

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1925

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S FOURTH WIN

COVENTRY BEATEN POINTLESS IN BAD WEATHER CONDITIONS

SHORT TIME PLAYED

Gloucester won both fixtures with Coventry last season, but in neither game had the City much in hand, and to-day's meeting at Kingsholm promised another keen and close struggle.

The Midlanders had selected a strong fifteen including J. Morton and H. J. Pemberton (both of whom have appeared in English trials), J. M. Wale (the clever R.A.F. wing), Tom Coulson (the old Gloucester forward), and their Welsh contingent – Ossie Hicks (ex-Cross Keys), A. H. Evans (ex-Pontypool), and R. V. Howell (ex-Llanelly).

The Gloucester team was not made up until practically the time of the kick off. Brown, Ayliffe, and Doctor Taylor had all cried off owing to injuries, and it was understood Williams and Abbey, of the A team had been kept back to fill the vacancies, but neither turned up. Eventually Taylor was prevailed upon to turn out; Crowther came in in place of Brown, and Triggs-Herbert deputised for Ayliffe.

Unfortunately the weather turned out a regular soaker. Rain fell incessantly all the morning and was pouring down at the time fixed for the start.

The conditions absolutely spoiled the gate, and the spectators who braved the elements were crowded in the covered accommodation.

GLOUCESTER

BACK : T. Millington.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. R. Crowther, G. Thomas, E. H. Hughes, and R. N. Loveridge.

HALF-BACKS : Dr. Taylor and R. Milliner.

FORWARDS : T. Voyce (capt.), E. Triggs-Herbert, F. Ford, M. Short, S. Duberley, J. Reed, J. Hemmings, and H. Roberts.

COVENTRY

BACK : J. Morton.

THREE-QUARTERS : J. M. Wale, J. W. Kingston, H. J. Pemberton (capt.), and H. Lee.

HALF-BACKS : O. Hicks and W. E. Hole.

FORWARDS : A. H. Evans, T. Coulson, J. Grubb, T. Meakin, R. V. Howell, N. Pugh, F. West, and A. Wyman.

Referee : H. J. Trafford.

THE GAME

Crowther had not arrived at the time of the kick-off, and Gloucester started one short. Voyce kicked off for the City, but early on the visiting forwards broke away with a loose rush which was not checked until Millington was reached. A big punt by Voyce was well followed up, and Morton being collared he essayed a pass. Gloucester tackled well, and the home team got on the attack. Picking up Taylor made a sharp dash and gave an inside pass but it was not taken. Gloucester were beaten back with a loose dribble and even play followed. Another good kick by Voyce was returned into the open by Morton to Thomas, who took a drop for goal which only just failed, a minor resulting.

The heavy rain had made the ground and ball very greasy and players soon found it very difficult to handle. The Gloucester forwards heeled, and Milliner opened out nicely but Pemberton intercepted though he knocked on in the proceeding.

Working well together, Gloucester gained the advantage, and Ford, after a clever feint, went close. Carrying a scrum the home forwards dribbled over the line, but just lost the touch. Crowther was still absent, Ford playing at three-quarter.

Play favoured Gloucester on the drop out, but long kicking took the visitors past the centre. Another high punt went to Ford, who misfielded, and Gloucester were in a dangerous position. Millington cleverly relieved, and a minute later again came to the rescue of his side with a flying kick. The ball turned towards the home goal line where Loveridge executed a smart clearance. Crowther now came on the scene amidst cheering.

Subsequent play favoured Coventry, who made one or two sharp attacks. From a cross-kick Wale looked to have a possible chance, but a knock-on ensued. A minute later Wale was put in possession by Kingston, but Millington effected a grand tackle. Coventry lost their position in an attempt to open out, the ball being misfielded, and Gloucester kicking out to beyond midfield.

The contest forward was waged strenuously, with Coventry having slightly the best of matters. The City, however, eventually gained the upper hand, but a wild pass from the scrum by Milliner lost ground, and Hughes in running back to save was upset. The ball was taken to Millington, who gathered, but was immediately collared. He managed to pass to Loveridge, who raced round behind the goal and punted out, Gloucester relieving luckily.

A kick through and follow up gained Gloucester some 30 yards, but a clever touch-finder quickly recovered the ground for Coventry. The visitors had the better of subsequent exchanges, but there was no score at the interval.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER Nil
COVENTRY Nil

Only 30 minutes each way were played. The first half had not produced anything startling in the way of converted movements, but on the whole Coventry had had the better of the game.

Coventry restarted, but play settled in the visitors' half for a time until some good kicking brought relief. A penalty to Gloucester sent play back, and the home forwards, working well together, tested the Coventry defence. Hughes, with a spirited dash, made a big effort to cross, but was held up.

An off-side tackle gave the City a penalty in a good position, but Millington's shot went wide of the upright. From the drop-out Gloucester assumed the aggressive, the forwards working with determination. Gloucester worked to within a dozen yards of the line, where Morton picked up. Being pressed, he passed, but the ball was captured by HUGHES, who had an unopposed run in behind the posts. Millington added the goal points.

