

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1926

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER 11 pts., UNITED SERVICES 5 pts.

CITY ON TOP IN HARD GAME

SOME CLEVER MOVEMENTS AND MANY MISTAKES

In contrast to several Saturdays last month, excellent weather conditions prevailed this afternoon for the City's home match with the Portsmouth Services.

Voyce, who is suffering with muscle trouble in the thigh, again stood down from the Gloucester team, and Bartlett was also absent, the vacancies being filled by Pitt and Shaw.

A. Danks, of the Old Boys, on his promising showing at Cheltenham the previous week, was given a further trial.

The Services were short of several of their regular players.

Teams : —

GLOUCESTER

BACK : G. Thomas.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. H. Hughes, Roy James, J. Stephens, and R. C. Thompson.

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

FORWARDS : G. R. Shaw, M. Short, G. Foulkes, H. Roberts, E. L. Saxby, A. Danks, H. Pitt, and A. J. Owner.

UNITED SERVICES

BACK : Mid. K. A. Sellar, R.N.

THREE-QUARTERS: Lieut. W. H. Wood, R.N., Sub-Lieut. J. A. Walsh, R.N., Lieut. A. B. Usher, R.N., and Sub-Lieut. N. Kennedy, R.N.

HALF-BACKS : Sub-Lieut. Morrow, R.N., and Sub-Lieut. G. P. Davies, R.N.

FORWARDS : Lieut. R. D. Fricker, R.N., (capt.), Lieut. D. Orr-Ewing, R.N., Lieut. J. H. Dale, R.N., Lieut. Thornton-Jones, R.N., Lieut.-Cdr. P. F. M. Dawson, R.N., Lieut. G. C. Dickins, R.N., Lieut. d'E. G. Chamberlain, Hants. Regt., Flying Officer A. Hesketh, R.A.F.

Referee : Mr. J. Southby (Bristol).

THE GAME

In the absence of Voyce and Loveridge, the City team was captained by Millington. The attendance was only moderate when the visitors kicked off, Saxby punting back with a big kick. Sellar was beaten with the bounce of the ball, which went over his head, but he recovered and sent to touch. The Services heeled from the first two scrums, and Kennedy cross-punted, but a knock-on ensued. Gloucester sent back through James, but from a pass by Milliner Walsh kicked through and gathered, but was upset by Thomas.

Failure to field by Wood and Walsh allowed the Gloucester forwards to kick ahead, and Sellar was hard put to it to get the ball away to touch close to the line. The City attacked strongly, and Milliner sent out a long pass to Stephens, who tried to burst over, but was tackled. Immediately after the home team forced the ball over the line, but a minor was given.

Play on the drop-out was contested in the Services' half, where the visitors were penalised for off-side. No ground, however, was made, the return to Millington's kick finding touch well. Heeling by the City forwards saw a series of exchanges by the home backs. Hughes was hampered, but got in a clever cross-kick, but a visitor picked up, though immediately tackled.

The Services next opened out, but Davies' pass was intercepted by STEPHENS, who went clean through, and beating Sellar, scored a nice try. Millington landed a beautiful goal.

Ensuing play was evenly contested at midfield until Gloucester were penalised at the scrum, the kick gaining useful ground. From a long line-out the ball got loose, and Wood securing, he shook off an attempted tackle and ran to Thomas. The latter only partially stayed the visitor's progress, but sufficiently to enable a colleague to stop him later. Gloucester cleared a little with the aid of a free.

The Services, working well together, initiated one or two attacks from cross-punts, but without success. Wood shone with another strong run, the home tackling being very feeble, and started a bout of passing which left the ball with Orr-Ewing. The latter made a fine effort to cross, but was held up outside. The Services had another chance a minute later, but the ball was fumbled, and Thompson picking up punted out of danger.

The Services again secured possession. Walsh ran straight and hard, but was met by Millington, who brought his man down in fine style. Inside the Services' half Milliner got the ball, but passed the wrong way for Millington, and nothing resulted.

