arms Park last October, when the Welshmen were going very strongly, Gloucester put up a splendid contest, and only lost in the last few minutes by 11 points to 8. The City had hopes of going one better this afternoon, though the absence of Stone (injured against Cinderford) and Voyce (engaged for England against Ireland) weakened the ranks. David, too, was unable to accept an invitation to assist. Gough, however, had sufficiently recovered to resume his partnership with Millington at half-back, and Hughes returned to the three-quarter line, taking up his old position at centre, where he was joined by Sid Brown, who did so well against Cinderford the previous week. This arrangement enabled the Committee to give a further trial to J. W. Gibbs on the wing, and the Second Teamer's debut against a really first-class side was awaited with a good deal of interest.

Cardiff had selected a powerful team to represent the Club, including their four Internationals – R. Cornish, T. Johnson, Clem Lewis, and D. G. Davies – but Cornish and Lewis were unable to play, and two reserves – Rosser and Venables – had to be called upon. J. Powell, however, was fit again, and resumed his place in the third line after several weeks' absence.

Mr. Gil Evans had promised to referee the game, with the consent of both clubs, but he was unable to fulfil the engagement, and the Gloucester Club referred the appointment to the Somerset Rugby Union, who sent Mr. R. Fear to officiate. Gloucester's luck in the matter of fine weather for the big matches was not in to-day. Following a bright day on Friday, rain fell in the night and continued practically without intermission all the morning. Fortunately the rain ceased about 2 o'clock, but the conditions generally were unpleasant and considerably affected the attendance. There was a late change in the City team, M. Evans taking the place of Major Roderick.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : J. C. Collett.

THREE-QUARTERS : N. Daniell, E. H. Hughes, S. A. Brown, and J. W. Gibbs.

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

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

CARDIFF.

BACK : Dr. T. Wallace.

THREE-QUARTERS : T. Johnson, A. Rosser, J. Powell, and T. Venables.

HALF-BACKS : T. C. Dean and D. E. Davies.

FORWARDS : Idris Richards, J. Prosser, J. Grant, W. Cornish, D. Llewellyn, A. R. Rickard, D. G. Davies, and A. Dalrymple.

Referee : Mr. R. Fear (Somerset County Union).

THE GAME.

The ground was in fair condition considering the heavy rain, but was very greasy on the surface. Cardiff started the game, but some of the forwards were in front of the ball and a scrum was ordered at the centre. Cardiff were early awarded a penalty against Gough, and with this kick and another the Welshmen gained a position in the home 25.

From a line out Richards gathered and threw out a pass to Rosser, but the latter was well tackled. A short burst, however, took the Cardiff forwards down and the ball being rushed over the line Gloucester conceded a minor.

Following the drop-out the City front broke away with a loose rush to beyond the centre, but Wallace fielded and sent to touch. Gloucester lost the ground gained through allowing an opponent to rob them of the ball, and race away to Collett. The visitor passed out to a colleague, but Collett intercepted and found touch. The slippery ball caused mistakes in handling when the City backs opened, Gibbs failing to take from Brown when there was a probability of a good run down touch. Smart hereabouts left the field to have a damaged hand bandaged, and Gloucester played on a forward short.

Smart now returned. A great dribble by the Cardiff forwards gave the City a lot of trouble, and the home line was in danger for a time. Millington at length relieved with a nice touch-finder, and later Brown, with a capital effort, broke clear and punted over Wallace's head. There was a race for possession, but Venables got back in time to save.

The City were penalised close to the line, and the resultant kick went to touch about ten yards outside. From the throw-out the City secured, and in a scramble Brown forced himself over with a try, which Millington converted. Five points up was good for Gloucester, but it must be said that the City had not had the best of play to this period.

Cardiff resumed and play was keen and vigorous. The Welshmen heeled cleverly from a couple of scrums, and once nice passing left the ball with Johnson, who made a spirited dash for the corner. He, however, was well tackled, and though he released the ball Venables knocked on with a try in view.

Cardiff still attacked, but Millington, and later Gough, changed the venue with good kicks. This gave Gloucester a footing in the visitors' half, but the Welshmen quickly changed the venue with a forward dribble. Later the Cardiffians handled smartly, and following a series of passes it looked certain the home line would fall, but the situation was saved at the critical moment.

From a scrum five yards outside Gough got the ball away to Millington, who gained 30 yards with a good touch kick. Play was keenly contested in the home half until the forwards broke away with a fast loose dribble. Then a Cardiff forward was penalised for a foul, but Collett punted to the centre of the field and Wallace easily returned.

Some desperate tackling by Gloucester checked a dangerous move by the visitors, and Millington, a minute later, made a fine return to a penalty. Still Cardiff kept on the aggressive, and the City were hard pressed.

At length Holford broke away in fine style, and gave a nice pass to Daniell, but the latter was upset by Rosser and thrown to touch. Both sides tried their best to open out, but the treacherous turf and slippery ball were a great handicap.

Centre play ensued for a time, the forwards being heavily engaged, and in some loose work Dean was injured and had to leave the field. Gloucester held their own in subsequent play, but there were no special incidents before the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal
CARDIFF Nil

The football had been lively and keen, with Cardiff doing more attacking and experiencing hard lines on several occasions. A five points lead rather flattered the City on the play. Ayliffe re-started, and Dean returned to the field after a couple of minutes. The opening was rather tame, but Collett eventually raised cheers with a lovely pick-up from the feet of the Cardiff forwards and a kick to touch.

