

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1921

## FOOTBALL

### GLOUCESTER UNLUCKY AT LEICESTER

FAR THE SUPERIOR SIDE, BUT UNABLE TO SCORE

MANY NARROW ESCAPES OF "TIGERS" LINE

For the return match with Leicester to-day, Gloucester had a heavy absentee list, and the chances of repeating the victory gained over the "Tigers" at Kingsholm in January were thereby considerably reduced. In addition to C. Cook, Stanley Cook, Tom Voyce, J. H. Webb, and J. F. Lawson, there were further defections last evening, W. Dix, A. Robbins, and W. F. Warde all having to cry off. Dix has been playing under difficulties for several weeks past, and had he studied his own interests he would have rested some time before.

As a result of these latest withdrawals the City back division had to be rearranged. The intention last evening was to play W. Collins at scrum half; T. Burns filling the vacant position at centre and F. Ashmead that of custodian, whilst T. Taylor succeeded Warde in the front rank. It was a makeshift sort of arrangement, but it was regarded as the best possible under the circumstances. Whether the side was capable of putting up a close fight with the powerful Leicester combination at Welford-road remained to be seen; but the outlook was certainly not encouraging.

The Gloucester team had to undergo a further change this morning. Following the lead of other second teamers recently, Collins declined to play; and Dix, despite his damaged ribs, consented to turn out.

Gorgeous weather prevailed, and the magnificent enclosure of the Leicester Club looked at its best. The huge covered stands were well filled, and the attendance must have reached 14,000 when the teams took the field.

#### GLOUCESTER

BACK : F. Ashmead.

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

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

FORWARDS : F. W. Ayliffe, G. Holford, S. Smart, A. Hall, J. Harris, T. Taylor, C. Mumford, and F. Mansell

#### LEICESTER

BACK : J. Wilkinson.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. Haselmere, P. W. Lawrie (capt.), A. M. Smallwood, and W. J. Gibbs.

HALF-BACKS : G. W. Wood and F. M. Taylor.

FORWARDS : G. Ward, F. Taylor, Gordon Vears, Norman Coates, W. C. Hicks, C. Cross, W. Buckler, and H. Sharratt.

Referee : Major J. E. Partridge.

#### THE GAME

Gloucester opened well, but inside the home 25 Mumford was penalised for tripping, and with the resultant kick Leicester found touch at centre. A loose dribble by the Tigers carried play to the City quarter, where attempts to open out by Wood were foiled. Leicester had Coates out as an extra back, and Gloucester followed suit by bringing out Hall.

A lovely bit of footwork by Harris and Dix gained Gloucester some thirty yards, but Haselmere kicked back to touch. Gloucester got the ball out nicely, and good passing gave Brown possession, but Lawrie effected a grand tackle.

From the next scrum Dix opened out, and a lovely bout of passing was witnessed. Cutting inside, Webb brought off a wonderful run, but his pass to Millington, with the defence beaten, was ruled forward. This effort was deservedly applauded by the spectators. Playing strongly, Gloucester maintained the pressure until a long kick went to Ashmead, who, however, returned well to touch. Gloucester rushed a couple of scrums well, and the ball was kicked over the line, a minor being conceded. The drop out was well followed up, but Gloucester were soon on the move again.

Dix opened out on the short side, and Webb executed another remarkable run, dodging superbly. He was, however, tackled from behind when almost clear. Gloucester continued to maintain the upper hand, but a couple of penalties against the City enabled Leicester to change the venue. The City conceded a touchdown from a kick over the line by Lawrie from a penalty, and subsequent play was even.

The Gloucester forwards were doing well in the scrums, and there was some smart handling until Hall missed. Leicester retaliated, but Haselmer was upset. Dix and Millington gave the backs plenty of the ball, and the handling was clean and accurate. These movements gave Gloucester a good territorial position, and Dix had a drop for goal but missed.

Immediately after the City had a good chance from close in, but Webb knocked on right on the goal line. Gloucester worked desperately to effect a score, but were unlucky. Then Wood relieved to touch at the centre with a good kick. From a throw-out Cross broke away. Ashmead failed to bring off a tackle, and the pass going to Frank Taylor, the latter scored a try which Wilkinson failed to convert. Thus Leicester opened the scoring after Gloucester had had nearly all the play and had displayed much superior form.

