

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S HARD LINES AT DEVONPORT.

SERVICES SECURE MARGIN OF FIVE POINTS.

A KEEN BUT SCRAPPY GAME.

Gloucester opened their Devon tour to-day at the Rectory Field, where they opposed the Devonport Services team in the return match.

Early in the season the City triumphed over their opponents by 1 goal 1 try (8 points) to 1 goal (5 points), the winning score being obtained practically on time.

On that occasion the Services had the assistance of their trio of Internationals – Gilbert, Luddington and Gardner – also Lieut. Eyres, who appeared in the International trials. These well-known players were in the selected side again this afternoon, and with the City short of Collett (back) and three good forwards in Smart, Evans and Bayliss, the visitors fully recognised they had a stiff task in hand.

Collett's place was taken by T. Millington, and at centre three-quarter A. M. David, the Oxford University player, was able to accept an invitation to assist.

The vacancies in the pack were filled by efficient substitutes, and on paper the Gloucester team appeared a very useful combination.

The City players made the journey to Plymouth over-night, and during their stay made their headquarters at the Albion Hotel.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : T. Millington.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. A. Brown, A. M. David, S. Stone, and N. Daniell.

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

FORWARDS : F. W. Ayliffe (captain), G. Holford, A. T. Voyce, A. Hall, T. Coulson, H. W. Collier, A. Rea, and J. Merry.

DEVONPORT SERVICES.

BACK : Shpt. Gilbert.

THREE-QUARTERS : Lee, E. R. A. George, Capt. Dobbie, and Sub-Lieut. Rowlands.

HALF-BACKS : Jnr. Husson and S. B. A. Barrington.

FORWARDS : Lieut. Eyres, Pte. Gardner, R. P. O. Luddington, Jackett, Lieut. Spencer, Sub-Lieut. Dale, L. S. Harrop, and Sto. Stebb.

THE GAME.

The weather was fine, but with Argyle and Albion both at home the attendance suffered, and only numbered a few hundred at starting.

The Services kicked off, but there was no return, and at the first scrum Gloucester were penalised. Luddington, however, failed with the shot at goal.

The opening five minutes' play was scrappy, and the only incidents were a couple of fine touch kicks by Dobbie, which confined the City to their half and a free fell to the Services, but it gained little ground.

Gloucester moved ahead with some smart back play, in which David, Voyce, Collins, and Hughes shone. The Services were closely pressed, and the ball driven over the line, but only a minor was given.

From the drop-out Gloucester returned to the attack, some neat handling causing Gilbert to defend. Working well in the loose the City dashed away, and Dobbie getting a kick charged down, matters looking dangerous for the home side. Voyce, picking up, brought off a great dash, and beating Gilbert, scored a good try. Millington missed the goal points.

Restarting, the Services' left wing passed well, but Rowlands fell to a good tackle by Millington. Gloucester cleared with a good forward rush, but for packing four up the visitors were penalised. The attempt at goal failed, however.

Following the drop-out there was a line-out near the centre, and Dale, unmarked, broke clean away to Millington, and then passed to Eyres, who scored near the posts. Luddington's shot for goal hit the upright, and the scores were level.

Hall, following up well, charged down the return to the restart, and the City secured a good attacking position, but Dobbie relieved with a nice kick. Gloucester, however, were doing very well all round, and the Services' defence was again called upon.

David had a drop for goal from a pass by Hughes, but the ball did not rise sufficiently. Gloucester went through and over the line smartly, but they were called back for some infringement. Then Hall, from a line-out, threw to David, who cut through beautifully, but was unfortunately belegged from behind.

The Services changed the venue with a good kick, and centre play ensued. From loose play the Services gathered, and Rowlands put in a fine run and pass, but the ball went astray and Gloucester saved.

Brown gained a few yards with a touch-finder, and Daniell, taking advantage of a wild pass by Dobbie raced away in fine style, and, handing off Gilbert, notched a splendid try. Millington failed to add the goal points.