Gloucester showed up well on the resumption, and off-side by the Coventry forwards was again penalised. Voyce put in a cross-kick, Crowther just failing to get up to gather. Coventry were pressed severely in the left corner, and following a charged-down kick the ball rebounded over the line for CROWTHER to score a try. The kick at goal by Millington failed.

On the re-start, Hughes cut through and opened out for Loveridge, but the wing man fell to a good tackle by Lee. Coventry replied with a brilliant dribble nearly half the length of the field, only to see Millington bring off a marvellous gather of the ball and punt. Millington next fed Taylor nicely, and the doctor beat his opponent and sent to Thomas, but Crowther missed the next pass.

Exciting play ensued in the next few minutes. Pemberton brought off a splendid solo run for the visitors, beating the defence and getting clear to Millington. He then unfortunately slipped, and letting the ball go Gloucester kicked well away.

Morton had to run back to gather, but he did this successfully and ran round, passing to Wale. The latter was quickly upset, and Gloucester broke away. There was a faulty kick straight to touch close in by Lee, and from the line-out REED secured, and with Hemmings burst over the line with a try, which Millington converted. Thus Gloucester led by 13 points.

The City were playing well together now, and Morton fumbling gave the City a good attacking position. Crowther executed a capital run after fielding a kick, but succumbed to a couple of opponents when looking dangerous.

A splendid effort by Voyce – a strong run and a high punt – placed Gloucester in the ascendancy again, and the Coventry defence was subjected to severe pressure. It held out, however, Pemberton being very smart all round. Inside the Coventry half some unpleasantness occurred on the old grand stand side, and there was a stoppage while a Gloucester player was attended to.

Play to the end was keenly contested, but nothing further was scored, though just at the end Wale made a good attempt from a penalty by Coventry.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 2 goals 1 try (13 pts.)
COVENTRY Nil

REMARKS

Gloucester's substantial win was not expected, especially after the way in which the game had gone in the first half. But Coventry could not "stay the course," and though the Midlanders made periodical bursts, they were not the dangerous set in attack as characterised their efforts in the earlier stages.

Considering the adverse conditions it was by no means a bad display; it was certainly keen enough, especially among the forwards, who battled strenuously all through.

The home pack were seen at their best in the second half, their loose rushes often presaging danger. But Coventry had some clever performers in the rear. Pemberton especially distinguished himself, and more than once turned defence into attack.

Despite the handicap of a wet and greasy ball and slippery surface, both teams made praiseworthy attempts to make the game open, and though it was as often as not the movements broke down owing to inability to handle accurately, there were some bright interludes.

Coventry, on the whole, were more effective than the home set, and they did some particularly good work in the first half. Gloucester suffered owing to Doctor Taylor being on the crooked list. He did not intend to play, and was fetched out of the grandstand at the last moment to help the City team out of a difficulty. There was something wrong somewhere for the City Club to be placed in the position they were, and for the first quarter of an hour they had to play a man short. No doubt some explanation will be forthcoming as to the failure of the Second teamer to turn up.

Gloucester could congratulate themselves on coming through the contest with so much credit. On such a day criticism would be unfair, and one prefers to overlook deficiency in any department. The forwards had to work desperately to hold their own, for they were up against an opposition well equipped in every way. The City captain was again a tower of strength to the side, and Ford, Reed, Short and Hemmings also came under notice for excellent work. And Roberts, Triggs-Herbert and Duberley bore their part well in the close exchanges.

At scrum half Milliner sent out a few passes that were none too well directed, but he bore the "shock tactics" of the visitors splendidly, and put in a lot of sound work. Taylor was not able to do himself justice, and every serious effort he made appeared to give him pain. It is hoped his turning out to-day will not emphasise his injury and keep him out of the field for a longer period.

At three-quarter Hughes and Loveridge were the strongest wing, the centre thoroughly enjoying himself in several mix-ups. Millington had some difficult situations to get out of this afternoon, but his cleverness and skill never failed him, and he was the saviour for Gloucester on more than one occasion.

Coventry shaped like a workmanlike team, and will give many of the strongest sides a shaking up. Pemberton is still a force to be reckoned with, and Hicks and Hole have a good understanding at half-back. Morton appeared on the slow side now and again, but he was generally safe in fielding and catching. A lapse on his part gave Gloucester their first try, but this was his only serious mistake.

The forwards were a well-balanced pack, of whom Williams, Coulson, Grubb and Howell were particularly prominent. Some of the visitors' dribbling was cleverly executed, but there were one or two players who had a tendency to infringe the off-side rule, and several penalties were given away.

Next week : Moseley, at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A BEAT DRYBROOK

Gloucester A beat Drybrook by a margin of 14 points in the City Seconds' first match of the season at Drybrook to-day.

Result :

Gloucester A	17 pts.
Drybrook	3 pts.