

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1926

## FOOTBALL

### GLOUCESTER'S GOOD PERFORMANCE

### NORTHAMPTON BEATEN ON THEIR MERITS

### A KEEN GAME UNDER TRYING CONDITIONS

With the thermometer registering over 80 degrees in the shade, footballers had a testing time this afternoon, and the conditions were rendered more trying with the hardness of the ground owing to the long absence of rain. The Kingsholm playing pitch was well watered from hose pipes for many hours, and the soaking had a beneficial effect.

Northampton who were visitors to the City this afternoon, had not been seen at Kingsholm for several years, and this was the only fixture between the teams this season, the return being played at Northampton next season.

Gloucester made two changes from last week, Shaw and Seabrook replacing Pitt and Rea. Northampton had Harris and Merry (forward) absentees.

Teams : –

### GLOUCESTER

BACK : G. Thomas.

THREE-QUARTERS : R. N. Loveridge, Roy James, E. H. Hughes, and S. R. Crowther.

HALF-BACKS : R. Milliner and T. Millington.

FORWARDS : A. T. Voyce (capt.), M. Short, J. Hemming, G. R. Shaw, G. McIlwaine, G. P. Pennington, G. Foulkes, and F. Seabrook.

## NORTHAMPTON

BACK : R. Vaughan.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. Haselmere, R. Loverock, L. Mayes, and D. Williams.

HALF-BACKS : R. Jones and G. Millward.

FORWARDS : H. Griffin, Eric Coley, R. Webb, A. Luck, E. Fidgett, G. Denton, A. Chandler, and G. Baldwin.

Referee : Mr. R. Fear (Somerset).

## THE GAME

There were between 4,000 and 5,000 spectators present when Voyce kicked off for Gloucester against the sun. Early on the Gloucester forwards broke away with a loose rush, and the ball being sent over the line there was a race for possession, and it looked as if McIlwaine got the touch, but the referee ruled for a minor.

On the drop-out the visitors were penalised, and Voyce found touch with a big kick. Gloucester attacked, and Milliner got away neatly, but the passing went astray. A punt over the line saw Vaughan run out and kick to touch. Some fast play followed, Haselmere on the one side and Crowther on the other making good efforts.

Gloucester worked down, but they were sent back by loose forward play by the visitors, who were very keen on the ball. The City were pressed in their 25, when some loose kicking gave Millington possession. The latter cut through finely and threw wide to Loveridge, who gathered the ball on the bounce. The vice-captain tried hard to round Haselmere, but was collared and forced to part.

Gloucester showed up strongly with good all-round work, and play was carried to the visitors' 25. Here Millward and Haselmere combined nicely on the left, but the attack was frustrated. Gloucester spoiled some promising play by faulty handling, and Northampton, too, were at fault with a good chance on the left wing.

Near the home 25 a Gloucester forward got off-side, and from a position right in front of the posts VAUGHAN landed a nice penalty goal, giving the first points to Northampton.

Gloucester resumed with dash and confined operations to their opponents' half. Loveridge made a strong effort which made ground, and later Millington made a splendid opening for James. The centre ran well, and with Vaughan only to beat a feint did the trick, and JAMES went over the line with a smart try. Millington missed the goal points.

With the teams level, play was continued with great keenness. A long kick down gave Gloucester an advantage, and the home halves opening out, James broke through and fed Crowther. The wing man, however, could not get past Williams, and though he passed, the ball went forward.

Give and take play followed until Gloucester gained a good slice of ground by the aid of a penalty. Loveridge made further progress with a clever touch-finder, and later the Gloucester forwards were nearly through in a dashing burst.

Northampton cleared from a dangerous situation with clever work, but Thomas with some judicious kicking put Gloucester close again. The City attacked strongly, and the ball being dribbled over, Voyce just missed a try after a great effort to gain the touch before the ball rolled out of play.

Northampton dropped out, and Haselmere had the better of exchange kicks with James, but the old Leicester man damaged his ankle and had to retire. Coley came out to centre, and Mayes went on the wing.

A good catch and touch kick by Thomas gave Gloucester a position at the centre, where Milliner opened out nicely. The ball was got across to Crowther with neat passing, but Jones upset the Gloucester wing and forced him to throw forward.

Off-side by Voyce gave Northants a penalty, but Thomas replied finely to the kick to midfield. A splendid check of the visiting forwards by Milliner was heartily applauded, and Gloucester went to the attack sharply.

Twice the City had openings, but forward passes at the critical moment spoiled certain tries. Haselmere had returned to the field now, but Gloucester maintained their advantage, the forwards playing with great dash.

Northampton just now were a beaten side, Gloucester doing all the attacking. The visitors' defence was continually tested, but it held out until near half-time, when McIlwaine got in a strong burst, and passing to VOYCE, the International dashed over the line and scored. Millington's shot for goal hit the upright, but Gloucester had gained a three points' lead.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER .....2 tries  
NORTHAMPTON ..... 1 goal (p)

Considering the conditions, the football had been keen and interesting, the form of the City team being a great improvement on that of the previous week.

Northampton restarted, and at the outset, aided by mistakes by home players gained a dangerous position in the right corner. An infringement, however, gave Gloucester a free kick and a huge punt by Voyce found touch at the centre.

Millington gained another 20 yards with a well-judged kick, but Northampton quickly got back. The visitors were playing Coley as extra three-quarter, but Northampton got the ball in the scrums with seven men. The backs, however, did not make much progress. Good work by Short and McIlwaine sent Gloucester away, and Crowther had a dash on the right, but his punt ahead went to touch.

