

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1927

FOOTBALL

LEICESTER GO DOWN AT KINGSHOLM

BEATEN BY NINE POINTS

GLOUCESTER FORWARDS IN GREAT FORM

After an absence of five years, the Leicester team re-appeared at Kingsholm, but the Midlanders were not at full strength owing to the International match at Paris, where R. A. Buckingham was playing centre for England, and F. D. Prentice (forward) was in attendance as reserve. L. C. Sambrook (full-back) and H. L. V. Day were also absent, the former owing to an injury. The only change in the home team was Comley for Foulkes.

A drizzling rain set in an hour or so before the match started, and made things unpleasant and the ground slippery on the surface. The attendance fell considerably below expectations, and there were only about 3,000 present at the time fixed for the kick-off, but the number was augmented later.

Mr. T. H. Crumbie, Hon. Secretary of the Leicester Club, owing to illness, missed his first Club match for 33 years.

Teams :

GLOUCESTER

BACK : G. Thomas.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. H. Hughes, Roy James, J. Stephens, and S. R. Crowther.

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

FORWARDS : A. T. Voyce (capt.), M. Short, L. E. Saxby, H. Pitt, F. Russell, E. Comley, J. Hemming, and T. Wadley.

LEICESTER

BACK : W. Thompson.

THREE-QUARTERS : W. Farndon, F. Wood, F. R. H. Turney, C. Flewitt, and E. Barlow.

HALF-BACKS : L. Burton and H. Greenlees.

FORWARDS : N. Coates (capt.), D. J. Norman, E. Coleman, F. Lawrence, F. V. Beamish, M. Christie, and D. Ryley.

Referee : Mr. Dodridge (London Society of Referees).

THE GAME

Gloucester lost the toss, and Saxby started for the home team. The visitors early started a passing movement, but it broke down on the wing. Clever back play by Leicester and judicious kicking tested Thomas, but the City full back fielded well and got in a good kick. This was well replied to by Thompson, and play was contested in the City half.

With seven forwards Leicester got the ball continually, and the home backs were often engaged chasing their opponents. One or two bouts failed through faulty handling, but at length Burton got the ball away nicely, and Flewitt making a grand opening sent BARLOW in with the first try three minutes after the kick-off. Wood failed at goal.

Gloucester resumed, and Hughes was prominent with a sharp run down touch, but his pass inside was knocked on. Close forward work by Leicester recovered a few yards, and an attempt by Millington to cut through was foiled. For feet up the visitors were penalised, ten yards from the centre line. MILLINGTON, however, essayed the long shot and with a beautiful kick levelled the scores amidst loud cheers.

On the resumption Millington was sent away by Milliner, but the latter's inside pass to Voyce was not accepted. A big rush by the Gloucester forwards covered more than half the length of the ground, Flewitt finally getting back and turning the ball into touch.

A penalty gave Leicester good relief, but the City front rushed back splendidly. Good kicking gave Leicester ground, and later Wood punted ahead. Farndon raced up and gathered but was smothered outside by Millington and two others. Gloucester were pressed severely in front of their posts, but Burton being penalised James punted to touch 30 yards out.

Individual efforts by Millington and Stephens enabled Gloucester to make progress, but Crowther missed fielding the slippery ball. Leicester got down again by the aid of a penalty, but a mistake in passing lost ground, and good tackling by Voyce stopped any headway.

Gloucester were now playing with plenty of vim, and by good all-round work gained a footing in their opponents' end. In a rush the ball was taken over the line, and Crowther touched down, but he was rightly adjudged off-side and only a minor was given.

Gloucester kept play in the visitors half on the drop out. Millington broke through and Voyce was clear, but a forward transfer was given. In some subsequent loose play the City had a possible chance, but Crowther over-ran the ball, and Farndon saved. A splendid round of passing by the Leicester backs from their own 25 looked dangerous, Barlow being well away. He cross-punted in facing Thomas, but the ball was captured by a Gloucesterian who handed back to Thomas for the latter to find touch with a fine kick.

The City forwards were doing grand work in the loose just now and the Leicester defence was severely tested and Crowther missed again with a possible chance, and some hot work followed in front of the visitors' posts. Leicester cleared eventually, but Gloucester worked back with passing. The extra man outside the defence stopped the attack. Leicester were the cleverer side behind and neat handling gave Barlow a chance. He was, however, well tackled on the centre line. Some fast and keen play ensued with honours fairly even.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal (p)

LEICESTER 1 try

Leicester resumed, and the spectators were soon provided with some excitement. From a kick down Thompson came up to his three-quarters and passed, but the ball was intercepted by James who had a clear field at the centre. He was not fast enough to get away from Flewitt, and passed to Hughes, who made a grand effort to cover the distance. Five yards outside he was tackled from behind, and the ball went from his grasp and over the line for a minor.