A little later the City front brought off a dashing burst and keen follow up. Wallace was pressed, and was forced to pass to Rosser, who got a left foot kick to touch. Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges, but there was a lot of loose play.

From a flying kick the ball was driven past the Gloucester third line, and Hughes had to run back to gather. His kick was charged down by Johnson, who raced up, and the ball bouncing nicely into his arms he finished a good effort by scoring between the posts. No charges were allowed, and Wallace had no difficulty in equalising the scores.

A Cardiffian marked from the restart, and the visitors, playing strongly, rushed to the home end, where Richards made a strong effort to cross the line, but succumbed to numbers. There was a brief delay for "man hurt," and on the resumption Gloucester were immediately awarded a free for a scrum infringement by the Cardiff forwards. The kick enabled Gloucester to ease the pressure, but Dean kicked back, only to see Collett bring off a splendid pick up and kick to touch. From this point Millington was prominent with a clever bit of footwork which beat the Cardiff defence, but offside spoiled the effort.

Exciting play followed, both sides putting in strenuous work, but neither side could secure a scoring chance. Once the Cardiff backs looked dangerous with a passing movement, but Brown tackled well. Up and down the field the ball went at a good pace with little in it. Near the centre Gibbs distinguished himself with a magnificent run straight up the field, but he was tackled by Johnson. For a moment Gloucester appeared likely to secure the desired opening, but they were successfully baulked.

Cardiff relieved with some useful kicking and forward work, Gough saving well. Inside their 25 Gloucester were penalised, but the shot at goal was a long way out, and Millington punted back to touch.

The City forwards, with dashing work, gave Cardiff some anxious moments, but their defence was very safe, especially in backing up and relief kicking. Gloucester lost a good position through a misunderstanding between Gibbs and Collett as to who should take the ball, the result being a knock on. The City, however, quickly recovered, and a capital opening was secured, only to find the referee's whistle had blown for an infringement.

A brilliant run by Johnson beat the home three-quarters but when he passed Venables knocked on. Gloucester came away to the other end, but the attacks were not strong enough. Even play followed for a time until Gloucester made a burst, and aided by a kick by Hughes, sent to Wallace. The Cardiff captain was sound and got the ball safely to touch.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal (5 points)
CARDIFF 1 goal (5 points)

REMARKS.

On the run of the play Gloucester were a trifle lucky to share honours this afternoon. The prevailing conditions – heavy ground and greasy ball – were a great handicap to the players; but the Welshmen showed the smarter football all round. It was by no means a spectacular game, but all the best open work attempted was done by the Cardiff backs, who at times handled with cleverness and resource, and tested the City defence very severely.

Forward, the contest was very vigorous, with the Cardiffians holding a slight advantage. The visitors were especially good in out-of-touch play and in the loose, and in the first half they indulged in some splendid footwork, which gave the Gloucester defenders many anxious moments.

In the tight matters were fairly even, the City pack doing capital work after the change over. The tackling on both sides was strenuous and effective, and nothing was given away. Hall was again particularly prominent in this department, and Holford, Ayliffe, Smart and Evans were ever noticeable in general play. For Cardiff, Richards was distinguished in the open for strong play, and Davies and Dalrymple gave him splendid assistance.

As a whole the Cardiff back division held the advantage. Gloucester had no player of the class of Johnson, who was very smart in attack and tackled with judgment and effect. The visitors were not afraid to throw the ball about, and though some risky passes were attempted nothing serious happened.

At the scrum Gough and Dean had a rare tussle. The Cardiffian had more initiative, but Gough by no means did badly, and he was fearless in going down to rushes. Millington's best work was in relief, and several times he warded off threatened danger with timely kicks to touch. But at other times he punted into the open field, and Wallace seldom failed to return with interest.

The City three-quarters rarely combined in an effective movement. Daniell only handled a few times, and the occasion he was sent away by Holford in front of the grandstand he found Rosser equal to him in speed. Gibbs was highly tried, but the recruit had the distinction of making the best effort on the Gloucester side. This was a fine dash through in which he displayed determination and pace.

In the centre Brown and Hughes were not afforded many opportunities to shine, the sharp marking of the Welshmen giving them little chance even when they did get the ball, which was not often.

Cardiff had a good pair of halves in Dean and Davies, and Powell and Johnson were the particular stars at three-quarter. The reserves, Venables and Rosser, shaped promisingly, and made few mistakes.

At full back, Wallace gave a sound exhibition. He was never flurried, fielded well, and kicked a good length either foot. Collett also did well, though there were occasions when he missed the touch-line with his return.

Summed up, it was a keen and stubborn contest, and Cardiff were probably just as pleased as Gloucester at the result. The Welshmen have not won at Kingsholm for 13 years.

Next week : Gloucester v. Llanelly, at Llanelly; Schoolboys International – East v. West (2.30), and Gloucester A v. Bream (3.30), at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A v. CARDIFF A.

Played at Cardiff. Gloucester played pluckily, but were badly beaten in the front. E. James, the full-back, put up a magnificent defence, and it was not his fault when Rees Davies, P. C. Jones, and Rowlands scored tries for Cardiff. King converted two tries from easy positions.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Cardiff Reserves 13 points

Gloucester II Nil

Play was very one-sided in the second half and Cardiff scored again through P. C. Jones, and Bryant converted. The Taffside Reserves pressed incessantly but James defended well. Gloucester made one fine break away and the forwards dribbled half the length of the field for Bridges to score an unconverted try.

RESULT :

Cardiff Reserves 18 pts.

Gloucester Seconds ... 1 try (3 pts.)