

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1919

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. LYDNEY

CITY'S OPENING WIN

A MODERATE DISPLAY

THREE TRIES FOR WEBB

A fair crowd attended at Kingsholm for the City's opening match with Lydney. Gloucester made a couple of changes forward, owing to Hayes and Voyce being unable to play. The vacancies were filled by J. F. Lawson (who did not intend to turn out in this match, but willingly consented to fill the breach) and E. Jones. Lydney came one short, and Capt. F. E. M. Clarke (Berkeley), who played full back in the Gloucester trial match on Tuesday, assisted the visitors.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : L. Mormant.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. Webb, A. Hudson, L. Hamblin, and W. Washbourn.

HALF-BACKS : W. Dix and A. Lewis.

FORWARDS : G. Halford, F. Ayliffe, A. Hall, W. Dovey, A. Ward, J. F. Lawson, E. Jones, and J. Harris.

LYDNEY.

BACK : A. J. Kerwood.

THREE-QUARTERS : Capt. F. E. M. Clarke, T. Biddle, H. Kerwood, and W. Probert.

HALF-BACKS : H. Fletcher and G. Probert.

FORWARDS : E. Darters, W. Edwards, T. Perry, W. Biddle, W. Robbins, G. Bartlett, ?. Gardner, and J. Grail.

Referee : Mr. T. F. Lawrence.

THE GAME

Halford kicked off, and the opening play was contested in the Lydney half. From a loose kick by a visitor Jones gathered and started passing. Hudson and Hamblin in turn handled, but the latter was floored in trying to cut inside. Dix opened out cleverly from the first scrum, and the ball travelled well to Hudson who, however, could not clear the opposition. Then from a penalty Hamblin had a shot for goal, but just failed. Soon afterwards Hudson forced a minor.

Lydney made headway from a line-out, and further improved their position with the aid of a penalty. Close work followed in the home 25, the visiting forwards working very hard. The defence, however, was too strong, and Lewis, with a clever touch-finder, sent play to mid-field. Here, Gloucester tried to open out, but not with any success.

The Lydney forwards were breaking away with a loose rush when Hall picked up and effected a fine burst through and pass. Webb finally was given possession, and he cross-kicked, but nothing resulted. Gloucester, however, continued on the aggressive, and following a series of neat exchanges Webb dashed over in the corner with the first try. Hamblin failed at goal.

Gloucester were seen to advantage immediately on the resumption, but Washbourn, who received a nice pass from Hamblin, was forced to touch. Lydney got out of danger with useful kicking, but they were kept at mid-field. The Gloucester backs were getting plenty of the ball, but the handling was not certain, and one or two promising movements were spoiled.

From a line-out Hall secured and started the backs finely, but Webb could not get away from W. Probert. Gloucester, however, kept play moving, and a pretty combined effort promised well. A re-pass from Washbourn to Hudson, however, was ruled forward with a certain try in view.

Lydney were playing a dogged game but they were overpowered in forward play. A fine kick by Lawson saw A. Kerwood collared near his goal line, and for several minutes the visiting defence was sorely tried. They held out pluckily, but at length Dix opened out, and passing ended in Webb scoring easily. Hamblin landed the goal points.

Lydney on the kick-off gained a footing in the Gloucester half, but they were soon driven out, Dix being prominent with some clever play. A loose dribble severely tested A. Kerwood, but the visiting custodian was able to get in his relief kick under difficulties. Dix, Lewis, and Washbourn combined in a neat effort, which made headway. Lewis was temporarily injured but the play went on and Lydney benefitted largely. Gloucester, however, soon regained the ground thanks to Lawson, who dribbled down the field in dashing style, and collared Kerwood.

Lydney were now hard pressed, and a combined movement by the home backs ought to have materialised but Hamblin sent a poor pass to Washbourn. Ensuing play favoured Gloucester, but no more scoring took place, Hamblin missing a penalty from a straight shot in front of the posts.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester	1 goal 1 try
Lydney	Nil

The second half opened rather sensationally. After the usual exchange of kicks play opened in the Lydney half. Then a big punt sent the ball to Mormant, who fielded and had heaps of time to get in his return. It was charged down, however, by Bartlett, who gathered the ball on the rebound and had a straight run in in the corner. It was an opportunist try and well taken, but Mormant was sadly at fault. The goal kick was a feeble one.

Encouraged by this success Lydney played up desperately and for a short period had the better of the exchanges. From a long throw out G. Probert gathered and was nearly through, whilst the forwards came very near scoring on the right.

