

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1914

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v. NORTHAMPTON

EAST MIDLANDERS WELL BEATEN

Northampton, who were visitors to Kingsholm to-day, had the distinction of being the only English Club to inflict defeat on Gloucester this season, and the City were naturally very keen on making amends. The East Midlanders have performed rather moderately, and a few weeks ago were beaten at Cheltenham by 20 points to nil. It was a stronger team that appeared at Gloucester, but though the home side was short of Webb and Washbourn, it was generally predicted the City were good enough to account for the opposition. The ground was in fine order, and the conditions generally were perfect for a fast, open game.

The teams were : —

GLOUCESTER.	POSITIONS	NORTHAMPTON
C. Cook	Backs.	A. Earl
A. Lewis	Three-Quarter	A. G. Bull
L. Hamblin	Backs	H. C. Barratt
S. Sysum	"	R. Spanton
R. A. Clarke	"	E. C. Cook (capt.)
A. Hall	Half-Backs	E. D. Lindow
J. Baker	"	A. Freer
G. Halford (capt.)	Forwards	T. Collins
S. Smart	"	C. P. Tebbitt
N. Hayes	"	S. Livingstone
A. Saunders	"	F. H. Richards
W. Parham	"	W. Welch
F. Ayliffe	"	L. Dudbridge
S. Millard	"	H. Griffin
J. F. Lawson	"	W. Burke

Referee : Mr. J. Feltham (Bristol).

THE GAME

Northampton won the toss, and Halford kicked off for Gloucester, but some of the City men being in front of the ball a scrum was ordered. Early on the visitors dribbled down the field, and Cook was tackled in possession. Matters looked dangerous for the City, the visitors working with great determination. Clarke and then Cook got in useful clearance kicks, but Northampton pressed again, Lindow and Bull trying hard to beat the defence. Gradually the City got out of danger, Cook and Hamblin being mainly responsible for the relief.

Centre play followed, but the attempts to open out were smothered. From a scrum a visiting forward dribbled nicely, but he was stopped in time, and play was contested in the home 25. Gloucester gained a few yards, but Baker was at fault a little later, and Northampton returned to the attack.

Saunders, who was playing a dashing game, picked up in the loose and threw out a wide pass to Sysum, who fed Hamblin. The latter ran well, but after cutting inside an opponent he was pulled down from behind. A long kick down and follow up by Freer quickly carried play to the Gloucester end, where the City were forced to concede a minor.

Gloucester dropped out, and from a forward pass by Barrett, Lewis gathered, but he was called back with a likely opening. Gloucester were doing none too well, the half-back play being anything but satisfactory. At length Baker got the ball away cleanly, and though Sysum fumbled, Hamblin recovered, and dodging Cook punted ahead. The ball, however, went over the line and Earl touched down.

Gloucester had the better of the exchanges on the restart, but little was done in the way of effective combination. Hamblin, however, forced another minor from a good attempt to drop a goal. The kick-out was charged down, and Parham, in tackling a visitor, was laid out and had to retire.

Resuming, the East Midlanders were at once penalised, but Hamblin, who took a shot for goal, sent very wide, and Cook punted out. Parham soon returned, and as he was running on the field the Gloucester backs had started a passing move. The ball came right across to Lewis, who feinted to pass inside and went on. He then transferred to Parham, who had come along, but the forward was bundled into touch a yard outside. Some loose play followed the line out, ending in Hall gathering and passing out sharply. Hamblin gathered and tricking Cook cut inside and scored near the posts. Hamblin converted.

Northampton re-started, and a wild pass by Baker allowed the visitors to reach the home 25. Subsequent play was very scrappy though very keen.

A loose kick by the Gloucester forwards was followed up by Ayliffe, but the City man just failed to clear it past Earl. A penalty accrued to Northampton, but Hamblin returned with interest, and the game was taken to the other end. Here Gloucester had a fine chance with practically an open line, after a free taken by Hamblin, but there was fumbling at the critical moment.

Gloucester were going strongly again later, but they were pulled up. Then Lindow ran back for Northampton, only to see him upset by Sysum. The City tried hard to open out, but things did not go kindly, and the defence prevailed. Gloucester, however, kept on the aggressive, and Baker opening up with a reverse pass there was a capital bit of play by Sysum, who punted ahead for Clarke to get up. The wing man gathered the ball all right, but failed to clear Earl.

Northampton's defence was severely tested for the next few minutes, but it held out. Clarke once got in a splendid individual effort, but his pass was not accepted, and then the interval was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 goal
Northampton Nil

Northampton restarted, and from the first scrum Gloucester heeled. The passing, however, was spoiled, and the visitors securing punted to Cook. A free to Gloucester for off-side was well taken by Cook, and then came a fine run by Sysum, who cut up the field splendidly, but in trying to punt past Earl he was collared. The Gloucester forwards took the ball over the line in some loose play, but there was some infringement, and a scrum was ordered five yards out. Northampton cleared from this, but the relief was only temporary. More passing by Gloucester looked promising, but Clarke slipped when going well for the line. The game was quickly taken across to the other wing, where some neat exchanges gave Lewis possession, and jumping the full-back the wing man scored in the corner. The place-kick failed.

