

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1937

GLOUCESTER 0 ; UNITED SERVICES 12

SURPRISE DEFEAT FOR CITY TEAM

SERVICES' WELL-DESERVED VICTORY

FEEBLE GLOUCESTER BACKS

SPECIAL BY "W.B."

Gloucester's splendid run of successes was surprisingly checked at Kingsholm to-day by the United Services (Portsmouth), who the previous week had lost to the Old Paulines.

This was the City's fifth home defeat, the last being against Newport in December, when the team was sadly disorganised.

Gloucester fielded full strength with the exception of Edwards, who had a cold. Ivor Jones was included in the third line at right wing, Bown playing centre.

The Services were one short, Lieut. Brady failing to appear, and Roy James deputised.

Perfect weather conditions prevailed, and the attendance . . .

[Herein c.22 column lines missing (includes teams) having been removed from original vers.]

Referee: Mr. Hodges (Bridgwater).

THE GAME

From the Services' kick-off Harris made his mark, and Stevens misjudging the bounce of the ball, it rolled behind him towards the line. A visitor, however, got back and punted to touch near the 25 line. Gloucester at once got on the attack, but a long pass out to the wing was secured by Whitworth, who dashed upfield. A pass inside was well taken, but the subsequent transfer was knocked on, and the movement stopped at midfield.

The City heeled from successive scrums, and once Phillips dashed through cleverly, but was finally collared, and his pass was not accepted. Fast football followed in the Services' half, but no opening accrued, the visitors defending well. Parker had a long shot from a penalty, but sent very wide, and a touchdown was conceded.

SERVICES' LEAD

On the drop out Gloucester assumed the aggressive with strong forward work, and the Services were hard pressed, but nothing tangible resulted. From a kick out by Elliott, Jones fielded, but James brought off a good tackle, and the ball went to touch. Subsequent play was scrappy, with little constructive work, but once A'Bear, from a line out, made a determined effort to force his way to the line, but was held up. The Services cleared with useful footwork to near the centre, where mistakes by the City lost ground.

Later, in some loose play, the visitors gathered, and DARLING being served, he ran hard and scored near the posts. There was some doubt as to the goal kick, but the referee, after consulting with both linesmen, awarded full points.

On the resumption, Gloucester tried hard to open out, but the City backs were unable to do anything, and ground was invariably lost. The visitors were exceptionally keen on the ball, and were quick in taking advantage of the home team's mistakes.

A long punt by Parker from a penalty eventually put Gloucester on the attack, and from passing Bown brought off a lovely run, beating the opposition cleverly. He reached the full-back, but an overhead pass to the wing went astray and a good opening was lost.

Gloucester were getting the ball from the scrum, but the close marking of the visitors prevented headway being made by the outsides. Hook and Phillips in turn were pulled down before being able to gain many yards, and Meadows was similarly dealt with.

GLOUCESTER BELOW FORM

Later the City captain changed his tactics, short punting instead of passing, but success did not come. The Services continued to play very lively football, and when threatened players were always in position to do something.

Gloucester, however, were playing a lot below form, especially behind the scrum. Parker shone with a magnificent field and reply kick half the length of the ground, but immediately Nott snapped up a pass from Meadows and broke through to Parker. A bad pass to James was missed, and Gloucester escaped rather luckily.

Talbot, the Services' scrum-half, was injured and went off, Hammond doing duty in his place. Gloucester had rather the better of the exchanges, but never looked like scoring.

Half-time :

Services 1 goal

Gloucester Nil

Gloucester had been a disappointing side, and although having most of the play, deserved to be in arrears. On the restart the City went direct to the attack, thanks to a fine touch-finder by Parker. Then Meadows dodged his way past the defence smartly, and there was a possible opening, but a high pass to the wing was lost by Jones. The City had the better of the scrums, and Day was well served with the ball, but when it got out to the backs mistakes were frequent.

CITY'S POOR WORK

Bown, with a good touch-finder, gave his side a nice position on the 25, but Elliott immediately transferred play to beyond the centre with splendid kicks. The football continued disappointing from a Gloucester standpoint, there being little combination behind the scrum.

By standing close up to the scrum, the Services backs kept the home threes completely under subjection, and attempts at passing were frequently upset. Playing with great confidence, the Services were very aggressive just now, and the Gloucester line was hotly besieged.

SERVICES NINE POINTS UP

The visiting forwards smashed their way through, and a forward was only held just in time.

From a scrum five yards out, Meadows punted to STEVENS, some 30 yards out, and the full-back, taking the ball nicely, dropped a fine goal, amidst loud applause.

This gave the Services a strong lead, and encouraged by this further success they played up with increased confidence. They opened out from the restart, and Gloucester had difficulty in warding off danger,

This was followed with a brilliant bit of combination, ending in James dashing down touch and giving an inside pass. He was served again and was well away, but the whistle had gone for a forward transfer.

GLOUCESTER OUT OF IT

The Services were showing all the better work outside, and from more mistakes by the City backs the visitors were away again. It looked all over for a try, but Gloucester just managed to save.

All the play continued to favour the Services. Parker alone on the Gloucester side displayed anything like his real form. The City were still winning the scrums, but the outsides could seldom do anything right, and errors in handling were quickly turned to advantage by the visitors.

Brilliant work by Elliott provided another opening, and WHITWORTH accepting a neat pass dashed over with a corner try. Elliott missed the goal kick.

After this score Gloucester had a period of severe pressure, and their line had further escapes. By loose forward rushes and useful kicks the City improved, but they were kept well out of the danger zone. The Services indulged in some clever handling which tested the defence, but it held out.

The Gloucester forwards took charge of matters, but although going close failed to score. Before the end the Services cleared, and retired from the game well deserved winners.

RESULT :

SERVICES ... 2 goals (1d.) 1 try (12 pts.)
GLOUCESTER Nil

REMARKS

Gloucester struck a bad patch this afternoon and gave one of the feeblest displays of the season. The Services, a very lively and fast set, were worthy winners in a game in which all the finished football came from the visitors. Gloucester had the ball from the majority of the scrums, but this proved a disadvantage, for the continual mistakes and lack of judgment by the backs played into the hands of the opposition, who were quick to benefit.

Parker alone of the Gloucester outsides played up to reputation, and the forwards, if good in the scrums, were slow in the open compared with their rivals, and the tackling at times left a lot to be desired.

It was a very disappointing performance all round from a Gloucester point of view. The spectators, however, showed full appreciation of the fine work of the Services, especially in the second half, when they exhibited several bits of brilliant combination.

Elliott was a clever schemer at fly-half for the winners, and the three-quarters were the speedier line and deadly tacklers. Stevens, at full-back, too, was excellent, and his dropped goal was a splendid effort. All the Services' forwards displayed dash and determination, with Hammond, Darling and Lyddon a dangerous trio in the loose and open.

Gloucester would probably like to forget this match. Certainly few players came out of the game with any distinction.

Next week: Gloucester v. Cardiff, away; Gloucester United v. Cardiff Athletic, at Kingsholm.

JC