Gloucester restarted in dashing style, but a penalty lost a good slice of ground. Just before the interval wild passing by Leicester saw Brown dribble away, but he was impeded, and Gloucester were robbed of a possible try.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
LEICESTER ..... 1 try  
GLOUCESTER ..... Nil

Gloucester's form in the first half was surprisingly good. Except for brief periods the City had had considerably the better of matters both forward and behind, and on the play deserved to have scored ten points at least instead of being three points down.

Gloucester were awarded a free soon after the resumption, and Webb found touch well inside the Tigers' 25. Taylor, however, punted out, and following up quickly, charged down Ashmead's return. Fortunately for the visitors the ball rebounded into touch. The ensuing play was a trifle scrappy, until Brown, taking advantage of an opponent's loose pass, dribbled clear. He finally picked up and threw out to the right, but it was snapped up by Haselmere, who ran back to midfield before being checked. Soon afterwards the Gloucester backs came away with an other promising passing movement. All went well until an opening was in sight, when another intercepted pass occurred, and a good opportunity of scoring the equalising try was lost.

The game continued bright, but all the best work behind was done by Gloucester. Dix and Millington were combining beautifully at half-back, and outshining the opposing couple. Weak passing by Leicester allowed Webb to gather, for the captain to screw-kick finely to touch. Dix got the ball out from the next scrum, and Millington threw out wide, only to see Burns slightly knock on with the line in sight. Leicester gained relief by the aid of a penalty, and when the City had worked back, another penalty was given against them.

With long kicks, one from a penalty for off-side, Leicester gained a footing in the Gloucester end, but a fruitless drop at goal by Smallwood only forced a minor. After this there was a spell of even play. Wood and Taylor tried hard to break through up the centre of the field, but the tackling was too good. Then the Gloucester forwards, following up smartly, tackled Wilkinson in possession, and the City were on top again.

The Leicester line narrowly escaped through a mistake by Smallwood, but Lawrie recovered and relieved cleverly. Next came a beautiful round of passing by the Gloucester backs. Webb, however, in trying to double inside, was collared only three yards from the line.

Anxious moments ensued for Leicester, but a penalty for off-side against Gloucester gave the Tigers temporary relief. Gloucester returned to the attack, but they could do everything but score. Another penalty came to the rescue of Leicester when the visitors were pressing hotly, but Gloucester soon came back again.

Wilkinson was collared under his goal after Lawrie had fumbled a high punt, and only sheer hard luck robbed the City of a try. Working desperately to save the game, Gloucester rushed to the line, and the ball was driven over. Several players fell on it together, a minor being awarded. Right to the end Gloucester attacked, but could not draw level, and Leicester were returned the luckiest of winners.

RESULT :

LEICESTER ..... 1 try (3 points)  
GLOUCESTER ..... Nil

REMARKS

Gloucester were full value for a substantial win to-day. On the play Leicester were a thoroughly beaten side, and it was remarkable how they kept their lines from being crossed. The only try of the match was of little merit, and was initiated from a knock forward in a line out.

Gloucester's form was a veritable surprise. The forwards beat Leicester well in the scrums, and Taylor and Wood were clearly out-pointed by Millington and Dix. In the three-quarters, too, Gloucester held a decided superiority, the men passing and running brilliantly at times. Fred Webb contributed several dazzling runs, but in trying the final cut through he just failed to clear the defenders. The last ten minutes saw continual attacks on the Leicester goal, and the City experienced the hardest lines imaginable in not penetrating the defence.

Ashmead at full-back fielded and kicked well, but on the few occasions his defence was tested he appeared a trifle uncertain. Leicester shaped poorly behind, and but for Percy Lawrie's fine marking Gloucester would have scored several times.

## ANOTHER VICTORY FOR GLOUCESTER A

### BATH AGAIN EASILY BEATEN

Bath A came to Kingsholm to-day, and were set the task of wiping out the 31 points' defeat inflicted upon them by Gloucester A at Bath. The weather was glorious, but the attendance was thin.

Teams : –

Gloucester A. – H. Adams; H. Ashmeade, W. Washbourne, F. Bloxsome (capt.), and J. Phelps; W. Collins and F. Meadows; A. Wright, E. Richardson, S. Bayliss, T. Bridges, J. Hawker, J. H. Webb, D. Collins, and J. H. Merrett.