Millington put Gloucester in a good position with his reply to the drop out, but Leicester quickly relieved with footwork and useful punts. Faulty passing stopped one or two promising movements by Leicester backs. Fielding a kick Russell broke through and cross-kicked, but nothing resulted. Gloucester, however, had the better of the exchanges but there was an absence of finish in the City movements behind. In some close work in the Leicester 25, the ball came to MILLINGTON, who took quick aim and dropped a good goal, the ball striking the upright and dropping over the cross-bar.

In subsequent play both sides made mistakes, the ball being difficult to handle. The City forwards shone in a great burst, but they were eventually checked, and Farndon being served he raced down touch and punted. Hughes, however, got in position, fielded, and after a short run round passed to Thomas, who got in a nice clearance kick.

Play was fast on the heavy going, both sides in turn gaining the advantage. Leicester were the more effective behind, but the home tackling was close and sure, and the forwards were fine in the loose. Twice the Midlanders' defence looked like being beaten, but Greenlees saved in great style. Clever work by Hughes put Gloucester in position, and Milliner was nearly through after a splendid burst by the home front.

Just now the City were clearly on top, the forwards attacking with great determination. Thompson saved well under great pressure several times, but Gloucester were not to be denied, and with a brilliant burst the line was crossed and RUSSELL credited with a try. Millington converted, and Gloucester led by nine points.

Resuming, the contest waged at a good pace, and the tackling was very deadly. The Leicester backs were not getting the ball so often now, but when in possession they moved well in combination. A forward pass from Flewitt to Barlow spoiled one good chance, and other mistakes checked promising movements.

The Gloucester forwards were continually causing danger with dashing loose bursts, a lucky flying kick by a visitor saving his line on one occasion. Gloucester kept up the pressure for a time, but could not break through. From a dropped Gloucester pass Farndon secured and raced away, finally sending a kick across, but Thomas just managed to reach the ball in time.

This effort led to Leicester having a brief turn at attacking, but play was soon transferred to the other end. Crowther worked clear of two or three opponents, and passed to Wadley, who had a man on his left with an open line. He, however, pulled himself up and tried to go through himself and was brought down. Gloucester, however, went right to the line, where in a scramble the home team were penalised for an infringement. The kick brought much needed relief to the visitors, but it was only temporary, for Gloucester were soon back again. In a splendid rush Voyce dribbled nicely and gathered the ball on the bounce, but just failed to force himself over. Near the end Leicester broke away, but with Farndon well placed the passing failed. The end came directly after.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 3 goals (1d 1p) (12 pts.)

LEICESTER 1 try (3 pts.)

REMARKS

Allowing for Leicester's weakened ranks, Gloucester's victory was a highly creditable one. It was a desperately keen game, contested under adverse conditions, but the City's splendid recovery in the second half fully entitled them to the winning points.

On a firm and dry turf the Leicester backs would no doubt have given a lot more trouble, but the tactics which paid effectively to-day were loose rushes, and here the City forwards were clearly in the ascendant. There was something like real cohesion in the work of the whole pack, the control of the ball was splendid at times, and the tackling and backing up equally praiseworthy. Voyce showed something of his best form, and his dash and determination gave his colleagues a splendid lead. There was not a weak spot as far as I could see, the younger members of the pack frequently coming into prominence. If I mention Russell, Pitt and Comley in this respect it is only because they were the more noticeable in the open in conjunction with Saxby and Short.

The Leicester seven in the early stages were able to command the ball at will in the scrums, and that early score by Barlow suggest the Midlanders were in for a comfortable win. But though the visiting backs did a lot of passing the extra man behind caused too much bunching, and mistakes in handling. Leicester were at times overwhelmed in front in the second half, and their line narrowly escaped on several occasions. Beamish, Coleman, and Norman were the pick of the visiting forwards, who tailed off towards the finish.

Behind the scrum Leicester had the cleverer set of players, but the combination broke down badly at critical moments. Burton had ideas of his own in putting the ball in, but apart from this he was pretty smart in his service and Greenlees did a lot of clever work at outside half. Flewitt and Wood, at five eights, developed attacks with judgment, the latter showing capital form.

All round the Leicester men were faster, and this was emphasised when James and Hughes were overhauled soon after the re-start. Milliner played a hard game throughout and took a lot of knocks in stopping rushes. Millington had a big hand in the City's triumph, for besides his two field goals he converted Russell's try, thus claiming nine of the twelve points obtained.

The Gloucester three-quarters brought off few combined movements, and the best work accomplished was mainly individual. Stephens was the best of the two centres and Hughes was the more reliable of the wings, Crowther mishandling too often. Just before the end Hughes' knee gave way, and he had to retire.

Thomas gave a very sound display at full-back for Gloucester, getting out of some difficult situations very cleverly. Thompson, too, proved a capable substitute for Sambrook, though lacking the latter's length-kicking.

Next week : Gloucester v. Plymouth Albion, away ; Gloucester A v. Berry Hill, at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A v. YORKLEY

NO SCORING IN WRETCHED CONDITIONS

Gloucester A travelled to meet Yorkley, but the playing conditions were wretched, rain falling nearly all through the game. There was no scoring, but play was well contested and the exchanges were hard.