

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1935

GLOUCESTER'S SURPRISE TRIUMPH AT CARDIFF

FROM "W.B.'s" NOTEBOOK

THIRD VICTORY IN LAST FOUR GAMES IN WALES

HOW THE CARDIFF FORWARDS WERE MASTERED

BOUGHTON'S DAY : GREAT PENALTY GOAL
AND WONDERFUL TACKLE

GLOUCESTER added to their victories in Wales when for the second season in succession they defeated Cardiff at the Arms Park. Of the last four games played in the Principality the City have now won three and lost one – to Llanelly by 9 points (three penalty goals) to nil. Here are the individual results : –

1934-5

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|------------------|---------------|
| Beat Newport | 8 points to 3 |
| Beat Cardiff | 9 points to 6 |
| Lost to Llanelly | 9 points to 0 |

1935-6

| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Beat Cardiff | 3 points to 0 |
|--------------|---------------|

And there was that memorable success over Swansea at St. Helen's in season 1933-4 – the first in the Club's history. The "Black Bridge" has no terrors for the Gloucester team now; the "bogey" has been successfully laid.

Saturday's victory was another triumph for the Gloucester forwards, who excelled in the scrums, rattled the Welshmen in the loose, and generally displayed all-round superiority.

The team work was remarkable, all the more so because there was no appointed leader of the pack in the absence of Hordern. What the City accomplished against Bristol and Northampton was repeated at Cardiff, and the Welshmen, on the run of play, were fortunate in escaping with only a three points' defeat.

VICTORY DESERVED

At the request of the Welshmen two "forties" were played; how gloriously the City forwards stood the test was testified by their strong finish. They were indebted a good deal to the splendidly-judged kicking of Boughton, Brooks, Meadows and James. These players used the touch line to advantage, especially in the concluding stages.

Gloucester won this game deservedly, although the only score of the match was Boughton's penalty goal. And what a goal! The International had lost marks in the two previous matches by his failures in goal kicking, but he made no mistake on Saturday – a great kick from near touch outside the 25 line.

BOUGHTON'S GREAT TACKLE

Boughton was up to International form in this game, and again distinguished himself with one of the finest tackles possible in open field.

Arthur Bassett is recognised as the best Welsh International wing – very fast, and a difficult man to upset. He was sent clear from a pass by Reardon with only Boughton to beat, and the Cardiff crowd cheered as Bassett raced for the line.

Someone shouted "It's a try," but the remark was premature. Boughton stood firm as a rock, timed his tackle to the split second, and the Welshman was brought down hard and low.

Bassett got up limping, and he will probably remember Boughton's "fond embrace" for some time.

The Gloucester player did many other good things on Saturday, and on this form England will probably need his services for a second term. But there is a searching time ahead in county matches and trials. Boughton's defence has distinctly improved, and one big factor in his favour is that he remains so cool in the most critical situations. His work in this respect in last year's Internationals has not been forgotten.

CITY FORWARDS' SUPREMACY

Coming back to the forwards, the big surprise for Cardiff was the supremacy Gloucester asserted in the scrums. There were occasions, of course, when the ball was controlled by the Welshmen, but for the most part it was a "day out" for Carpenter and his colleagues. The old International beat Regan continually for possession, and the ball came back readily to Fifield.

But it was not only in scrummaging and heeling the City excelled. In the loose and lines out the work was equally meritorious; the men bunched together splendidly in massed footwork, the backing up was excellent, and the tackling deadly in the extreme. Cardiff battled with grim determination against a relentless opposition, but their success was only partial. Honours on the day – most decidedly went to the Gloucester front.

IVOR WILLIAMS IMPRESSES WELSH SELECTOR

The whole City eight shared in the triumph, but there were one or two outstanding players. Ivor Williams, on familiar ground, had a particularly good match as wing forward, and his display impressed one of the Welsh selectors who attended. Williams had a mission in looking after Harry Bowcott, and he carried out his duties to such purpose that the old International was rarely able to get his three-quarters moving properly. Williams' quickness in breaking away from the scrum continually hampered the opposition, and caused frequent blunders in handling.

Wales are not overburdened with effective wing forwards, and there should be more than a possible chance of the Gloucester player figuring in this year's trials at least.

COUNTY POSSIBLES

Welshman and Ken Smith (deputising for Franklin) were the other back row forwards, and both enjoyed a large measure of success. A'Bear and Morris put in a tremendous amount of hard work – the more strenuous the exchanges the better they seem to play.

A'Bear was very noticeable with strong bursts and dashing footwork, and his display, on the whole, was the best he has given since his introduction in the senior ranks.

A repeat performance this afternoon against Llanelly should have brought him amongst the "possibles" for Gloucestershire against Devon next week. And the same may be said of Morris. Both players are suited to the conditions of county championship football.

CARPENTER THE WONDER PLAYER !

Carpenter is the wonder player of the Gloucester front; that the veteran successfully stood the test of 80 minutes' fast and vigorous football last week was a fitting tribute to his remarkable stamina and fitness. And as a hooker, Carpenter still remains supreme.

Harris and Price, his colleagues in the front row, are fitting in well – gaining in experience, and fighters to the end. Both are county players in the making, for they possess plenty of dash, and are very useful all round.

The City forwards may not sparkle in the open with brilliant hand-to-hand passing movements, like Blackheath, the Harlequins, and the University teams, but they are an opposition to be feared by any club pack in the country on present form.

FINISHED BACK PLAY LACKING

The combined back play on either side did not reach the standard of first-class clubs, and the absence of try-getting emphasised the lack of scoring ability. Of individual efforts there were many, and Gloucester figured prominently in these.

