

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1919

## TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. ROYAL AIR FORCE

SPLENDIDLY CONTESTED GAME

AIRMEN'S WELL-DESERVED WIN

The Royal Air Force, victors over Australia in the Inter-Services Competition last week, were at Kingsholm again to-day, when they opposed Gloucester. The City were strengthened by the return of S. Smart to the forward ranks after four and a half years' Army service.

The old International was recently demobilised from the Royal Munsters, with which regiment he had been attached for sixteen months in Italy.

There were several changes in the visitors' ranks. Seddon (not eligible to play owing to his having figured in N.U. football) and Wrentmore being prominent absentees. Perfect conditions prevailed for a fast game, and there was a good attendance of spectators.

GLOUCESTER. – T. Miller; A. Hudson, L. Hamblin, W. L. Stone, and F. Webb; W. Dix and A. Hall; G. Halford, S. Smart, Lieut. T. Voyce, W. Davis, A. Redding, L. Robbins, W. F. Ward, and J. Reynolds.

ROYAL AIR FORCE. – Capt. I. L. Hamilton; Lieut. W. G. Clarke, Major Fuller, Lieut. L. Randles, and Lieut. W. F. Warner; Capt. C. Lawton Moss, and Lieut. H. W. Taylor (capt.); Capt. W. W. Wakefield, Capt. G. Thom, Lieut. D. H. Malan, Capt. E. F. Turner, Lieut. R. S. Simpson, Lieut. H. H. Thesen, Capt. J. P. Findlay, and Capt. Copeland.

Referee. – Mr. P. R. Clauss (Cheltenham College).

The Air Force kicked off with a strong sun at their backs, and Miller failing to take the ball, which went over the goal-line, he was only able to get in a short punt to touch. Thus right at the start the visitors gained a good attacking position, and they should have scored early on, but Randles sent a wild pass to Clark at the critical moment. Gloucester eventually cleared with a good rush, and Hamilton being slow in clearing, the City got well beyond the centre.

The visitors tried to open out on two occasions, but the passing broke down, and Gloucester eventually dribbled away. The City lost their advantage through an infringement, the Air Force gaining some 20 yards by the resultant penalty. Fast play followed, the visitors doing well forward. Stone checked a dashing burst very cleverly, but Miller, failing to judge a kick, let the visitors in. The ball getting loose, a series of sharp exchanges gave Clark possession, and with a good dash the right wing scored in the corner. The same player failed at goal.

Play on the drop-out was fast and keen, with plenty of open work. Both sets of forwards showed up well in the loose, but so far the Airmen had had the best of matters in the scrums. The City, with one good effort, got well past the centre, but they were driven back with a loose rush, and Miller was forced to concede a minor.

Fielding a kick on the restart, Warner raced down touch, but he was eventually charged over and fell heavily. He was, however, soon able to resume. Play continued to favour the visitors, who were displaying considerable smartness all round. Stone came into prominence with a clever bit of work, but it availed his side little. From a punt out the ball went to Fuller, who with a clever left-foot kick dropped a splendid goal.

Restarting, the Air Force attacked strongly, the backs indulging in some good passing. Near the centre Dix got the ball away to Hall, who cut through and sent out wide to Hudson. The latter ran down to Hamilton and then passed inside to Hamblin, who completed the remaining distance and thereby put the finishing touch to a fine movement. The goal-kick failed.

Gloucester after this encouragement played up much better, and Stone earned hearty applause for a fine dodgy run, in which he beat a host of opponents and secured a nice opening, but his pass was not accepted.

Gloucester lost a good slice of ground through getting off-side, but this was soon recovered, and centre play followed. Working a quick line-out, the Air Force broke away and cross-kicked, but Webb gathered and sent to touch. Then Fuller attempted to repeat his success with a dropped goal, but this time failed.

The game was being keenly contested in the home half when Dix smartly fed Hall, who sent a quick pass to Hamblin. The latter cut through and handed to Stone, who raced away, and though tackled by the legs just outside the line managed to get the ball over – a very fine try indeed. Hamblin added the goal points, and Gloucester gained the lead.

The Air Force soon got on the attack following the restart, and the Gloucester defence was sorely tried. It held out for a time, but Taylor, gathering in the loose, passed out quickly, and the ball travelled out to Clark, and the latter scored his second try. There was no goal.

There was no slackness on the restart, both teams working very hard, but nothing further was done before the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
R.A.F. .... 1 goal (d), 2 tries  
Gloucester ..... 1 goal, 1 try

Gloucester opened well on the restart, and confined play to their opponents' half. A smart bit of combination between Dix, Hall and Hudson saw the latter make a big dash for the line, but he was well collared, and in falling he injured his leg and had to leave. Warner, on the other side, was also off the field with an injured face. Gloucester, working well together, got very close, but the visitors saved by touching down.

Soon after the City had a good opening, but Webb passed wide of Stone and gave him no chance. A break-away by the visiting forwards brought welcome relief, and a spell of play ensued at the centre. From this point the Gloucester backs indulged in a clever bit of combination which promised well, but a mis-field spoilt it. Hudson had now returned, and took part in the latter movement.

On the other wing Dix and Webb shone in a neat effort, but the wing man was bored to touch. The Air Force took up the running after this, and from a loose rush got dangerous. Miller let the ball go when near his line, and a try looked certain for the visitors, when Stone dashed up and kicked dead – a lucky escape.

Some good kicking by Hamblin gave Gloucester a favourable position, but the Air Force forwards quickly changed the venue. Back the City came by the aid of a penalty, and combination between Hudson and Hamblin nearly did the trick.

Faulty play in the open by Gloucester allowed the visitors to dribble right away, and the home side was placed in danger. The position was saved for a moment, but another forward dash took the visitors over the line and Thesen was credited with a try. No goal resulted.

Gloucester, on the kick-out, showed up strongly forward, and Stone had hard lines in not dropping a goal. The Air Force, by dashing forward play in the loose, were always dangerous when on the move, and from one big burst they took the ball three-parts the length of the field and scored, Thesen again being the try-getter.

Play to the end was vigorously contested, the tackling on both sides being terrific.

RESULT :

R.A.F..... 2 goals (1d), 3 tries (18 pts)  
Gloucester ..... 1 goal, 1 try (8 pts)