Millington gained the advantage in an exchange of kicks, and Gloucester obtained a footing on their opponents' 25. Here Milliner, Millington, and Thompson combined in an effort on the short side of the scrum, but the final transfer was forward.

Gloucester had a splendid chance of scoring in the next minute. Stephens made a splendid opening, and James went almost to the line but his pass, timed too late, was snapped up by Kennedy, who, however, could not keep out of touch. Good kicking gave the Services the advantage, where Morrow took a fruitless drop at goal, with three men well placed and almost a certain try in view.

Gloucester worked out of danger with neat kicks, and from a passing bout Thompson punted ahead. Sellar fumbled and a scrummage followed ten yards inside the Services' half. The visitors, opening out well, brought off some clever passing. Kennedy beat Hughes, and was going well for the line when he was finely upset by Thomas. The Services had the better of the exchanges for a time, but off-side by their forwards gave Gloucester several penalty kicks. From one of these Millington had a long shot for goal, a splendid effort just failing.

Subsequent play was scrappy, mistakes in handling on both sides being frequent. Millington twice missed transfers from Milliner, and Orr-Ewing dribbled away down touch, but Hughes turned the ball out of play. Gloucester heeling, Milliner served Millington with a reverse pass, and Stephens and James handled in turn. Hughes next received and sent back inside to Stephens, but the latter was "legged" just as he was about to clear.

Gloucester had the better of the play, but the attacks lacked judgment and finish. Saxby left the field just now for attention. Gloucester got the ball out, and James cut through, but a drop for goal was feeble and rebounded from an opponent. The City centre, however, got back and recovered. After dodging an opponent he threw out a pass to Thompson. The latter attempted a cross-kick, but it was charged down by Wood, who picked up and had only Thomas to face. Punting over the latter's head, WOOD raced up and gathered the ball on the bounce and completed a splendid effort by scoring behind the posts. Dawson converted, and equalised the scores.

HALF-TIME :

 GLOUCESTER 1 goal
 SERVICES 1 goal

Saxby was able to continue when the game was resumed. Thomas received the reply to the kick-off, and after dodging an oncoming forward sent to touch nicely near the Services' 25. From the first scrum Gloucester got the ball away, and Millington served Stephens, who burst through and cut out a nice opening. He missed James in passing, and HUGHES gathering slipped over with a try. Millington failed at goal.

After a faulty restart a scrum was formed at the centre. Milliner slipped Davies nicely, and there was a series of exchanges between Stephens and Thompson, but the former was brought down when he took the re-pass.

The game went across to the right wing, where Hughes had a sharp dash and kick over the line, but failed to gain the touch. Gloucester gained another good attacking position after the drop-out, but an intercepted pass enabled Davies to run out of danger. He eventually passed to Wood, but "forward" was ruled.

Milliner again showed smartness in breaking away from the scrum, and after a couple of passes Saxby received and made a plunge for the line, but just failed to get there. The Services relieved luckily, and for the next few minutes play was fairly even, though mostly in the Services' half.

Gloucester opened up several times from the line-out and loose, but the movements did not develop. Thomas showed initiative by coming up and starting his three-quarters, James finding touch well down with a big punt. The Services quickly cleared, but Gloucester came back again through Milliner and Stephens. Hughes being fouled, a penalty was awarded Gloucester, but Millington failed with his shot at goal.

Subsequent play was keen but the football witnessed lacked finish. Hughes came into the picture with a marvellous effort, eluding opponents in clever style and securing a splendid opening. He eventually passed to James, who ran straight into the arms of two opponents and was brought down in front of the posts.

Just after Millington had hard luck with a left foot drop at goal. Good kicking by the Services brought relief, and then from a penalty Thomas again set his backs in motion. Thompson kicked ahead, and Sellar missing the ball it rolled over the line for a touch down.

