

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1921

## FOOTBALL

### GLOUCESTER'S LUCKY GET OUT

#### GAME WITH PONTYPOOL SAVED IN LAST FIVE MINUTES

#### WELSHMEN'S FINE PACK OF FORWARDS

For the return match with Pontypool at Kingsholm, Gloucester were handicapped in having some of the regular team unavailable, the absentees including Stanley Cook (centre three-quarter), and Tom Voyce, J. Harris, and W. F. Warde (forwards).

Voyce and Harris were both on the injured list, and Warde had an important business appointment.

With the exception of W. Hodder (who was playing for Wales against France) and Jack Jones, Pontypool brought their strongest fifteen, and bearing in mind the severe defeat Gloucester sustained in the first game at Pontypool (20 points to 8), it was recognised the City's ground record was in dire danger of being lost.

The afternoon turned out beautifully bright, and the ground was in fine condition.

The attendance included some 400 to 500 Pontypool supporters, and at the start there was about 5,000 present.

There was a late change in the Pontypool team, R. Bullock taking the place of Veater in the forwards.

## GLOUCESTER

BACK : C. Cook.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. Brown, T. Millington, F. Webb (capt.), and N. Daniell.

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

FORWARDS : F. W. Ayliffe, J. H. Webb, G. Holford, A. Hall, S. Smart, Mumford, J. F. Lawson, and F. Mansell.

## PONTYPOOL

BACK : R. Vaughan.

THREE-QUARTERS : Ivor Llewellyn, J. Kerr, T. Probert, and L. G. Jenkins.

HALF-BACKS : G. Stacey and S. Coleman.

FORWARDS : F. Phillips (capt.), E. Bullock, G. Oliver, T. Woods, T. Rees, J. Williams, J. Hayward, and F. Brown.

Referee : Mr. W. H. Vanstone (Bath).

## THE GAME

Gloucester played in white jerseys, as there was a similarity in the respective colours of the clubs. The City captain won the toss, and the visitors kicked off against the sun. Lawson failed to gather, and the ball rolled behind him to Cook, who had his kick charged down. The ball was sent over the line, and Daniell had to concede a minor.

On the drop-out Pontypool were at once awarded a penalty, and with the kick Vaughan sent the ball to well inside the home 25. Some loose scrambling forward play followed, ending in a Gloucester man missing the ball, with the result that the City had to touch down again.

On the restart play was near the centre, where Pontypool were penalised. Gloucester made headway with the kick, and later Ayliffe with a nice punt gained further ground. The home forwards were rushed in a scrum and the ball being kicked into the open Kerr sent ahead. Cook slipped in trying to pick up, and he passed back to Daniell. But Jenkins came through, and with a flying kick sent to near the home line.

There was an attempt to save, but the ball rolled away and over the line, and Jenkins touched down for a soft try near the posts. [Name unreadable] converted, and Pontypool were five points up in less than as many minutes.

Gloucester restarted, but play continued to favour 'Pool, who were very strong forward. Some well-judged kicks put Gloucester on the defence, but a penalty relieved the pressure. Further ground was made with a loose rush, and next Millington charged down Vaughan's kick and raced ahead. Woods, however, got back and turned the ball to touch.

Gloucester were now in a good attacking position, and from a pass by Dix, Robbins dropped for goal, but missed. Vaughan, however, was collared directly he received, and the Pontypool line was in danger. Fumbling lost the City a good position, and Probert, intercepting, ran and kicked over Cook's head, the ball going out of play at the home 25.

For a scrum infringement, Pontypool were penalised, and following up the kick Gloucester prevented a return. The Welshmen quickly worked back, a clever run by Stacey giving the visitors a good opening. A knock-on ensued, however, and the movement came to a stop.

Ensuing play was scrambling, both sets of players failing to control the ball accurately with hands or feet. A great rush by the visiting forwards took a lot of checking, J. Webb eventually doing the needful. Gloucester came away by the aid of a penalty, and the game was desperately fought out at mid-field.