Following the drop-out Northampton, thanks to good kicking by Lindow, kept play at the centre. The Gloucester forwards soon got moving, and Saunders, with a fine effort, dashed ahead and secured a good opening. A pass to Lawson was taken, and the latter feeding Halford, the captain ran behind the posts. Hamblin missed the goal kick.

Immediately after Gloucester added to their score, through Hall and Clarke. The half-back fielded a big kick by Lindow, and running strongly handed to Clarke, who dodged through and behind the posts for a good try. Sysum this time converted.

Halford received the ball from the kick-off, and opened out. Hamblin gathered later and brought off a fine run, but in trying a bit too much he was collared near the line. Cook was instrumental in changing the venue, the Gloucester players making the mistake of waiting for the whistle.

Northampton did a bit better during the next few minutes, but they were never dangerous. Gloucester soon came again, and clever play by the backs looked promising. Twice, however, a forward pass was ruled with the goal line in sight. Sysum also had a chance, but succumbed to numbers in trying to cut inside. Gloucester had a good long spell of attacking, but there was not that necessary finish to the movements behind.

Some lucky kicking by Northampton removed operations to the other end, and Gloucester were pressed seriously for the first time. Freer getting from the scrum, passed out, but Sysum intercepted and punted out. Ayliffe and Lawson got on the ball, the latter putting in a big kick and sending the ball past Earl. The visiting custodian ran back, fell on the ball, and recovering got in a punt – a clever clearance.

Play just now was rather scrappy, and except for the keenness of the tackling there was little of interest. A couple of penalty kicks to the City saw C. Cook give the home side nice slices of territory, but the position was soon lost. From a penalty kick Lindow had a shot for goal from the centre, but the ball was charged down, and the game was in the Northampton half when the end came.

RESULT :

Gloucester ... 2 goals 2 tries (16 points)
Northampton Nil

REMARKS

There was one period of about twenty minutes in the second half when the football was really good, but taken as a whole the exhibition was rather scrappy. Northampton were quicker in settling down than the home players, and play in the first quarter certainly went in their favour. That they failed to score was a bit of luck for the city.

Henceforward the home team were clearly on top, and it was due to ineffectiveness in the attack that only one try was registered before the interval. The chances came all right, but the finish and penetrating power were absent.

Amends were made in the early stages of the second half, and for a time Northampton were overwhelmed. The three tries obtained by Lewis, Halford, and Clarke were all the result of clever movements, but other points ought to have been registered. It was rarely indeed the East Midlanders were dangerous, and as a side they were disappointing.

The Gloucester forwards, though not so uniformly consistent as of late, put in some dashing work, and I should pick out Saunders as the most effective of the eight. The ex-Lydney man was splendid in the open, and tackled with deadly effect. Lawson, too, was excellent, and Ayliffe and Halford were well to the front.

The heeling was not up to standard, and with Freer, the Northampton scrum half, none too scrupulous as to observing the off-side rule, Baker had anything but a pleasant afternoon. For a long time the City player could not rise superior to his opponent's tactics, and he was frequently pushed off the ball. He, however, managed to do some good things in the second half. Hall opened out well at times, but he had to contend with some difficult transfers, and as often as not the ball came to him very slowly.

The Gloucester three-quarters brought off some capital movements at times, but the centres were inclined to neglect the wings. Both Hamblin and Sysum contributed splendid individual efforts, and the former's well-judged kicks were of great help when the game was going against the City. Lewis scored his try smartly, and generally gave a good account of himself. Clarke, too, worked hard, but did not get the best of luck. He is more effective at centre, but he showed to-day he is more than useful in the outside position.

Cook had not been well for the past days, and was doubtful about playing. But he showed no falling-off in form, and his clever side-stepping and splendid kicking were greatly in evidence. He was more stylish than Earl, though the latter performed creditably.

The Northampton forwards were a keen lot, concentrating their efforts on loose rushing and close tackling. Welch, Collins, and Burke were a hard-working trio. Lindow started well, but except for his lengthy kicking was not seen to much advantage after the first quarter. Spanton and Cook were the pick of the third line, but they attempted few combined movements, and were seen at their best in defence.

Scorers for Gloucester : Hamblin, Lewis, Halford, and Clarke, tries ; Hamblin and Sysum each converted one.

Next week : Cinderford away.

GLOUCESTER A v. ST. MARK'S

CITY SECONDS WIN

At Sandhurst. St. Mark's kicked off, and at once rushed to the Seconds' goal-line. Here give-and-take play followed until Wilkes, with a good kick, relieved the pressure. The Seconds, with several forward rushes, took the ball to the other end, and continued to press until half-time, but could not score.

Restarting, Gloucester A went off with a rush, and had hard luck in not scoring several times. Very soon, however, Wotton set his backs in motion, and a splendid run by the three-quarters saw Staunton score a good try near the corner. Burns' kick, though a good one, failed.

After this reverse St. Mark's tried very hard, but play again settled in their half. Good play by Mumford on several occasions came very near to a score, but luck was against the Seconds. Finally the forwards, with a determined rush, took the ball over the line, and E. Osborne was credited with a try. Burns goaled.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 1 goal, 1 try (8 points)
St. Mark's Nil