

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1919

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. CHELTENHAM

CITY'S SIXTEEN POINTS WIN

GLOUCESTER BACKS TOO GOOD FOR THE TOWN

GOOD SHOW BY CHELTENHAM FORWARDS

Disappointed in the inability of the London Harlequins to keep their engagement at Kingsholm owing to the railway strike Gloucester were fortunate in fixing up a match with Cheltenham, who were free owing to the Handsworth fixture being cancelled. Gloucester made one change in the selected team, J. H. Webb taking the place of G. Halford (captain), who was indisposed. The Cheltenham team was an unknown quantity and a number of new players were on view.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : L. Hamblin.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. Webb, H. Stone, A. Hudson, and S. A. Brown.

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

FORWARDS : J. H. Webb, N. Hayes, F. W. Ayliffe, W. Davis, J. F. Lawson, A. Ward, J. Harris, and T. Voyce.

CHELTENHAM.

BACK : B. Davy.

THREE-QUARTERS : H. Hughes, A. Green, H. Speck, and W. Watson.

HALF-BACKS : A. Smith and H. Bendall.

FORWARDS : H. Wixey, W. Burford, F. Taylor, W. Yeend, J. Cocks, I. G. Jones, F. Jackett, and H. Pontin.

Referee : Mr. J. L. Davis (Lydney).

THE GAME

There was a splendid crowd of spectators when the sides took the field quarter of an hour late. Following an exchange of kicks the Gloucester backs were early given possession, and a fine round of passing between the whole division ended in Webb being pushed to touch inside the visitors' 25.

A loose scrum followed, and the ball was taken to the line, where a Cheltonian fumbled, and Lawson being well up scored the first try within three minutes of the start. Hamblin made a splendid shot for goal, the ball going just wide of the upright.

Restarting, Cheltenham kicked down the field, and Hamblin was thrown to touch on the quarter mark. The visiting forwards carried a scrum and went closer, but Gloucester cleared by the aid of Webb. Dix further improved, but a promising forward rush was checked by Bendall making his mark. At this stage Ayliffe was laid out with a damaged ankle, and had to be carried off the field.

The free to Cheltenham only gained a few yards, and play settled at the centre. The Town heeled, and after a series of exchanges Green punted down to Hamblin. The latter dodged a couple of opponents, but his kick was charged down, and Cheltenham got dangerous. Pushing hard, the town pack carried the ball over the line and a try resulted. The place kick failed.

Resuming, Cheltenham opened out smartly, and Smith with a clever effort got clean through to Hamblin before being upset. He let the ball go, but it went astray, and Hudson gathering the City centre started a passing movement in his own 25. The ball was handled smartly, and Stone was left with possession at midfield. Dodging Hughes, who had come across, Stone raced hard, and beating Davy for pace scored a capital try near the posts. No charge was allowed, but Hamblin missed the goal points.

The game on the resumption was fast and open, the Town shaping very well. Hall made a strong burst for the City, but he was pulled down before he could pass. Then Dix broke away in smart style and passed to Hayes, who punted past Davy. The latter got back and made a splendid save under difficulties. Cheltenham eventually gained relief by the aid of a touch-down.

On the drop-out the Gloucester backs were seen in a pretty combined movement, but Hudson missed Stone's pass. The Breamite however, recovered . . . [Herein approximately 20 column lines unreadable, owing to damage/fading of the original copy].

Big kicking by Watson gave Cheltenham a footing in the home end, where play was keenly contested. Heeling nicely, Dix and Hall got their threes in motion, and brilliant passing and running were witnessed. Stone cut out a lovely opening and Hudson served Brown well, but the wing man failed to accept with Davy beaten.

Gloucester accomplished [word/words unreadable] more clever combination shortly afterwards, but nothing tangible resulted. [word/words unreadable] little later Hall broke through beautifully and fed Hudson, who ran down and passed to Brown, the latter racing round behind the posts. Stone converted and Gloucester led [words unreadable].

The Cheltenham kick-off saw the ball bouncing to touch well inside the home 25. From the line out the visitors were very close, and in a general scramble on the line Bendall was awarded a try, which went unconverted.

The game underwent some rapid changes for immediately on the resumption Gloucester went right away, and only a forward transfer at the last moment robbed the City of a try under the posts. It mattered little, however, for from the succeeding scrum the ball was whipped out by Dix, and after a couple of transfers Brown [word/words unreadable] over the line and behind the posts with Gloucester's fourth try, which Stone goaled.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 2 goals 2 tries
Cheltenham 2 tries

Cheltenham early gained a good attacking position on the restart, and though Dix eased temporarily with a useful touchfinder, the Town forwards worked back to the line, and the home team had a very anxious time. In a general scramble a Cheltenham forward was laid out and had to receive the attention of the Ambulance men, being finally led off the field.