Loose play by the City lost ground, and Pontypool again pressed. From a scrum close in Dix sent back to Robbins, but the latter was collared, and matters looked very dangerous. So far Pontypool had been clearly superior, the home players being decidedly off-colour. Eventually with a loose dribble Gloucester gained some 30 yards, but the visiting forwards immediately rushed back with dashing football.

The Gloucester forwards were overpowered in the scrums, and the backs when they did get the ball could not seem to do the right thing. Robbins got another kick charged down, and it was a narrow escape for a try. Soon afterwards the 'Pool backs opened out nicely, and a long pass out to Llewellyn gave the left winger a chance. The visitors ran well, but Cook effected a magnificent tackle a dozen yards from the line. A free fell to the Welshmen directly afterwards, but the shot for goal went wide of the posts.

Play for the next few minutes hovered in the Gloucester half, and up to this point there had been only one team in it. There was a slight delay whilst a visitor was attended to, and on resuming Jenkins shone in a splendid run, in the course of which he shook off several would-be tacklers with ease. He eventually gained the open, but passed wildly with several colleagues well placed.

Another stoppage now took place owing to Coleman being injured, but he was able to resume. Continuing, Pontypool got the ball out to their backs, and they made a bold bid for a score, which only just failed. Gloucester were again severely pressed, and from an attack on the left the defence was given a warm time. Fortunately it held out.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
PONTYPOOL ..... 1 goal  
GLOUCESTER ..... Nil

The first half had gone wholly in favour of Pontypool, and the five points' lead did not give an accurate idea of the visitors' superiority. Forward the Welshmen held a big advantage, both in the scrums and in the loose, and behind the men also displayed a good deal of smartness. On the form displayed something special was required from the City to turn the fortunes of the game. Ayliffe restarted, and Gloucester opened brightly with a break-through by Robbins, but the passing went astray and the ball was kicked to touch. Near the centre the home forwards lost the ball in a loose scrum, and a Pontypool man picking up there was every chance of a score. The home tackling, however, proved effective, and the situation was saved.

The Welshmen, however, rushed well from the next scrum, and Gloucester were forced back onto their line. Here Dix ran round behind and passed to Millington, who got the ball to touch some 20 yards up the field. Some vigorous play followed, mostly amongst the forwards, but the visitors maintained their superiority, rushing the home men off the ball with ease.

Play was wholly confined to the Gloucester half, and when the City did once get away off-side spoiled it. From a sharp run and punt over the line Cook touched down with Probert very close up. Following the drop-out the Gloucester backs showed up with a nice bout of passing – the first real movement they had taken part in so far. Webb eventually cross-kicked, but the ball was captured by an opponent, and though he was immediately upset Gloucester got no further.

The game continued very fast and keen, Gloucester doing better in the next few minutes. Dix twice got the ball away cleverly, and ground was made, but Pontypool were sound defenders and tackled with deadly effect. Some fine kicking by Vaughan gave his side territorial advantage, and the visitors kept operations for a time in the home end. Then Dix served Robbins, and some brilliant passing, in which Robbins, Hall and Millington took part, promised well. Brown, however, failed to take his transfer, and though Millington recovered the possible scoring chance was lost.

After this Pontypool came away again, and Cook, running in to take the ball in the air, missed it altogether. It bounced nicely into a visitor's hands, and a try seemed certain, but Hall got back and effected a wonderful save. Gloucester had a couple of narrow escapes in quick succession, but with a big effort relief was obtained. Daniell, with a nice effort on the right, placed his side well down, but the Welshmen changed the venue with some well-judged kicking.

Only a few minutes were left for play now, and there were visions of the ground record going. Putting forth a special effort, the Gloucester forwards heeled several times, and the backs handled smartly. A fine dash by Daniell put Gloucester near the line.

