

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1925

FOOTBALL

DING-DONG STRUGGLE AT BRISTOL

GLOUCESTER PUT UP A GREAT FIGHT

BEATEN BY A SMALL MARGIN

In a full programme of Rugby Union matches set for decision to-day, one of the most important, especially in the West of England, was the first of the two annual fixtures between Gloucester and Bristol at the Memorial Ground, Filton. For a number of years Gloucester, with an occasional lapse, have had an uninterrupted run of successes, and the City enjoyed the distinction of being one of the few opponents of Bristol who had not met with defeat on the new ground. More than once Gloucester's chances, on paper, were anything but bright, but the team generally managed to rise to the occasion to the delight of their followers and the discomfiture of their old and keen rivals.

In the match at Kingsholm last season Bristol broke a long sequence of reverses, winning by 12 points to 10, but Gloucester got even in the return game, which went in the City's favour by 5 points to nil.

How would to-day's contest go? With both clubs keen and determined, another tremendous struggle for winning points was certain, with the result an open one. Except at three-quarter, where Bristol were regarded as holding an advantage in combination and scoring ability, the sides were well matched, and rival supporters were not prepared to give odds either way.

Gloucester were naturally encouraged by past performances against Bristol, and the players were confident that what they had accomplished before they could do again.

With the exception of Loveridge, nursing a broken collar-bone sustained against Moseley last week, Gloucester fielded full strength, and the team originally selected turned out. In the forwards the City were strengthened by the inclusion of W. B. Scott, the old Cambridge Blue, who is spending the weekend in the district, and offered his services to the club. Scott displaced Roberts, who has not been too well of late, and who accompanied the team as extra man. The vacancy at right wing three-quarter was given to Crowther, who had a fine opportunity of making his place in the side a permanent one.

Bristol, too, had selected practically their best fifteen, the replacing of Francis (injured) in the forwards being the only change. Corbett, who had been operating with Carter at half-back, reverted to his old position at centre for this match, Pickles changing places with his captain.

The match, as usual, excited the keenest interest at both ends of the county, and a goodly number of supporters of Gloucester took advantage of the cheap excursions run by both the railway companies to Bristol; whilst others made the journey by road.

The weather conditions were ideal, and the playing pitch, re-laid with new turf since last season, was in a perfect state for fast open football. There was a splendid attendance, estimated at between 11,000 and 12,000. Whilst training on Thursday Dr. Taylor damaged his leg again, but was able to play, and the teams took the field as announced.

THE GAME

Following the kick off an exchange of punts between Millington and Chantrill ended in the latter finding touch inside the Gloucester half. Bristol further improved their position by means of a penalty by Pickles, but Gloucester worked back with a fine forward rush. The tension was great, but both teams kept their heads and were very fast on the ball. Brown made headway for Gloucester, but the Bristol backs opened out nicely, Stinchcombe getting well away until beautifully tackled by Hughes.

Play hovered in the visitors' half, but the exchanges were exceptionally close and there was little in it. A mis-kick by Taylor eventually let the home team get close, but Milliner effected a daring save.

The battle continued to be waged forward, with Bristol holding their own well. Another penalty to Gloucester enabled Voyce to clear for the City, but Pickles returned with a splendid touch-finder. So far Bristol had the better of the exchanges territorially, but not a semblance of a scoring chance came owing to the deadly tackling. Gloucester shone in a good rush, but off-side gave Bristol a penalty, and from a good position in front of the posts PICKLES landed a goal, giving the home team a three points' lead.

Resuming, Pickles brought off a strong dash and passed to Corbett, but the latter was pulled down quickly. Bull[*sic*] got across to Evans, but Brown upset his man finely and Gloucester gained the advantage through the ball getting loose. Voyce with a dashing burst, in which he handed off a couple of opponents in characteristic style, aided Gloucester appreciably, but some fine fielding and kicking by Chantrill neutralised the effort.

Clever kicking by the Bristol backs twice checked Gloucester, and then a lofty pass by Milliner from the scrum was captured by a Bristolian, who initiated a bout of passing, but the movement was stopped by sound tackling.

Voyce again came into prominence with a run and hand off, and Gloucester later kicked through to Chantrill, but the latter cleared beautifully. Bristol forced a minor after this, but soon after the drop out Gloucester shone in a brilliant effort to equalise.

Taylor, receiving from Milliner, cut straight up the field and passed to Hughes, who fed Voyce. The International raced hard for the line, but Chantrill just got him a yard out amidst great excitement. Gloucester struggled desperately to effect a score, and Millington had two shots at goal from penalties, just failing with the second kick.

Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges, but could not draw level before the interval was taken.

HALF-TIME :

BRISTOL 1 goal (p)

GLOUCESTER Nil

Ten minutes before half-time Bristol had had slightly the better of the game, but Gloucester's great efforts to get on terms, following Voyce's tremendous attempt to score, deserved a reward. Largely play had been with the forwards, and the rival backs were well matched.