A flying kick by Millward took Northampton well down and for the next few minutes the East Midlanders had the better of the exchanges. Gloucester eased the pressure by the aid of a minor, but on the drop-out Northampton made a clever attack with passing. Williams, on the right wing, made a spirited dash for the corner, but a fine effort led to his being pushed into touch-in-goal – a narrow escape for Gloucester and hard lines for the visiting player.

Gloucester were not playing so well together now and the game for the most part was in the home 25. It was mostly forward work and when the ball was got out to the backs they made poor use of their chances. Loveridge came into prominence with a praiseworthy dash but succumbed to a tackle by Haselmere. Thomas was caught napping in attempting to give the "dummy," with the result that he was upset, but fortunately nothing serious happened.

A fine run by Loverock, in which he shook off several Gloucester players who made the mistake of going high, looked promising for a try for the visitors, but Coley knocked on.

Chiefly through Crowther and Millington Gloucester got out of danger, but it was only for a brief period, for the East Midlanders were soon back in the home 25. From a punt out Northampton started passing, Vaughan joining in, but a bad transfer was sent to Haselmere.

Play generally had deteriorated, but at length Milliner robbed Millward at the scrum and fed Millington, who punted to touch. Loveridge came into the picture with a run and left footed kick to touch.

Gloucester were playing a stronger game now and Vaughan missing a punt by Loveridge there was a possible chance. It was missed, but later Hughes fielded and went almost to the line, when he passed, but the ball was fumbled and a try lost. Soon afterwards the City forwards dribbled finely and took it near the line, but Jones dashed up and kicked dead in a lucky save.

After this Northampton had a turn at attacking, and Haselmere and Vaughan had fruitless drops at goal. Gloucester then went to the other end, where McIlwaine made a fine run and pass to Loveridge. The latter went all out for a try, but was cut off and floored just outside.

Gloucester had a possible opening on the left, where the ball bounded awkwardly for Crowther. On the other wing McIlwaine nearly scored in the corner. In the last few minutes some capital work was displayed by both sides, but the scoring sheet was unaltered.

#### RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ..... 2 tries (6 points)

NORTHAMPTON ..... 1 goal (p) (3 points)

#### REMARKS

It was one of the hottest afternoons for football I can remember, and how the players kept going for seventy minutes under such conditions was a tribute to the fitness of the contesting teams even at this early stage of the season.

Gloucester won and deservedly so, on the day's play. The form all-round was a distinct improvement on that against Lydney, and particularly so in the forwards, where the men showed better cohesion, more skill, and improved methods of attack. That the City pack had a few breathing periods was only to be expected on such a day, but they came gloriously again at the finish, when the Northampton line had several narrow escapes of being crossed. A few more games together and Gloucester should have as strong a front as ever. The scrummaging to-day was not left to two or three players, and this is as it should be. In heeling, there is still room for improvement, but this should come with proper understanding.

Individually, McIlwaine and Short were the outstanding performers in the Gloucester front. The South African was splendidly effective in the open, and breaking through the ruck cut out one or two fine openings. His tackling and saving, too, were immense.

Short showed that judgment and resource which brought him into prominence last season. He is a sterling worker in all phases of play; clever in the line-out, and good in handling. Voyce played a keen, hard game, and was always doing something useful. The City forwards showed capital control over the ball in the loose at times, and one or two very fine combined efforts deserved reward. Hemming, Seabrook and Shaw were prominent in this department, and Pennington and Foulkes were by no means out of the picture. Altogether, the general form was encouraging, and should give the players confidence for the severe tests to follow.

Milliner, back as a scrum worker for Gloucester, was quite his old self, revelling in the hottest of exchanges, and worrying Millward no end. The latter was no novice at the game, but there were occasions when he was robbed of the ball after his forwards had heeled, and Milliner saw to it that Gloucester benefited appreciably.

The combination between Milliner and Millington recalled old times, and the latter did some beautiful work, both in relief and in attack. By-the-way, one or two of his kicks mistimed – an unusual occurrence for Millington.

The City three-quarters are not together yet, and the combination this afternoon was somewhat disjointed. Yet individually the players all did capitally. James confirmed the good opinions formed of his general ability, and against a strong set of opponents his work was exceedingly creditable. His try was a capital effort, and the one occasion where the use of the "dummy" was justified. Hughes did some good defensive work, and with a little more scope would have beaten the defence at least once.

Of the two wings, Loveridge played with rare dash, and though opposed by Haselmere never failed to have a go. He did not always beat the old Leicester player, but once in the second half he cleared his opponent cleverly near the touch line, only to fall a victim to Vaughan and another. Crowther had a few opportunities of showing his pace, but Williams did not allow the Gloucesterian to get really dangerous.

Thomas at full back for the City gave a sound and convincing display, and Vaughan was in good form for Northampton. The East Midlanders had a likely looking set of three-quarters with speed and cleverness, but the visitors did not add to their effectiveness in attack by bringing out Coley in the second half.

Jones, the Welsh International half of last season, kicked well, but made few openings, and was a good bit below his proper form. The forwards worked strenuously, with Webb, Denton, Griffin, and Luck the more effective.

Next week's matches at Kingsholm : Thursday – Gloucestershire v. Yorkshire (kick-off 5.30); Saturday – Gloucester v. Moseley.

JC