

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1920

## FOOTBALL

### GLOUCESTER'S FAILURE AT NEWPORT

CHAMPIONS SCORE A TWENTY-POINT VICTORY

#### CITY'S PLUCKY FIGHT

Gloucester's performances in Wales this season did not suggest the City stood much chance against Newport this afternoon, and the best that was hoped for was that the Welsh champions would be given a good game, and the adverse scoring kept to within reasonable limits.

In their last two fixtures – Cardiff and Cross Keys – Newport did not reach the high standard of play set up for the greater part of the season; in fact against Cross Keys the Usksiders found the defence too strong for them, and had to be satisfied with a pointless draw.

When the rival teams met at Kingsholm in January, Newport were returned winners by 18 points to 5, but Gloucester were severely handicapped on that occasion, especially at three-quarter, where neither Hudson nor Fred Webb were available.

The City forwards worked heroically that day, and if the pack could do as well this afternoon, and the backs render that support and co-operation essential, Newport were not likely to have matters all their own way.

One recognised that as a combination Newport were much the stronger side all round, and a team of opportunists, and Gloucester would have to be keen workers to the end to make a good fight of it.

Teams : –

### GLOUCESTER

BACK : G. Welshman.

THREE-QUARTERS : A. Hudson, F. Webb, T. Millington, and S. A. Brown.

HALF-BACKS : W. Dix and J. Humphries.

FORWARDS : S. Smart, S. Bayliss, F. Ayliffe, F. Ward, A. Hall, E. Richardson, N. Hayes, and F. Mansell.

### NEWPORT

BACK : F. W. Birt

THREE-QUARTERS : R. C. Plummer, Jerry Shea, E. Hammett, and A. E. Morgan.

HALF-BACKS : J. Wetter and W. J. Martin.

FORWARDS : R. Edwards, P. Jones, A. Bell, N. McPherson, J. Whitfield, T. Radford, T. Jones, and L. Attewell.

Referee : Mr. F. Richards (Pontymister).

### THE GAME

There were two further changes in the Gloucester team, Voyce and Mumford being replaced by S. Bayliss and E. Richardson, of the A team. Uzzell stood down from the Newport ranks for R. Edwards; otherwise the Welsh champions were at full strength. The weather was dull, and the ground heavy in places, but rain did not actually fall when the teams took the field. The attendance was about 10,000.

Gloucester started, and play opened quietly, until a good touch-finder by Shea found touch well inside the visitors' half. Here Gloucester were penalised for an infringement, and from the easy position Birt landed a neat goal, giving Newport three points' lead in four minutes.

Subsequent play was scrambling, attempts to open out by the Usk-siders failing. The City twice rushed well, but were checked, and then Newport brought off a fine bout of passing. Plummer gave the repass to Shea, who kicked over the line, but only a minor resulted.

Newport continued to have the better of the exchanges, and operations were confined to the Gloucester half. More passing by the Newport backs promised well, but Morgan's cross-kick was taken by Hudson, who sent to touch. Immediately after, however, from a mark by Williams, Birt placed the second goal for Newport.

Gloucester played up strongly on the re-start, and a forward brought off a capital run and kick, but Birt returned nicely with a good burst. The City went for the corner, but were stopped in time. Newport changed the venue to the centre by the aid of a penalty, but Hall ran back and the game was even for a time.

Millington and Brown were prominent with some good tackling and saving, but the Gloucester defence was severely taxed at times, Morgan being thrown to touch in goal on one occasion. Newport were giving the ball plenty of air, forwards and backs taking part, but there were numerous mistakes in handling, though Gloucester's tackling on the whole was very effective.

Webb and Hudson, with good kicks, gave Gloucester the advantage, and the forwards later followed this up with some brilliant footwork, which carried them close. Wetter ran back finely, but, though his pass was stopped, the ball rolled clear, and Hammett gathering scored a try, which Birt failed to convert.

The Gloucester forwards did well in subsequent play, but behind the combination of Newport told its tale. Shea made a couple of good runs, and put the City defence in danger, but Ward collaring prevented a score, and Webb brought relief.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

NEWPORT .. 2 goals (1m, 1p), 1 try (9 pts.)

GLOUCESTER ..... Nil

Newport attacked directly after the restart with a combined passing movement, but it broke down in the right corner. A penalty for off-side was well taken by Welshman, who found touch at the centre.

With capital footwork, Ayliffe being to the fore, the City made further headway, but a lucky flying kick to touch checked them. Dix opened out, Hudson put in a high punt and, Birt fumbling, Gloucester had a fine chance of opening their account, but Newport saved at the critical moment. Hammett eventually cleared with a splendid kick, but Dix, snapping up Wetter's transfer, cut out a nice opening. He passed inside to Hayes, but the latter could not hold it.

Playing finely together, Gloucester got in another strong attack, but could not quite clear the opposition. The Gloucester forwards continued to do finely in the loose, but the backs could not get set going properly. From inside the Newport 25 McPherson led a grand dribble right to the other end, Millington turning the ball to touch in the nick of time to save a try. Gloucester came right away from the dangerous position, Dix being instrumental in effecting the change in the venue. For a few minutes Gloucester held their own, but the Newport forwards breaking away in brilliant style, Whitfield crossed with a fine try, Birt converting.

Newport were seen to advantage on the drop-out, and from a pass by Wetter Martin cut straight through and transferred to Plummer, who dashed over in the corner. The place-kick failed.

Though 17 points down, Gloucester resumed with great keenness, Humphries following up a long kick and tackling Birt in possession. This led to a sharp attack on the Newport line, the City forwards working tremendously hard in one desperate effort. The ball was taken right to the mark, where Mansell picked up and scored a try. Welshman made a good attempt at conversion.