Bath A. – F. Jenner; A. Anderson, H. Crane, D. Strudwick, and L. F. Birt; H. Dowding and E. G. Northway; G. Collins, D. Clifford, W. Bascomb, T. Day, A. Fisher, G. E. Blake, A. Boley, and D. Turner.

Referee : Mr. J. Hall (Cinderford).

Gloucester fielded 14 men and Bloxsome put the ball into the first couple of scrums, but Collins then turned out. A free in favour of the City Reserves gained little ground, and play was at the centre until Collins, getting the ball away nicely, set the threes in motion, Ashmeade running well and punting inside for Washbourne to field and race past Jenner with the first try. Adams failed with the kick.

After the restart the ball came to Adams, who kicked strongly to midfield, Jenner allowing the ball to cross the line and touching down.

After the kick-out from the 25 the Seconds came away and attacked strongly. Bath being penalised from a scrum near the line, Adams took a drop and kicked a splendid goal.

Bath were now entirely on the defensive, being subjected to strong attacks. In the course of open play, in which the forwards and threes took part, Bloxsome picked up and started a round of passing, Washbourne eventually securing and giving the dummy in fine style notched a second try. Adams made no mistake with the goal points.

Then the Bath threes tried passing, Crane and Strudwick running well, but Birt over-ran his pass and the movement failed. Again Gloucester were in front of the Bath goal, and a strong forward burst saw Jack Webb pick up and run over with the fourth try, which went unconverted.

Phelps was next in the picture, his score coming as the result of a combined movement on the part of the threes. He went over in the corner, and the angle was too difficult for conversion.

Bath now made a lively burst. The threes handled, and then the ball flew along at the feet of the forwards, being carried to the goal line, where Blake won the race for the touch. Crane goaled.

Encouraged by this success, the Bath forwards put more vim into their work and twice carried play to the Gloucester 25, but they were thrust back, and after a scrum in the visitors' quarter the Gloucester threes got going, and Ashmeade, with a characteristic run, scored with a couple of opponents hanging on. The kick failed.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Gloucester A ..... 2 goals (1p), 4 tries  
Bath A ..... 1 goal

Gloucester resumed with a couple of bursts, but minor infringements interfered with the carrying out of the movements. Then Bath worked up the line, and one of their forwards picked up and punted down the field. Adams was tackled in possession and held the ball, Bath being awarded a penalty. A feeble drop at goal resulted. The Gloucester forwards came away, but twice the home side were penalised, and Bath kicked to touch in their 25.

The visitors could do nothing tangible, however, and a bout of passing by the Gloucester threes carried play to the other end of the field, where Bath were lucky in keeping their line intact in the face of a couple of strong attacks.

Gloucester were worried by the sun this half, and could not bring off a score, although they were keeping Bath severely on the defensive. They persevered, however, and at last were rewarded, Collins, Bridges and Phelps being concerned in a round of passing, the latter going through the opposition and scoring too wide out for Adams to goal.

Then Ashmeade dashed down the line, but was bored into touch. A visit to the Gloucester end by the Bath forwards enlivened the proceedings, but they could not keep the advantage.

A splendid solo effort by Anderson was the next feature, the wing man picking up at the Bath 25 and running strongly down the field unsupported and followed by the home pack. He turned inside to avoid Adams, and in doing so was collared from behind and brought down.

A tendency amongst the threes to hang on a bit too long brought several movements to grief, but Gloucester A continued to press to the end.

#### RESULT :

Gloucester A ..... 2 goals (1p), 5 tries (23 pts.)  
Bath A ..... 1 goal (5 pts.)

#### COMMENTS

The first five minutes were sufficient to show that Gloucester A were not up against a serious proposition. Bath A exhibited a feeble defence, and the home team had no difficulty in keeping up a constant stream of tries until the second half, when perhaps owing to the sun in their eyes, they fell off badly.

Collins was behind the best pack and generally got the ball, although Downing did not let him have it all his own way. Meadows played a keen game and should make a useful player.

The home threes all played on the top of their form, and Adams made a good substitute for Ashmead.

Bath were fair in the loose, but in all departments they were outclassed.

JC