A big effort by the City relieved but the visitors came back, the Gloucester players becoming disorganised for the time being. A neat move by Lewis and Washbourn saw the latter finally kick past Kerwood, and the ball went to touch well inside the Lydney half. The Gloucester backs now had a chance of doing something, but the passing went wrong with the men well placed.

Soon afterwards the City forwards forced a touchdown after a good rush. Subsequent play was keenly fought out in the visitors' half. The home backs were prominent with a splendid effort, Webb trying hard to score in the corner, but he was ruled to have been held up outside. Lydney obtained temporary relief, but they were forced back again, and twice in quick succession Gloucester were almost over.

Continuing the pressure the City secured one fine opening, but Hudson sent wide to Washbourn. Another bad miss came shortly afterwards on the same wing, and for the next few minutes Gloucester could apparently do nothing right with the ball. The Lydney marking was certainly very close, but the home players with the chances they had ought to have done much better.

From a high punt down the field Hall received, and bursting through. initiated a splendid opening, but again things went wrong. Though having all the play, Gloucester could not rise to another score, finish being entirely lacking. The forwards heeled well and Dix was most energetic at the scrum, but the threes could not hold the ball properly. Following a lot of scrambling play Gloucester eventually got the ball in the open and after Hudson and Dix had handled Webb was given possession, and with a sharp dash scored wide out. Hamblin kicked a lovely goal from the touch line.

Lydney made a spasmodic burst on the restart, which took them inside the Gloucester half, but Hall ran back and passed nicely to Hudson, who transferred to Hamblin, but the latter dropped the ball with a beautiful opening. Lewis came into prominence with a clever bit of footwork, but kicked a shade too hard, and only a minor resulted.

Then Hall (who was playing outside) was in the picture again with another dashing burst and pass, but Lydney checked well.

Play slackened somewhat in the next few minutes, and there was little of interest. Eventually the home forwards rushed away in a body, but were pulled up in time. Nothing further of note occurred.

RESULT :

Gloucester 2 goals, 1 try (13 points)

Lydney 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

One cannot be too critical in the opening match, but Gloucester's form, to put it mildly, was by no means satisfactory. Lydney put up a hard, dogged contest forward, and the backs defended gamely, but the City, by reason of the many mistakes made in handling, largely contributed to their ill-success. It is early yet to talk about changes, but the side will have to show a vast improvement to stand any chance against many of the crack teams due to appear at Kingsholm. Pace – a very necessary essential – is wanted behind, and the players will need to bear this important fact in mind.

On the whole, the forwards by no means shaped badly. For the most part they scrummaged well and though the heeling was slack at times, the City pack held a distinct superiority in the tight. Plenty of dash was introduced into the loose rushes, and there was some bright open movements occasionally.

The best forward on the field was A. Hall, and his all-round work was a feature of the game. A tireless worker in all departments he was especially prominent in the lines out and open, and some of his bursts were irresistible. On several occasions he initiated passing bouts in the most approved style, but the movements failed for lack of finish on the part of his confreres. Lawson, Ayliffe, and Ward did a lot of sound work and Halford led the front with his usual success.

At half-back, Dix and Lewis proved a successful combination, and made openings galore. Dix was closely watched at the scrum by Probert, but time and again he circumvented his opponent and got the ball away very cleanly. Lewis was particularly safe in gathering his passes, was quick off the mark, and fed his threes with good judgment. His kicking, too, came in very useful.

The third line was not happy in combination, and for such an experienced quartette far too many mistakes were made in handling. Occasionally the players got in a clever movement, but the misses far outnumbered the successful efforts. Webb had the distinction of scoring all three tries, and the right-winger made the most of his opportunities. Hudson and Hamblin were good in parts at centre, but Washbourn was not seen to any special advantage.

Mormant does not show much advance at full back. His kicking is strong, but I fancy he would suffer badly if opposed to some of the fast forwards the team will have to meet.

Lydney should train into a useful combination. They are workers to a man, but at present lack skill all round. A. Kerwood made a fair show as custodian, and Biddle and W. Probert were the pick of the three-quarters, sound tackling being their chief forte. The half-backs showed little inclination to open out the game, and of the two W. Probert was easily the best. The forwards were a good, level lot – keen and untiring. The early part of the second half saw the visitors at their best, but they could not keep it up, and Gloucester pressed them continually all through the last quarter.