Encouraged by this well-deserved success, Gloucester played up splendidly, and confined operations to the Newport half for some few minutes. Newport tried hard to change the venue, but the City stuck to their powerful opponents in fine style. The home team eventually gained a good slice of ground by long kicking, but Webb replied well.

The Newport backs, however, were set on the move by Martin, and after clever handling Plummer scored wide out. Birt missed the goal points. Whitfield added a further unconverted try.

RESULT :

NEWPORT .... 3 goals (1p, 1m), 4 tries (23 pts.)  
GLOUCESTER ..... 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

Newport won handsomely, but Gloucester put up a plucky fight, and at times more than held their own. The forwards did extremely well, and Dix worked very hard. The backs for the most part tackled well, but in combined attacking movements they lacked the pace and skill of their opponents. Newport, however, were very erratic, and made a lot of mistakes. Fred Webb, who played centre, kicked finely, and Millington was very useful.

GLOUCESTER A v. NEWPORT A

CITY SECONDS' FINE PERFORMANCE

The return match between Gloucester A and Newport A took place at Kingsholm on Saturday afternoon. The home team was faced with the task of wiping out a defeat at Newport by 14 points to 3. Rain fell during the game and the ground was very soft. Both sides made several changes in their selected teams. There was a good attendance.

The teams were : –

Gloucester A : G. Smith; N. Daniell, H. Ashmead, F. Bloxsome, and B. Mace; W. Collins and G. Thomas; L. Meadows, A. Wright, G. Turner, T. Merrett, A. Comley, S. Hayward, T. Taylor, and J. Griffiths.

Newport A : B. Charlton; H. C. Thompson, O. Mail, H. Davis, and F. Lawrence; J. Groves and C. Gray; G. Boots, S. Skuse, W. Evans, C. Pile, W. Williams, O. Williams, F. Glover, and S. Carr.

Referee : Mr. L. Jones, Cinderford.

## THE GAME

Gloucester kicked off, and play settled at the centre. Newport got the better of the first scrums, but gained very little ground owing to faulty handling. Then the Gloucester threes got going, and the ball travelled to Mace, who ran well and then kicked, the ball going over the dead-ball line. Newport now came away and carried the ball at their feet to the home quarter, where from a scrum in front of the Gloucester goal Davies secured and landed a very pretty drop goal.

The visiting pack continued to put in some excellent work, both in the pack and in the loose, but the home team put up a strong defence and at length reached the visitors' quarter, Mace and Merrett being conspicuous in a couple of smart moves.

Relief came to Newport from a good kick to touch, but Ashmead was instrumental in putting Gloucester well up again. Off-side by the visitors gave Hayward a chance for a penalty, but he made a very poor attempt.

From a line-out Ashmead and Mace indulged in a promising dribble, but Mace kicked a little too hard and the ball was sent dead. Gloucester were now testing the Welshmen's defence. Another excellent chance to kick a penalty came to Gloucester, the charge being disallowed, but Smith did no better than Hayward with the heavy ball.

### HALF-TIME SCORE :

Newport A .....	1 goal (d)
Gloucester A .....	Nil

Gloucester were most unfortunate to be four points down on the resumption, as they had played the better game. The struggle continued to be keen, Mace being conspicuous with a clever bit of work on the wing, but the Welshmen's touch-finding kept them well up until a strong forward burst took the homesters into the Newport 25. They could do nothing, however, and the ball returned to Smith, who ran strongly and returned to the centre, where a likely burst by the City was pulled up.

A vigorous battle forward led to a very pretty dribble towards the Welshmen's line, but the ball rose and a mark saved the situation, and again the venue was changed, Newport working down the line. They were promptly given the right-about, and after a quiet spell Bloxsome secured, and after giving the "dummy" to a couple of the visitors passed to Ashmead, who kicked forward, but was just beaten in the race for possession, and a touch-down resulted.

Another score was missed only by an ace, the ball being touched down from a melee just the wrong side of the line. Gloucester were very dangerous now, but it was not until after relief had been gained and the Gloucester threes again secured that the first try came. This was gained by Bloxsome after a really fine movement, in which Daniell and he carried the ball into the corner. The kick was much too difficult for Hayward.

Then a fine thing happened which sent the crowd into raptures. A strong burst saw Thomas get possession of the ball by jumping into the air, and forcing his way through the crowd he scored beautifully. Smith failed with the kick.

The homesters were now playing grandly, and Daniell put in a spectacular run and only just failed.

#### RESULT :

Gloucester A ..... 2 tries (6 points)  
Newport A ..... 1 goal (d) (4 points)

#### REMARKS

Gloucester A were all out to-day, and played the best match of the season for apart from their unfortunate failure with the kicks, the whole team did particularly well against dangerous opponents. In the first half they undoubtedly had the best of the game, but they were not worked up to scoring point. In the second half, although Newport continued to put up a strong fight, they had the Welshmen beaten.

It was only by some exceptionally fine play that their tries were secured, however, and credit is due as much to the strong attack of the forwards as to the good work of the back division. In the pack the honours were about even, but the City men were stronger in the loose. Merrett again showed up well amongst the forwards. Collins played a keen game, and was well supported by Thomas, who is proving an able successor to Humphries.

The City threes surpassed themselves. Mace and Daniell did excellent work on the wings, and Bloxsome and Ashmead were dangerous inside. Mace has speed, combined with vigour, and should make a useful recruit. Smith played a safe game at back, as also did Charlton for Newport, who, however, was hampered by the Gloucester forwards. The Newport threes were generally on the defensive, and after the opening stages did very little handling.

JC