Fifield and Meadows, better served by their forwards, were the more effective pair at half-back, and some of the openings made should have yielded profitable results. But the handling was none too certain, although I thought Mr. Freethy, the referee, erred on two occasions when he pulled up Meadows for forward transfers.

Fifield was very active, and generally gave out a good service, and Meadows contributed several pretty runs, and kicked with admirable judgment.

HOOK'S HARD LUCK

The Gloucester three-quarter line was strengthened appreciably by the inclusion of Pugsley (who figured at centre three-quarter in place of Francis Edwards) and Hook.

Pugsley showed up strongly in defence, and Hook, with the slightest bit of luck, might have had a couple of tries. Once he followed up a long kick at a fast pace. The ball was bouncing nicely for Hook, with an open goal line, but Stone robbed him at the critical moment – a marvellous save for Cardiff.

Hook displayed plenty of keenness, and his showing fully entitled him to a further trial at right wing.

Brooks and James utilised their skill and experience to the full, especially when Cardiff threatened danger. The captain was quick to cover up gaps in the defence, and his clearance kicks were of inestimable value. James tricked opponents cleverly on several occasions, and all through played smart, resourceful football.

CARDIFF DISAPPOINT

Cardiff disappointed their followers, and on Saturday's performance the team stand a poor chance of defeating the New Zealanders. The forwards were weak in the scrums, and poor heeling handicapped the Brothers Bowcott at half-back. The elder Bowcott showed cleverness at times, but he has slowed down in pace.

The ex-secondary schoolboy International, Edwards, tried at centre, gave promise of developing into a useful player, but he has something to learn. Cardiff had two speedy wings in Bassett and Jones, but they were served poorly, and Gloucester's defence gave nothing away. Stone, usually a menace to the City team, was not so reliable as Boughton, although he did one or two remarkable things.

UNITED'S LACK OF COMBINATION

"R.C." writes : Last week I wrote about the United's lack of combination and weak team-work behind the scrum, particularly at the centre. After watching them play Cardiff Athletic I am convinced more than ever that that is where the trouble lies. Everything I pointed out last week was borne out again, in marked degree, for it seemed to me that despite the internationals among the visitors' team the United could at least have drawn had there been some attempt at good combined passing among the threequarters.

The team as it is playing now sadly lacks attacking power. The only way they ever appear likely to score is through the forwards rushing the ball over the line in the loose.

SIX-POINTS MARGIN

The result of the game was in accord with expectations, and the United did well to hold such a strong side to a six points margin. The fact remains, however, that far too much work is being put on the forwards, particularly in attack.

What happens nine times out of ten when the ball is heeled in the visitors' 25? Voyce gives a good service and the movement breaks down, either because the centres will not send the ball on, and are brought down in possession, or they give passes which could not possibly be taken. Then the forwards have to get back, cover up the mistake and endeavour to carry on the attack.

Cook and L. Morris, who both showed good form, had to make their own opportunities. The former, I think, with more experience will go far, and Morris whose bugbear last season was injuries, also showed a nice turn of speed.

Birch will probably be a problem for the Selection Committee. From a kicking point of view he is worth a place in the side, but judging by the displays he has given so far he has little power in attack and his handling leaves a lot to be desired.

INTERNATIONALS DRAW THE CROWD

There was a good crowd at the match, more than usual for a United fixture, and I expect that J. Bassett, at full-back, and M. J. Turnbull, at scrum half for Cardiff Athletic accounted in part for drawing the increased "gate."

Both were in good form, but Turnbull did not seem to bother much when the ball came out on the Gloucester side of the scrum. This was in direct contrast to Voyce who is always doing something useful, and who checked many movements right at the root by marking Turnbull cleverly and effectively. Turnbull's service, however, was a joy to watch, for he got the ball out at all angles and always found his man.

WELSH THREES NOT UP TO FORM

While the Cardiff threequarter line showed better combination than the United, they lacked the thrust and dash which I expected would account for a fairly useful score against Gloucester.

The first try came from a good constructive movement. The other two were opportunist affairs, and it hits hard to think that these gave them the victory after the United had stood up so well, to what on paper was a much stronger combination.

Most of the credit to the United for running the visitors as close as six points was due to the forwards who were splendid in both attack and defence, and a good word must be said for the defence of the three-quarters and the full-back. Everyone tackled accurately and well, but let us have more constructive attacking !

A COINCIDENCE

Coincident with the publication of my reply to Mr. P. D. Evans (Richmond) in Rugby Briefs last week regarding L. C. Watkins, was an inquiry from the player to his brother if there was a chance of his getting a game with Gloucester this season. The City Club were placed in possession of the request, and Watkins was selected at right-wing against Llanelly to-day. But there appears to have been some misunderstanding. It is now stated Watkins, who is attached to the Southampton Police Force, is having a try-out next week, and if his knee, injured when assisting Gloucester against the Harlequins at Twickenham last March, stands the strain, he will make application for leave to play.

The Gloucestershire team to meet Devon next week will be selected this evening, and I hope to be able to publish the names of the chosen players in the late Football Final. Gloucestershire's last visit to Torquay was in a replay in 1928-29, when Devon won by 11 points to nil. The previous meeting was in 1923-24, when Gloucestershire proved successful by 12 points to 8.

GLOUCESTER'S VISIT TO CHELTENHAM

Gloucester pay their annual visit to Cheltenham next week, and despite weakened ranks owing to the County match, the City should field a useful side.

The Town Club is fighting hard to keep going, and the officials are looking forward to welcoming a large contingent of Gloucester Rugby followers to help the "gate."

Last season Cheltenham lost at home by 5 points to 3, after being definitely on top for three-quarters of the game.

Next week's meeting promises an equally close struggle, especially forward, where Cheltenham have been doing extremely well this season.

JC