Immediately after the restart Ayliffe snapped up an opponent's pass and ran down to Gilbert, but Holford failed to take with an open field. Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges, but twice the Services' broke away. Millington effected a splendid clearance. The football was fast and keen to the interval but there was no further scoring.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER 2 tries
DEVONPORT SERVICES 1 try

Gloucester well deserved their three points' lead, and both tries were splendid efforts. Play was keenly contested, but all round the City were a bit the superior. The forwards did extremely well, and Millington at full back shaped with every confidence.

Holford mis-fielding from the restart to the kick-off, the Services gained an advantage. Gloucester, however, quickly recovered, and centre play followed. Here Wilson took the ball nicely in the line-out, and ran 30 yards, but his transfer was spoiled by Gilbert. Opening out from some loose play, Hall, David, Ayliffe, Brown and Collins in turn handled, the latter finally kicking to Gilbert on the line. The City struggled hard to effect a score, and the Services had an anxious time. Millington fielded grandly from a pass-out, and put Gloucester close down again.

Exciting play followed, ending in the Services clearing to the 25. Some loose scrummaging ended favourably for the home team, who dribbled with great effect, but Millington stopped them when looking dangerous. A big effort by the City brought play out to more favourable quarters, but another testing burst caused further anxiety.

A combined dribble enabled the City to relieve, but feet up caused the visitors to be penalised again, and Stebb with a fine shot kicked a goal.

This placed the sides level once more, and the excitement increased. Fumbling by Gilbert on the kick-off gave Gloucester a good position, and the City made desperate attempts to beat down the defence.

Several scrums were hotly contested a few yards from the home line, but nothing resulted. Hughes, with a sharp dash, was once more nearly through, but he succumbed to numbers just outside.

The Services continued to be hotly pressed, but their defence was equal to all occasions, the forwards specially bunching together well in the melees. Twice in succession the home line escaped miraculously, but still the contest continued with unabated vigour.

Gradually the Services worked out of danger, and the tension was relieved. Daniell received and punted high in front of goal, but a home player marked, and a dangerous situation was saved.

There was a brief delay for an injury to Dale, and on resuming some loose passing by Gloucester allowed Dobbie to punt up and burst through, but he was tackled in time. Gloucester replied with an open movement, but it broke down at David, and the Services benefitted. Gloucester failed again badly in passing twice in quick succession.

The Services, taking full advantage, attacked hotly. They City had themselves to thank for the position they were in, and the game was thrown away when Stebb scored and Barrington converted.

Gloucester attacked at the end, but failed to score, and, unluckily, lost.

RESULT :

SERVICES 2 goals (1p), 1 try (11 pts.)
GLOUCESTER 2 tries (6 pts.)

REMARKS.

Gloucester experienced hard lines at being beaten, for they had a good deal the better of the exchanges and had the Services penned up quite twenty minutes in the second half. Their mistakes allowed the Services to break away and attack, and winning points quickly came.

Millington played a capital game at full-back, but the City outsiders did not make the best use of their chances, movements breaking down badly at the critical moments. The forwards did well in a gruelling game, Hall doing great work, and Voyce, Merry, Collier and Coulson were also distinguished. It was a very keen game all through, but at times play was very scrappy.

GLOUCESTER A v. WHITECROFT.

Gloucester A were at home to Whitecroft on Saturday at Kingsholm. The attendance was small.

Teams : –

Gloucester A. – A. Manns; R. N. Loveridge, F. Meadows, F. Wadley, and J. W. Gibbs; W. Clements and J. Rea; S. Smart (captain), M. Evans, T. Taylor, C. Rose, J. Webb, W. Taylor, T. Bridges, and S. Bayliss.

Whitecroft. – R. Wildin; R. Gunter, H. Trotter, G. Harris, and S. Wildin; L. Morse and A. T. James; W. Charles, L. B. James, F. Fletcher, P. C. Morris, C. Walker (capt.), H. Berry, M. Morgan, and W. Stratford.

