

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1924

FOOTBALL

NORTHAMPTON'S CRUSHING REVERSE AT KINGSHOLM

EAST MIDLANDERS COMPLETELY OUTCLASSED

PROLIFIC SCORING BY CITY TEAM

Northampton, whose only home defeat this season was to Gloucester last September, by a try to nil, opened their Easter tour at Kingsholm this afternoon. The visitors were strongly represented, the side including F. W. Layman, the Oxford University three-quarter, who is shortly returning to America.

Gloucester were short of Saxby and Voyce. The Hereford player was assisting Worcestershire and Herefordshire in their first County match, and Voyce was on tour with the Barbarians. Hughes re-appeared for the City after several weeks' absence, and played centre with Millington.

The weather was beautifully fine, and there was a capital attendance.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. A. Brown, T. Millington (capt.), E. Hughes, and S. R. Crowther.

HALF-BACKS : G. Poole and F. Meadows.

FORWARDS : A. Hall, F. W. Ayliffe, F. J. Seabrook, J. Merry, F. Ford, P. Carter, and T. Coulson.

NORTHAMPTON

BACK : R. Vaughan.

THREE-QUARTERS : C. S. Archer, W. H. Weston, H. A. Sambrook (capt.), and F. W. Layman.

HALF-BACKS : A. Earl and R. Jones.

FORWARDS : H. Griffin, A. Luck, J. B. Merry, T. Harris, E. Coley, G. W. Baldwin, C. P. Tebbitt, and G. Denton.

Referee : R. W. Barry

THE GAME

Ayliffe started for Gloucester punctually to time, and there being no response play opened in the visitors' 25. A line-out saw a home player kick through to Vaughan, who was pulled down at once. From the first scrum the Gloucester halves got possession, and the visiting backs being out of position a series of passes between Poole, Meadows, Millington and CROWTHER enabled the wing man to dash over the line and score without opposition. Millington missed the goal points.

On the restart Brown showed up with a run across the ground, and opened out to Millington, who cut through beautifully, but being partly tackled from behind he was forced to throw forward. Gloucester pressed hotly, and Northampton had to concede a minor from a kick over the line.

From the drop-out Northampton reached the centre; but gathering in the loose, Hughes brought off a wonderful run, covering more than half the length of the ground. He reached Vaughan, but was tackled in trying to beat him. This splendid effort was loudly cheered, although it failed in a score.

Gloucester continued to press and Earl being penalised for off-side, MILLINGTON kicked a neat penalty goal, and Gloucester were six points up, and they deserved it.

Restarting, the Gloucester forwards gave the ball air, and Coulson raced away to the full back, when he punted over Vaughan's head. The Northampton custodian, however, got back and cleared neatly. Crowther fielded and ran strongly, but he was pulled down before he could get clear. Play was fast and keen, the home side showing capital form.

Good kicking by Northampton enabled them to make headway, and Vaughan had a place for goal from half way, but the distance was too great. The visitors, opening out from a scrum, there was a chance on the right, but Archer missed the transfer badly. Immediately after Jones took an over-head kick from Poole and ran to the left, but Seabrook held on too long.

Subsequent football was even but on the Gloucester side of the half way. Layman and a forward combined to make an impression on the home defence, but good tackling kept the City line intact. Another penalty was awarded Northampton on the 25, but Vaughan's shot again failed.

The East Midlanders kept up the pressure until a mark from a line-out enabled Gloucester to clear to mid-way. Wild passing by Earl lost the visitors ground, and then Vaughan, fumbling, should have been easily tackled, but he was allowed to slip the defence and send to touch. Vaughan, a little later, came into prominence with a fine touch-finder in response to a kick by James, but Gloucester quickly changed the venue by the aid of a penalty.

Play for the most part was close, but at length Poole got the ball away cleverly to Meadows, and Brown, Hughes and Millington in turn handled. The captain yielded to Crowther, but though the wing man made a gallant effort he could not round Layman. Vaughan checked a dangerous rush of the Gloucester forwards, who came at him in a bunch, and from this point the visitors got past half-way.

Heeling by the Northampton forwards saw the backs open out, and Layman was placed in possession. The American ran strongly, but James tackled his man well.

Earl was injured in a melee and had to retire, but with 14 men Northampton pressed. The backs lost ground in attempting a passing move. A penalty was awarded Northampton, and VAUGHAN this time placed a goal, reducing Gloucester's lead by three points.

The game resumed and continued at a fast pace. The Gloucester forwards brought off some good loose work, but they were checked in time. Some wide passing by the visitors left the ball with Layman, but the Oxford man was brought down well.

Gloucester gained the advantage with clever all-round work, and from a movement by Coulson and Ayliffe the latter was only tackled five yards outside. Gloucester should have scored just now, but they missed it, and Northampton eased the pressure by touching down.

Earl had now returned and the exchanges were keener than ever. Coulson and Ayliffe were again distinguished in breaking away from a line-out, and Carter just failed to score in the corner. The exchanges were getting warm, and the referee had to administer a general caution. Just before the interval Gloucester attacked hotly and the Northampton line had a couple of narrow escapes.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal (p) 1 try

NORTHAMPTON 1 goal (p)

The game had been very keenly contested, but Gloucester, after their earlier successes, had had to fight very hard to maintain their supremacy. The second half opened with some lively play, but things went awkwardly for both sides. Coulson, who was showing fine form, dribbled in splendid style, but Vaughan luckily saved with a flying kick. Gloucester benefited by a penalty for off-side, and later a high punt by James was only saved over the line by Coley.

