

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1920

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S EASY JOURNEY AGAINST STROUD

OPPOSITION NONPLUSSED BY CITY'S COMBINATION

MILLINGTON'S SUCCESSFUL DEBUT AT OUTSIDE HALF

Although A. Hall and Hamblin cried off, Gloucester were strongly represented at Kingsholm for their return meeting with Stroud, but the attendance was considerably below the average for a First team match. The lack of interest was easily understood. Stroud have been going very moderately this season, and, in the first match with Gloucester the City ran up the substantial score of 28 points to nil. Stroud have before now sprang a surprise, and once actually defeated the City at Kingsholm, but though football games occasionally produce strange results, no one anticipated other than a comfortable win for Gloucester this afternoon.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : G. Welshman.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. Webb, A. Hudson, G. J. Brown, and S. Brown.

HALF-BACKS : W. Dix and T. Millington.

FORWARDS : G. Holford (capt.), S. Smart, T. Voyce, F. Ayliffe, F. Ward, C. Mumford, J. H. Webb, and N. Hayes.

STROUD

BACK : Bingham.

THREE-QUARTERS : Clissold, Newman, Hughes, and Bradbury.

HALF-BACKS : Watkins and A. Durn.

FORWARDS : Gould, Gardner, Harrington, Browning, G. Durn, Mills, Davies, and another.

Referee : Mr. A. E. James.

THE GAME

The visitors did not arrive on the ground till ten minutes past three, and the kick-off was consequently delayed half an hour after the advertised time. Holford started for the City against the sun, and the opening exchanges were contested at the centre.

From a line-out the ball was sent to Hudson, who threw a long pass to Webb on the right, but the ball rolled wide, and was kicked by a visitor down the field, who ran on and gathered again, but was brought down.

Gloucester quickly changed the venue, Dix being prominent with a tricky run and pass, but nothing resulted from the subsequent exchanges. A minute later, however, Gloucester were well away, and Jack Webb opened the scoring wide out. Welshman missed the goal points.

On the restart the City at once set up a strong attack, and after clever handling Fred Webb dodged over and went behind the posts. Welshman's shot for goal hit one of the uprights.

Stroud resumed pluckily, but as a side the visitors were hopelessly outclassed, especially behind the scrum. Gloucester heeled continually, but the passing left something to be desired. The City, however, went very close with a good rush, and Millington getting possession scored the third try. Again, Welshman missed the goal points.

Holford and Voyce were both conspicuous with strong runs, the latter zig-zagging practically through the whole of the visiting team before passing to Ayliffe. The latter sent on to a colleague, but it was not accepted with an open goal in view.

The game was not taken seriously by the City or the spectators, who appeared to be out to get as much fun out of the play as possible. Gloucester were having all the game, the opposition being very weak.

The home team took risks in throwing the ball about the way they would never have attempted in a more serious match, and one can imagine mistakes were frequent. At the scrum Dix was having a rare old time, and Watkins was beaten continually. The Stroud man was repeatedly off-side, and from one penalty, Welshman landed a goal making the points 12-0 in favour of the City.

Dix in subsequent play was frequently in evidence. One dash of his down the short side of the scrum was a very smart effort, and when he finally ran over with a clever try the crowd cheered heartily. Welshman added the goal points.

After this reverse Stroud had more of the play, due to snapping up the ball after mistakes by home players. Once or twice the visitors had really good openings, but they failed to take advantage. During a brief period Stroud several times got the ball out and tried handling, but nothing resulted. Still for the first time Stroud gained a footing in the home end, and the crowd gave them every encouragement.

F. Webb, with a strong burst up the centre of the field, brought the game out to half-way, where Gloucester opened out several times, but finish was lacking, Sid Brown being very poor on the left wing. Dix eventually worked the blind side of the scrum on his own, but just failed to reach the mark.

Gloucester pressed heavily again now, but a penalty against Dix for picking out of the scrum eased the pressure. At once the Gloucester backs were set going, and Hudson punting ahead, F. Webb raced up and secured possession. He side-stepped his immediate opponent cleverly, and then transferred to Ward, who notched the fifth try of the match. Welshman made a good attempt at conversion, the ball going just wide of the posts.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

GLOUCESTER 2 goals (1p) 4 tries
STROUD Nil

Stroud resumed, but in a couple of minutes the City backs were set going beautifully by Dix and Millington. The passing broke down, but Hudson recovered and punted across for Jack Brown to field nicely and send out to F. Webb, who beat the defence in good style and scored a try. The place kick failed.

Gloucester had another good opening immediately on the drop-out, but the handling went wrong, and Stroud got out of danger. Back the City came, Webb and Hudson bringing off a good bit of work, but the International was well tackled by Bingham, who was easily the best man on the visitors' side.

The game continued to go all one way, but Gloucester were not altogether happy in combined movements. Jack Brown, who was shaping extremely well on the whole, made a strong run through, which took the City close in, and from the subsequent scrum Dix secured and put the ball over the mark. No goal resulted.

A clever move by Dix sent F. Webb well away on the right, but the referee's whistle went for a forward pass. Subsequent play was scrambling, relieved occasionally with some clever combination by the City backs. One splendid movement looked certain for a try, but the final transfer was forward. At the next scrum Watkins was penalised, and being allowed a second kick for some infringement, Millington landed a good goal.

Gloucester were off again from the kick-off, [word unreadable] Brown, feinting to pass, went through [word, words unreadable] finely, and crossed with a grand try. [word unreadable] again goaled. Stroud continued to [word, words unreadable] but they were hopelessly out [word, words unreadable]. Following some neat passing [word, words unreadable] brought off a strong dash, and beating Bingham, scored the ninth try, which Millington again converted. Before the end S. Brown added to Gloucester's score, but the place-kick failed.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ... 5 goals (2p), 7 tries (42 pts.)
STROUD Nil

REMARKS

Such a one-sided game calls for little in the way of comment. Gloucester were never seriously tested, and with the opposition so weak the only real interest in the match was what the final score would be. The City finally topped the previous best for the season – 33 points against Cheltenham – but the tally this afternoon might easily have been advanced with the scoring chances which presented themselves.

I was particularly interested as to how Millington would shape in his new position at outside half, and first impressions were decidedly encouraging. Stroud, of course, was not a serious test, but judging on Millington's display this afternoon he should certainly be given a further trial. For the most part he took his passes cleanly, was quick away with the ball, varied his tactics with skill and judgment, and all round showed ability and resource.

Dix had an afternoon out, and at times he was beating the whole Stroud team himself. His trickiness fairly non-plussed the opposition, and the crowd greatly enjoyed his performance.

At three-quarter Jack Brown did splendidly at times in attack, running strongly and serving his wing in good style. His defence was not put to the test to-day, but there is little doubt with the coaching of Hudson he would soon rid himself of any little weakness in this department. Experience is bound to make for improvement, and it is to be hoped circumstances will permit of his playing for the seniors for a few more games this season.

F. Webb and Hudson were in capital form, but Sid Brown had another off day.

Forward, Gloucester were far too clever for the opposition, and did practically what they liked. Welshman had an easy afternoon.

Stroud was best represented by Bingham at full-back. He was continually engaged, and despite the heavy score registered against his side he did a lot of sound tackling and saving.

Clissold and Newman were fair at three-quarter, but as a line the visitors were eclipsed, and the same may be said of the half-backs and forwards.

JC