Resuming, the Gloucester forwards broke away with the ball at their feet, and a hard kick sent it towards Davy. Voyce got up and secured possession, but fell. The ball, however, rolled away, and Gloucester took it on some 20 yards. From the ensuing scrum Dix worked the blind side cleverly, but fell a victim to Davey 10 yards outside.

Next there was a nice series of exchanges ending in F. Webb going strongly for the line, but he was pushed to touch-in-goal. On the drop-out the Gloucester backs indulged in some neat exchanges, but the pass to Webb was ruled forward with a certain try in view.

Subsequent play was in favour of Gloucester, but the players could not seem to control the ball with accuracy, and some promising movements were spoiled. The game continued to hover between the Cheltenham goal line and 25, but play was very erratic. Davis and Voyce led a strong rush to the line, but Davey turned the ball out of play in the nick of time.

Gloucester kept up the attack strongly, and Brown receiving from Hall, made a big effort to cross but was held up. Had Hall taken his pass, however, a try was certain, as he only had to touch down. Relief eventually came to the Town through Hughes who intercepted a pass and punted down the field, the ball going to touch at the centre. The City forwards rushed back strongly, and Smith in trying to send to touch, was knocked over and a couple of City players fell over him. He was laid out for a time, but was able to resume.

So far play in this half had been disappointing from the spectators' point of view. Gloucester, except for the first five minutes, had done all the attacking, but their efforts to press home chances were not successful. The forwards allowed themselves to be worried by the Town pack, and there was not that cohesion in the tight scrums so desirable to be effective. More than once the City forwards were pushed off the ball completely, clearly showing some of the men were not doing their fair share of the hard work.

There was a temporary stoppage for a slight injury to Dix, and on resuming Gloucester immediately took up the running. Although hampered by Smith, Dix got the ball away to Hall, who sent to Stone. Getting well away, the centre cut right up the field and reached Davey, when he transferred to Hudson, who scored behind the posts. Stone added the goal points, making the score 21-6.

The City backs were moving again directly after the kick-off. This time the ball came along to Brown, who brought off a dashing run, being finally tackled near the touch-line. The same player distinguished himself with another fine dash, showing trickiness in cutting inside the field of play when prevented from going down touch. Though partly collared, however, he managed to get his kick to touch.

After this Cheltenham made a spasmodic burst to the home end, but Hall starting a passing movement, Hudson and Brown came clean away. The winger raced hard, but could not clear the opposition. Play became very warm in the last few minutes, and Ayliffe and Burford were ordered off.

Just before the end Gloucester made a desperate effort to add to their lead. The forwards took the ball half the length of the field and over the line, but at the critical moment a visitor kicked dead.

RESULT :

Gloucester 3 goals 2 tries (21 points)
Cheltenham 2 tries (6 points)

REMARKS

Gloucester won handsomely on points, and territorially the City had by far the better of the exchanges, yet the display all round was by no means convincing. Superiority behind gave the home team the victory, and the combination at times reached a high standard, but there were occasions in the second half when faults of handling were numerous and scoring chances were thrown away.

The Town were not outplayed to the extent the score indicates. The forwards were the one bright spot, and the City pack were given a rare shaking up. This was especially noticeable in the tight scrums, where the visitors, packing well and working all out, frequently got the upper hand. In the loose honours were more even, and for Gloucester, Davis, Voyce, and Hayes were often seen to advantage.

As a combination, Dix and Hall were the superior pair at half-back, and when opportunity served they opened out well. Dix had a tough opponent in Smith, who worked energetically all through, and proved a good spoiler.

The City three-quarters all did fine work at times. In the centre Hudson and Stone displayed cleverness and resource in attack, while the Breamite was also conspicuous for some splendid defensive work and relief kicking. Webb and Brown were very effective on the wings, the recruit fully sustaining the reputation already gained. He was a real trier all the way, and his dashes, especially in the second half, greatly pleased the crowd. Webb got very close on several occasions, and had hard lines in not scoring.

Hamblin was fair at full back. I don't think he is kicking so well in his new position, and he had a tendency to get out of his place. Davy is still the safe, reliable custodian. The Town captain was frequently tested to-day, but was never found wanting. He saved one or two possible scores by his adroitness in anticipating the attack.

The Cheltenham threes were mainly engaged on defence, and taken all through they made a good show. Watson (who was said to be the old Leicester player) shaped well, and Hughes got through a lot of useful work. The centres were not much in the picture in attack, for the reason they did not get much sight of the ball.

There was an unfortunate incident a few minutes before the end. Ayliffe (Gloucester) and Burford (Cheltenham) both being sent off for some irregularity. I did not see what happened, but was given to understand it was a very minor affair which the referee might easily have passed with a caution.

JC