The Northampton forwards broke away with a good rush, and with useful kicks the centre was passed. Brown, with a sharp run, regained some 20 yards, and then Hughes, getting possession in the middle of the ground, broke clean away to Vaughan, with Ayliffe in attendance. Hughes' pass was knocked by the full back into the arms of AYLIFFE, who ran on and scored in a good position. The place kick failed.

Northampton restarted, and the visitors played up strongly. From passing Layman ran with great determination, but he was too close to touch and was bundled over the line by James. Clever combination by the visiting backs a minute later gave them a fine opening, but the centre held on and was upset.

For a couple of minutes Gloucester were in difficulties, but relief came and Bayliss headed a fine rush which was not stopped until Vaughan was reached. Play was hotly contested, but there were too many mistakes behind when the ball got amongst the backs.

Gloucester were now playing well together, and to atone for previous failures the backs combined in a beautiful movement which left the ball with BROWN. The latter had not much room to manoeuvre, but he got off well, and with a brilliant effort beat Vaughan and scored in the corner. The goal kick by Millington was a failure.

From the restart Ford started passing, and the ball went through several pairs of hands to Brown, who punted ahead, but with Vaughan out of position and Crowther well up the ball rolled to touch. Soon after the Gloucester backs shone in some passing, and Hughes made a capital run, but he stuck to the ball and was upset. The ball rolled away and Jones gathered and kicked up the field. James was penalised for illegally tackling an opponent, and with the kick Northampton gained a footing well inside the Gloucester half. Gloucester, however, soon cleared and got on the attack. Seabrook and Carter were prominent in a further rush, and Ayliffe gathering threw out wide to CROWTHER, who dashed over with the fourth try. Ayliffe this time took the shot at goal but failed.

Gloucester were now well ahead, but the City did not relax their efforts. Northampton twice tried to open out, but the passing broke down. Gloucester were more successful, and after some clever exchanges Brown punted down the field and over the line. CROWTHER dashed up with great speed, and, beating Layman for the touch, scored a fine try within a foot or so of the dead-ball line. Ayliffe met with no success with the kick at goal.

It was all Gloucester now, Northampton tiring perceptibly. From near the centre Brown picked up and cut out a fine opening for AYLIFFE to score the sixth try, which Millington converted with a neat kick.

Gloucester continued to show clever football, and one or two more tries should have accrued, once especially when, with an open goal, Brown failed to accept a low transfer from Hughes.

Just before the end Northampton had a spurt and reached the home 25, where a line-out took place. From the throw-out Ford secured and put in a big punt, the ball being carried more than half the length of the field. Vaughan thought it was going to touch, and left his effort to save too late. He missed the ball, and COULSON, kicking on, picked up and scored behind the posts. James converted, and the end came.

RESULT :

GLO'STER 3 goals (1p), 5 tries (28 pts.)

NORTHAMPTON 1 goal (p) (3 pts.)

REMARKS

Northampton's crushing reverse came in the light of a complete surprise. After the first shock – when Gloucester scored six points in almost as many minutes – the East Midlanders did put up something of a fight for a time, but the second half collapse was inexplicable in a side which has met with so much success this season.

In the last quarter especially the East Midlanders made a sorry show; and up against the City were made to appear a second-class combination. Twenty-eight points to three is some beating, but on their display this afternoon Northampton deserved it.

Gloucester were in fine form, and the backs gave one of their best displays of the season. The forwards did their part gallantly, scrummaging well, breaking up quickly, and showing cleverness and skill in the open and lines-out.

It was hot work between the rival packs at times, and more than once it looked as if there might be unpleasant developments. But Mr. Barry, the referee, held a firm grip of the game, and nothing serious resulted.

The City forwards, as a whole, were the stronger and more resourceful eight, with Coulson, Ayliffe, Carter and Ford perhaps the more distinguished. But Hall, Bayliss, Seabrook and Merry shared equally in the honours. The men maintained a fine pace all through, and in point of condition completely outlasted their opponents.

Behind, Gloucester's supremacy was very marked. Poole and Meadows did splendidly in association at half-back, and they had the pull of Earl and Jones all the way through. The combination of the third line was as good as anything seen from the City this season, and one could make allowances for the few mistakes made in the general excellence of the football displayed.

The fact that the wing men were credited with four of the seven tries scored showed they were well supplied with chances. Millington and Hughes co-operated well at centre, and both cut out some fine openings.

One or two runs by Hughes were very spectacular, and Millington, besides his successful work in attack, did finely in defence. Crowther and Brown were greatly distinguished on the respective wings, both showing splendid dash.

Crowther, who notched three tries, was on his toes all the time. He was opposite Layman, who took some stopping on the few occasions he was served; but the Gloucestrian caught his opponent napping when he sprinted up and touched down just before the ball crossed the dead ball line. Crowther was sent up against the fencing and temporarily laid out, but was able to resume. Brown's try was, perhaps, the gem of the afternoon – a really brilliant finish to a clever bit of combination.

Northampton, on the whole, were a disappointing side. Amongst the forwards were several good and fast men in the loose, but the pack lacked cohesion and the scrummaging generally was poor. Coley was one of the best of the eight, and was always prominent.

At half, Earl and Jones were not allowed to do much effective work, and both men passed wildly at times. The tackling of the backs was uncertain, and the combined efforts in attack very faulty. Sambrook was inclined to hold on too long, and Layman did not get many chances. The Oxonian, however, showed up with several strong runs, and once on the move he took some stopping.

Vaughan, at full back, did not sustain his reputation, and was inferior to James on the day's play. That give-away try of the visiting custodian in the last minute was one of the simplest imaginable, though Coulson deserves all credit for his fast following-up.

Easter Monday : Gloucester Boys v. Tredegar Boys; at Kingsholm.