

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1936

GLOUCESTER'S TRIUMPHS OVER WELSH CLUBS

THREE WINS AND A DRAW IN SIX ENGAGEMENTS

NEWPORT'S DEFEAT AT KINGSHOLM

BROOKS' FINE DISPLAY

FROM "W.B.'S" NOTEBOOK

In club football, Gloucester were again in the limelight with a notable victory over Newport – the third triumph over a leading Welsh team. In the six engagements with Cardiff, Llanelly, and Newport this season, the City can claim three wins (two on Welsh grounds) and a draw, as against two defeats – an achievement which recalls the best performances in the history of the Club. With a reduced fixture list, Gloucester cannot hope to equal the record of the Diamond Jubilee year (1933-34), when 29 victories were recorded as against eight defeats, and two drawn games, with aggregate points reaching 556 for and only 205 against.

But on present form, and with the players keeping free from injury, the City should show figures of which the captain (John Brooks) and his colleagues should be justly proud. The team is set a heavy programme for the remainder of the season, and eight engagements have been crowded into next month. Stroud has been offered an evening match, on Monday, April 27. It was originally intended for the Gloucester captain to take a side to Fromehall, but I understand it will be an official fixture with Gloucester, and will be included in the record with the two matches with Bristol. The season, will, therefore, end on May 2, and will fill up the blanks caused by cancelations in December and January. Whether interest will be fully maintained to the extended date remains to be seen; the club officials have done their part in providing the fixtures.

GLOUCESTER'S FINE DISPLAY.

R. C. writes :

It would be hard to find fault with Gloucester's display against Newport, for there is no doubt that in beating another of the strongest Welsh clubs the City played one of the finest games of the season. There were mistakes, of course, as there are in every match, but I think most of them were excusable. It was a delightful game to watch, with an attack which worked like a machine pounding away at a defence which stood like a wall. The machine, however, found several chinks in the wall, which is all honour to the Gloucester attack, and no discredit to the Newport defence.

IDEAL COMBINATION

While Newport made a couple of changes in the centre from their published team, it by no means weakened them on paper, and that cannot detract from the brilliance of Gloucester's victory. It was an ideal combination. Every man played his part and there was no weak link. As I have already said, there were mistakes, as for instance when Hook failed to gather the ball after Brooks had punted ahead. The bounce seemed quite easy, and had Hook got the ball a try was certain. He also had a tendency to stand in front of his partner. Edwards, too, was so keen on drawing his man that he held on too long before passing. However, the generally fine team work of the home side far outweighed any small faults.

CARPENTER'S HOOKING

Carpenter has made a great reputation for himself as hooker, and the way he got the ball in the tight scrums against Newport looked as easy as falling down. He secured possession from about three out of four scrums. He is a good hooker, but he was backed up by a pack who were shoving their weight, and the best hooker in the world cannot get the ball without that.

This was, of course, the root of all Newport's troubles – the fact that they were seldom able to heel the ball and set their backs in motion. Even if their forwards got the ball, the attentions of Ivor Williams were generally too much for the wiles of Dunn, who might have been dangerous if not closely watched.

FORWARDS ALL GOOD

When it comes to singling out players in the Gloucester pack who were outstanding, I am in a quandary. I might as well write the names of all the forwards and have done with it. One or two incidents I cannot forget, however. Williams' brilliant try comes to mind; his speed had the Newport defence completely guessing.

Then there was the fine work in the loose of A'Bear, Morris, Ken Smith and Price, who when they got moving were hard to stop. I can also remember Hordern's admirable work on the few occasions when Gloucester were defending. The way he covered Boughton, and his kicking, however amusing it may be to watch, shows that he plays with his head as well as his feet. Harris I saw occasionally, always in the thick of it.

CENTRES SHINING STARS

Of the backs, the centres were shining stars. Brooks played an inspired game, a real captain's part. Time and again he cut through and made some clever openings. Edwards, despite the fault I have already mentioned, and although he was overshadowed by his captain, was a constant danger to the Newport men, and was primarily responsible for Brooks' tries.

The wing men were too well marked to show up a great deal, and although Hook tried his luck in the centre once or twice, he found the same deadly tackling awaiting him there. Day and Meadows, with an excellent service from the forwards, had a good match, although we did not see much of Don's elusiveness as usual.

Last, but by no means least, is Boughton's well-judged touch-kicking, and his two goals were beauties. The first attempt, from an easy position, appeared to me to go under the bar, but I am told by people who were immediately behind the goal that the ball was touched by a Newport player.

JC