The Services played up strongly on the drop out, and Gloucester were forced back in their half. The visitors tried hard to gain an opening, Davies being prominent, but the tackling was too good. Danks saved well from a loose rush and then the City shifted play beyond the centre by the aid of a penalty.

Thomas got the better of Sellar in some exchange kicking, and placed Gloucester on the attack again. The home forwards serving Milliner, the scrum half slipped the defence beautifully, and giving a perfect pass to MILLINGTON, the acting captain crossed with a cleverly worked out try. He, however, missed the goal points.

In the last few minutes Gloucester made strong efforts to increase their lead. From a kick down a forward opened out and one of the prettiest movements of the afternoon followed. There was a repass in the centre of the field, and then the ball came along to Thompson, on the left wing. Sellar was beaten, and the County three-quarter went all out for the line. But Wood's pace was too much for the home player, and Thompson was tackled and thrown into touch. Gloucester had the better of the exchanges to the end, but there was no further scoring.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal 2 tries (11 pts.)
SERVICES 1 goal (5 pts.)

REMARKS

Gloucester were full value for winning points this afternoon in a game in which some good football was interspersed with a lot of scrambling play. The four tries obtained were all clever efforts, but both sides missed a number of scoring chances, judgment being sadly at fault at times and the handling very erratic. The Services had the speed behind, and up to a point the combination was excellent. Where they failed was in doing the wrong thing at the critical moment. An instance was a visitor dropping at goal with practically an open line and three colleagues in attendance !

Gloucester's showing, on the whole, was distinctly creditable. The forwards were up against a fast and dashing set, but except for some feeble attempts at tackling in the first half they did better all-round work than in some previous matches. In the scrums the City men had quite their fair share of the ball, and with the heeling greatly improved Milliner had a chance this afternoon to do something in attack. And the scrum-half did not fail. He was one of Gloucester's best players, being very quick in slipping the defence and giving Millington a good service. The latter's try was the direct outcome of his partner's cleverness, but this was by no means the only occasion Milliner initiated real openings. Millington missed one or two transfers, but his skill and judgment were prominent features of the home team's display.

The City forwards were best represented by Short, Saxby and Owner, with Danks a keen worker in all phases of play. The home men made several praiseworthy attempts to open out with handling, but the footwork was hardly so effective as usual. The Services were inclined to get off-side a lot, and the referee had to penalise them on several occasions for this infringement. Orr-Ewing, Fricker and Thornton-Jones were always conspicuous, but the eight did not form such a strong combination as some packs the Services have fielded at Kingsholm.

The Gloucester three-quarters, if failing to rise to any great heights, put in some capital work, and there was more thrust and general ability exhibited to-day. Stephens was the more effective of the two centres, making several dashing runs, handling well, and showing up strongly in defence. James' work suffered through a lack of finish, though he displayed plenty of keenness, and some of his work was highly meritorious.

Both Thompson and Hughes had fast men opposed to them, and this advantage was utilised to the full by Wood and Kennedy when danger threatened. Hughes brought off one remarkable run, and how he escaped the clutches of would-be tacklers and got clear was marvellous. Thomas played another excellent game, and quite outshone Sellar, who too often waited for the bounce of the ball and misjudged it.

The Services have been better served forward and behind the scrum. Davies was eclipsed by Milliner, but the outside half did some good things, and Walsh and Usher ran with plenty of determination. The best man in the line was Wood, a very capable wing, with speed, dash and elusive swerve. Wood was always dangerous, and it was fortunate, perhaps, for Gloucester he was not afforded too many opportunities.

Next week : Gloucester v. Cheltenham, at Kingsholm; Gloucestershire v. Cornwall, at Camborne; Gloucester Boys v. Bath Boys, at Bath.

GLOUCESTER A v. CHEPSTOW

SECOND STRING'S GOOD WIN

Gloucester A journeyed to Chepstow, where, after a good game, they won by a good margin.

Result :

Gloucester A 15 points.

Chepstow 6 points.