Bristol re-started with a splendid dash, and early on Evans was given a chance by Corbett, but Millington stopped his career with a good tackle.

Loose passing by Bristol allowed Gloucester to clear from a dangerous position, but thanks to Chantrill, who was wonderfully safe, Bristol came on the attack again with strong forward work, and having gained a good position their forwards heeled.

RESULT :

BRISTOL 1 goal (p), 2 tries (9 pts.)

GLOUCESTER 1 goal (5 pts.)

GLOUCESTER A v. BRISTOL A

CITY SECONDS' SPLENDID WIN

BRIGHT PASSAGES IN A GOOD GAME

City Seconds made their first home appearance of the season at Kingsholm, with Bristol A as opponents.

Teams :

Gloucester A. – S. Williams; L. Abbey, E. Fisher, D. Redler, and A. Hopcroft; G. Thomas and S. Collins; A. Rea (capt.), R. Triggs-Herbert, F. Sturge, R. Smart, J. Shaw, T. Print, H. Pitt, and G. Foulkes.

Bristol A. – J. C. Watts; H. E. Thuell, J. G. Coole, E. T. Tucker, and H. Sherman; Ed. Tucker and J. Lucas; D. Moore, E. Sullivan, J. Portman, A. F. Hucker, P. G. Williams, W. H. Hale, E. C. Dymond, and E. G. Everett.

Referee : Mr. E. Wilson (Coleford).

In the first minute Gloucester, who kicked off, were awarded a penalty owing to the visitors having "four up" in the scrum, and Williams placed the ball over the bar for three points. Keeping well together City Seconds maintained the offensive, and Redler, making a neat catch from a kick by Watts, ran up and punted over the heads of two opponents. Print, who was supporting strongly, dashed up and touched down for a try which Williams failed to convert.

Six points up in less than five minutes' play was good going but Bristol retaliated with much spirit, Thuell and Coole making capital runs on the right. Coole was pulled down only inches from the line while a strong defence prevented this wing from succeeding in other attempts. Play kept in front of the City Seconds' goalposts for a few minutes till E. T. Tucker threw out a long pass for Sherman to score a well-deserved try. The attempt to convert was not successful.

Bristol's handling had more purpose in it than that of the home fifteen's, but the latter's forwards played a spoiling game in the loose. Hopcroft was twice pulled down when going well.

Forward play predominated for some time, with Bristol acting on the defensive, but Collins and Thomas got few opportunities owing to the unsatisfactory heeling of the home forwards. A Gloucester forward was penalised for obstruction, but Dymond failed with the kick.

The City Seconds did not stay long in their own half, Hopcroft being prominent for the finest touch kick of the game so far. Although they did most of the attacking, Gloucester's combination was hardly up to the standard displayed by Bristol, the visiting three-quarters moving to good purpose when they started passing. There was hearty tackling on both sides, and so far Redler and Hopcroft had not had much to do.

A breakaway by Portman found the Gloucester defence scattered. He passed to Ed. Tucker for the latter to make a splendid run and send to Thuell for the equalising try, the winger running from the corner flag and touching down behind the posts. Dymond missed the effort to convert, the ball hitting the cross-bar and rebounding.

Half-time :

Gloucester A 1 goal (p) 1 try
Bristol A 2 tries

A fine kick by Abbey put Gloucester in an attacking position immediately after the resumption, but the ball came across to the other wing through Thomas, Fisher and Redler, Hopcroft finally getting the final pass and running strongly for the line. He was tackled only two yards away from the corner, Watts being hurt in stopping the winger. The Bristolian quickly recovered, but found his team still acting strongly against the persistent attack of the City Seconds.

Thomas tried a drop at goal, and the ball went across to the wing and behind the goal-line for Abbey to rush up and touch down for a surprise try. Williams' attempt to convert was wide.

Thomas made ground with a raking kick to touch near the corner, and at this period Bristol were being well held. Thomas claimed a mark right in front of the posts, and kicked the goal. Gloucester's combination had improved considerably, but there was rather too much forward passing, a fault which stopped Bristol attacks on two occasions.

Bristol could not throw off the pressure, and splendid work by Fisher ended in his passing to Thomas for the fly-half to score behind the posts. Williams converted.

From the kick-off Sheman made a capital run and punted over Williams' head only to see Thomas touch down with nothing to spare. Play shifted quickly to the other end, where there was some desperate play in the loose, ending in Portman, of Bristol, having to be carried off with internal injuries.

Some really smart exchanges by both sides were seen in the closing stages with Gloucester Seconds well on top. In the last minutes Hopcroft was well rewarded when he got a try near the corner, Williams converting from a difficult angle. Foulkes also scored a try.

Bristol finished with 13 players, Edward Tucker retiring with an injured shoulder.

Result :

Gloucester A 4 gls (1p, 1m) 3 tries (25 pts)
Bristol A 2 tries (6 pts)