Referee : Mr. J. T. Curtis.

Whitecroft kicked off, and a knock-on let them into the home quarter where a keen struggle ensued. With a fine burst the City forwards cleared and ran well down towards the visitors' line. They were, however, checked, and the ball was kicked down to Loveridge, who ran round nicely and sent to touch.

Gloucester were twice penalised and lost ground as a result of splendid kicking by Wildin. Gibbs showed up in a short dash, and there was a smart bit of passing which ended with a cross-kick by Loveridge.

An excellent touch-finder by Manns from a penalty gave Gloucester a chance to attack, but play was scrambling. Bridges touched down after a forward dribble, but he was recalled. From the drop-out the Foresters came away with a rush to the home line, but they could not pierce the defence. Harris marked for Whitecroft, and again his team were in a good attacking position. Fred Meadows picked up in the loose and broke away nicely. When faced with Wildin he passed to Smart, who was tackled from behind and passed forward when there was a fine scoring chance.

Play fluctuated very quickly, and the visitors took another turn at attacking, but Loveridge put in some good defensive work. Gloucester continued on the defensive for some time, Wildin aiding his side with some fine kicking.

At length the Reserves worked down to the Whitecroft 25, but their attack lacked sting. Then the Gloucester halves got the ball away and Meadows threw wide to Loveridge, who calmly manœuvred for position and dropped a goal. This was a very fine score, and one which Loveridge richly deserved on the run of his play.

Smart was shining in dashing play, and twice put in spectacular runs which, however, did not materialise.

Gloucester's second score came after a forward rush down the wing initiated by Bayliss and carried on by Rose, who touched down in a position from which Loveridge failed to majorise.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A	1 goal (d) 1 try
Whitecroft	Nil

Just after Smart had re-started a heavy hail-storm came on and the referee and players made a dash for shelter. The storm was of short duration, and a start was again made, but rain then fell heavily. The game was continued on a very slippery ground. Evans collided with an opponent and received a nasty cut near his eye and had to go off.

Gloucester then pressed to the Foresters' quarter and Meadows tried to cut through but was pulled up. Whitecroft continued to put up a strenuous defence, which gave way to a keen attack on their part, and the home line was in considerable danger. An infringement by the Reserves gave Wildin a chance at goal, but he did not kick so well and Whitecroft lost ground. Clements made a mark, but did not gain any ground, and the game was again contested at midfield. Hereabouts play became tame, mistakes being frequent, but eventually Whitecroft forced their way to the Gloucester quarter, where the ball was kicked over the line and Gunter fell on it and opened his side's account. The kick was too difficult for Wildin.

This reverse spurred Gloucester to another attack which was keenly pressed, but Wildin saved under great difficulties and prevented an almost certain score. Again the City made for the visitors' line, but still the defence held and Whitecroft cleared. At length the Gloucester backs showed a bit of real form. They got away from a long line-out, and after a fine run by Meadows, Gibbs, to whom he passed, raced over and grounded the ball behind the posts. Loveridge missed the extra points.

On the re-start, the City again tested the defence of the visitors, but by good touch-kicking Whitecroft worked down. Their attack lacked strength, and they were soon defending again. Wildin was grassed and the Seconds had a chance, but the greasy ball made accurate handling difficult. Before the end Whitecroft turned the tables and forced a minor.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 1 goal (d), 2 tries (10 pts.)
Whitecroft 1 try (3 pts.)

REMARKS.

For a second class match the game was quite interesting, although there was a good deal of scrambling play at times. The visitors had a fair share of the game, playing bustling football, but they did not combine well behind the scrum and failed to take advantage of the chances which came their way.

Gloucester A were handicapped by having to play a substitute scrum half, but Clements did quite as well as could be expected. Rea played a useful game, and the three-quarters did well. The home forwards controlled the scrums, but found the visiting pack dangerous in the loose. Wilding was the outstanding man in the Forest team.

Next week : Gloucester Boys v. Bath Boys, at Kingsholm.