From the throw-out the ball came to Fred Webb, who side-stepped an immediate opponent and dashed over with a try behind the posts amidst tremendous cheering, which was renewed when Robbins goaled and equalised the score.

In the closing stages Pontypool made desperate efforts to regain the lead, and close on time there was a line-out a couple of yards from the home goal-line. The City saved and a scrum followed. At this the visitors were penalised, and Robbins punted out of danger, and immediately the whistle sounded "No-side."

#### RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ..... 1 goal (5 points)  
PONTYPOOL ..... 1 goal (5 points)

#### REMARKS

The Gloucester record is safe; but, frankly, it was a lucky get-out for Gloucester to-day. On the run of the play Pontypool were decidedly superior at all points, and considering the amount of attacking done by the visitors it was marvellous their scoring was kept down to one try – and that a rather soft affair obtained quite early in the game.

Pontypool pride themselves on their forwards, and this afternoon Tom Woods and his colleagues proved themselves one of the finest packs seen at Kingsholm for a long time. Man for man the Gloucester eight were giving away about a stone and a half in weight; as a consequence they were overpowered in the scrums, and not until late in the contest were they able to do any effective heeling.

It was not because they could not control the ball; when it was hooked the visitors, by sheer pushing, heaved them off it. In the loose Pontypool displayed splendid dash and resource, and all round they well sustained their reputation as the strongest club pack in the country. Considering their handicap, the Gloucester front did good work; but as a whole they had to give best to their opponents this afternoon.

There was a weakness in tackling at times, and in the first half a number of mistakes were made in handling. Holford, Ayliffe and Smart were prominent for individual efforts, and Hall was a tower of strength in defence. When brought out, too, he took part in one or two nice passing movements.

Behind a beaten pack Dix was not seen to so much advantage as usual; but he accomplished some good spoiling and saving. Robbins was placed at a similar disadvantage, and altogether the home halves did not scintillate as in previous matches.

With limited opportunities, the Gloucester three-quarters were not much in the picture. Some very risky things were attempted with the ball at times, and in more than one instance Pontypool just failed to take advantage.

Fred Webb's equalising try was another opportunist effort; it was really Gloucester's one and only chance, and the captain deserves every credit for the smart manner in which he snapped it up.

Millington did a lot of useful things, and of the wings Daniell appeared more effective than his colleague on the other side, though Brown showed any amount of pluck in going down to the forward rushes.

Pontypool had a smart set of backs. Jenkins took a lot of holding at centre, and all the men kicked well. Stacey and Coleman combined nicely on occasion, and were more than a useful pair of full-backs[*sic*].

Vaughan played a lovely game at full back, his touch-kicking being a feature. Cook, who only came into the team at the last moment – he had cried off owing to a bad foot – was not up to his usual standard.

Next week : Coventry, at Kingsholm.

## ANOTHER VICTORY FOR GLOUCESTER 'A'

### GORDON LEAGUE'S KEEN DEFENCE

Realising that they were entertaining some formidable opponents this afternoon at Hempsted, Gordon League confined themselves chiefly to defensive work, and were so successful in their efforts to keep the Reserves out that it was not until 15 minutes before the end of the game that the visitors were able to open their account.

Gloucester had the better of the game throughout, and kept up considerable pressure, but the Leaguers prevented them opening up the game to any extent, and when the backs did get the ball minor infringements prevented them doing anything tangible.

Towards the end, however, Collins got the ball out to H. Ashmeade, who was playing stand-off half, and that player put in a good solo run and scored an unconverted try. A few minutes later the threes again handled, and after a run by Ashmeade, Washbourn took a pass nicely and grounded near the posts for Bloxsome to goal.

The League were well served by their scrum half L. Smith, Tovey and Lucas on the wings, and James, their full-back.

Gloucester missed two of their regular forwards. Adams was of but little use out of his accustomed position at full-back, which was filled by F. Ashmead.

#### RESULT :

Gloucester A ..... 1 goal 1 try (8 points)  
Gordon League ..... Nil