

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 1927

RUGBY REFLECTIONS

GLOUCESTER'S "REST" DAY IN LONDON

CITY SECONDS' FINE RECORD

With the exception of the Blackheath-Services match, there was a wholesale cancelling of Rugby Union fixtures in the Metropolitan area last week. In the absence of any communication from Guy's Hospital, the Gloucester team duly made the journey to London to keep their engagement, only to find a message awaiting them at Paddington that play was impossible owing to the frost-bound condition of the ground. The outlook when the party left Gloucester in the morning, and the wintry conditions met with on the train journey all the way to London suggested the improbability of the match being played, so that the news that the game was off was not altogether unexpected.

For several reasons the scratching of the fixture was disappointing to the visitors. In the first place Tom Voyce, after eight weeks' absence from the City team, was anxious to test himself in a serious game. His injured thigh had sufficiently recovered to do some training during the week, and the Gloucester captain was pretty confident he had got rid of the trouble.

It was understood some members of the English Selection Committee would be in attendance at Honor Oak, and Voyce was naturally anxious for an opportunity of showing the selectors that, fit and well, he is still a candidate for national honours. As things turned out this chance was not afforded the old International, and the prospects of his appearing for England again were, therefore, not improved.

Further, the Guy's match had been selected by the Committee for an experiment at full-back. Thomas' unfortunate illness has left a void which has been hard to fill. Millington filled the position for two matches, but his removal to the last line of defence sadly weakened the team at outside half, and Townsend was given a trial. The latter performed creditably, but was hardly satisfactory at Leicester, and the selectors deemed it necessary to make a further change. The choice fell on Roy James, who, as is well known, has had a good trial at centre three-quarter without fully realising the expectations formed of him at the outset of the season. A clever kick either foot and a safe fielder, James possess two good points essential in a custodian, but with his defence a very doubtful quantity some supporters of the club thought the Committee were taking a big risk in entrusting him with such an important position. On the other hand, there was the possibility of James, put to the test of relying on his own resources, coming out of his shell and confounding his critics as to his inability to tackle. The Guy's match would have provided a real try-out for James, but it was not possible, and the experiment had to be reserved for this afternoon at Kingsholm.

R. Milliner being down with the "flu" could not make the trip to London, and Gloucester had called on E. Goodwin, of the A team, to play scrum half. Goodwin appeared twice against Cheltenham this season, but Saturday would have been his first big match. The Second teamer has made capital progress, and with encouragement and help from a player of Millington's experience and ability ought to make good. He should get an opportunity of displaying his worth before the end of the season.

With the match cancelled, the players had the "day" for entertainment, and, thanks to the kindness of Mr. Arthur Bouchier, the twelve hours spent in London were made the most of. In the afternoon the party witnessed the performance of "Treasure Island" at the Strand Theatre, with Mr. Bouchier playing the leading role; they were his guests at dinner afterwards at Simpson's, followed by a visit to "Sunny" at the Hippodrome, and a return to the Strand Theatre for refreshments prior to making for Paddington for the journey home.

"A memorable outing" was the unanimous verdict of players and committeemen, and it need hardly be said that at the dinner Mr. Bouchier received the heartiest thanks for his splendid hospitality and his health toasted with musical honours.

Mr. Bouchier, in a brief reply said it was a privilege and pleasure to entertain the team, and he hoped all had enjoyed themselves.

GLOUCESTER A v. BATH A

GOOD OPEN GAME IN KINGSHOLM MUD

ANOTHER SUBSTANTIAL WIN FOR CITY SECONDS

SOUND COMBINED WORK BY HOME BACKS

Gloucester A were not so strongly represented as last week for their match with Bath A at Kingsholm to-day. Neither James nor Hoare were available at centre, where a winger in Abbey, and a full-back in Townsend did duty. At scrum half A. B. Clutterbuck appeared in place of Goodwin.

The teams were :

Gloucester A : H. Boughton; –. Robins, L. Townsend, L. Abbey, and G. Holford; E. Stephens and A. B. Clutterbuck; L. Bartlett, L. Franklin, A. Danks, R. Shaw, J. Russell, W. Seabrook, T. Wadley, and T. East.

Bath A : W. Bishop; P. Coles, J. Gillett, F. A. Lace, and J. F. Jones; K. Howard, and C. W. Denny; L. Seal, A. Weeks, P. Curtis, R. Pocock, F. Coombes, W. S. Usher, B. Russell, and R. E. Meyer.

Referee : Mr. G. Leighton.

Following the warm sunshine of the middle of the day, the ground so far from being hard or frost-bound was very wet and soft. The ball as a consequence was very difficult to handle, and play in the opening stages was mostly with the forwards.

Both sides, however, tried to open out the game, and on one occasion E. Stephens made a smart cut-through. Another incident which aroused enthusiasm was a save by Boughton at the feet of the Bath A forwards.

Gloucester A settled down to play a very sound game. Stephens, Abbey and Townsend marked their men keenly, the forwards heeled better than their opponents and Clutterbuck got the ball away smartly.

The three's got going well, with Abbey prominent several times for neat, forceful dribbling; only a fine tackle by Coles saved a try when Holford was sent away by Townsend.

Play was practically confined to the Bath A half, and after 25 minutes the City Seconds opened the scoring with a rather remarkable try. Boughton hit the post with a penalty shot and fielding the return kick had a drop for goal after a moment's hesitation as to whether he was in touch or not. Abbey dashed up and just won the race for the touch-down with a couple of defenders. Boughton failed with the kick.

Townsend was doing well at centre, both in attack and defence, his handing-off being a feature of his play. Given a pass by Abbey in mid-field he burst through in great style and cleared all opposition but the full-back. However he fell to a good tackle by the latter in the corner of the field.

Half-time :

| | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Gloucester A | 1 try |
| Bath A | Nil |

Gloucester A went further ahead immediately on the resumption, but the award of the try to Robins was greeted with cries of "Hard lines, Bath!" from all round the ground. The score was the outcome of good passing, but Robins appeared to be bundled into touch-in-goal before he put the ball down.

The best movement of the day and a goal about which there was no element of doubt followed. Clutterbuck got the ball away from a scrum at midfield. Stephens, Abbey, and Townsend handled in turn. The last-named cut through and gave to Holford, who beat the full-back and ran round behind the posts for Boughton to convert. Gloucester A thus led by 11 points to nil.

Play continued fast, exciting and full of incident. Boughton saved cleverly from a forward rush and started passing on the left, which ended in Holford being held up near the line. Then on the opposite wing Abbey and Robins got away, and a score was only missed by the centre's inability to gather a reverse pass.

Stephens picked up a pass from Clutterbuck which came along the ground, and another sound piece of combined work by the outside half and centres sent in Robins for the City's fourth try. Boughton failed with the kick from the touch-line.

Result :

Gloucester A ... 1 goal 3 tries (14 points)
Bath A Nil

COMMENTS

It was a good, open game. Considering the conditions the passing of the home backs was of extraordinary excellence, for the ground was a regular morass and the ball must have been very greasy and difficult to handle.

By the end the players were so plastered with mud as to be hailed by the crowd as the "All Blacks."

Gloucester A were the better side all round and their win was well deserved. They attacked for the greater part of the game and only the fine defence put up by Bath A outside the scrum and the spoiling of their forwards prevented a higher score being registered.

The home team were well served in every position behind from Boughton at full-back to Clutterbuck at scrum-half, and the forwards more than held their own.

Stephens did a lot of clever work at outside half, Abbey and Townsend played soundly in the centre, and Holford and Robins were two equally workmanlike wings.

JC