

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1924

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER BEATEN AGAIN IN POOR GAME

FIRST VICTORY FOR GUY'S AT KINGSHOLM

It was a seriously weakened team Gloucester fielded against Guy's Hospital at Kingsholm this afternoon, and the prospects of another defeat for the City were more than likely. Owing to the knee injury sustained against Bristol last week, Sid Brown (the acting captain) was not available; Dr. Taylor was out of town for the week-end; and E. L. Saxby, chosen for the centre position, could not accept the invitation to play. Thus three vacancies – outside half and two at three-quarter – had to be filled by players from the A team, viz., W. Prior, G. R. James, and P. Hogg. The latter figured in the premier ranks on one occasion last season against Llanelly, but James and Prior had had no previous experience of first-class football. Both came from the Gloucester Old Boys Club.

Guy's, whose four previous visits to Kingsholm had resulted in defeats, had a strong side doing duty, especially in the back division, although C. L. Steyn, the well-known sprinter, was an absentee.

GLOUCESTER

BACK : T. Millington.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. Crowther, G. R. James, E. H. Hughes and W. Prior.

HALF-BACKS : P. Hogg and W. Collins.

FORWARDS : S. Bayliss, F. Ayliffe, F. Ford, A. Hall, J. Merry, H. Collier, J. Seabrook, and M. Short.

GUY'S HOSPITAL

BACK : P. D. Spence.

THREE-QUARTERS : G. R. Mostert, J. Finnemore, H. Grahame Davies, and R. Fellowes-Smith.

HALF-BACKS : W. Hopps and V. R. Preen.

FORWARDS : J. Durr, G. C. Cameron, B. G. Scholefield, N. M. Holloway, J. W. Schabert, E. W. Hutchinson, G. E. C. Tregarthen, and E. King-Turner.

Referee : Major Partridge.

THE GAME

The afternoon was beautifully fine, but the attendance was not up to the average when the teams lined out. There was one late change in the visitors' ranks, Finnemore taking the place of the Captain (Van Schalkwijk).

Ayliffe kicked off for Gloucester, and opening play was contested at the centre. Each side in turn got the ball out smartly, but the backs were content to kick to touch. A little later Collins fed Hogg, and James and Crowther handled prettily, ending in the latter cross-kicking, but with the Gloucester forwards well up the ball bounced awkwardly and was lost.

Gloucester confined operations to the visitors' 25, but play was a bit scrappy, and several wild passes ensued on either side. James showed up well in stopping a loose rush, and later gathered nicely and got in a screw kick to touch.

Heeling by the Guy's forwards saw Preen miss a pass from Hopps, and the City forwards taking advantage dribbled to Spence. The latter, however, fielded cleverly and drove the home team back to the centre with a clever touch-finder. From a line-out a visitor broke away, but his pass was taken by Seabrook, who punted out of touch. Immediately after the Hospital got in another strong attack, but a glorious tackle saved the situation.

With a couple of useful kicks and a dashing loose burst Gloucester changed the venue. Spence again came to the rescue of his side when matters looked dangerous, the full back clearing in good style. Millington put Gloucester in a good position with a lovely touch-kick, but the Hospital soon broke away, and smart individual runs carried them beyond midfield.

Preen was next away with a good dash, but Millington tackled his man splendidly. From passing Finnemore had a dash for the corner, but was upset by Hughes and another close in. Hughes was damaged in his effort, and had to leave the field – a further serious handicap for Gloucester. Seabrook was brought out to the centre position and the game continued. Play went in favour of the Hospital, who gave the ball plenty of air, but little ground was gained with the passing.

From a mark kick the City cleared to the centre, where Gloucester attempted passing, but the handling was too slow. Another bout, started in good style, was spoiled with a forward transfer. Gloucester held their own territorially for the next few minutes, but there were too many mistakes on both sides to make play interesting.

James was applauded for a sharp dash through, but nothing resulted, and by the aid of a penalty Guy's transferred play to the home end. Following, an exchange of kicks between Millington and Spence ended in favour of the visiting custodian, who got the ball to touch ten yards outside. Gloucester cleared a little, but from a scrum Hopps fed PREEN, who cut through the home defence, and shaking off Millington finished a fine run by scoring between the goal posts. Grahame Davies added the goal points.

Gloucester re-started, and Collins, with a flying kick, sent to touch near Guy's 25. A penalty against the City quickly lost the ground, and the Londoners attacked with a burst through and punt by a forward. Millington, however, saved cleverly. James, who was shaping creditably, led to a Gloucester advance; some passing by the home backs a little later was too slow to be effective.

The game, though open, was not particularly attractive and lacked finish. The Gloucester forwards, warming to their work, got the better of the exchanges, and later there was a smart movement initiated by James which nearly ended in a score.

Prior made a praiseworthy effort to score, but was tackled. In the next minute the City forwards burst over the line in a body, but only a minor was given. From this point Guy's broke away, and clever passing sent Finnemore away. The left wing ran hard, but coming up against Millington fell to a grand tackle.

HALF-TIME :

GUY'S HOSPITAL 1 goal

GLOUCESTER Nil

Guy's restarted, but though the ball failed to travel the regulation ten yards the referee took no notice, and allowed the game to proceed. The Gloucester forwards heeling, Collins fed James, who made a big effort to break through, but was brought down in time. In a loose rush the City kicked over the line, but the ball rolled out of play. From the drop-out Hogg misfielded, and the visitors dashed away. A forward ran some 20 yards and put in a short punt, but Millington gathered in the face of strong opposition and made his mark – a wonderful save. With his kick Millington gained some 30 yards to touch.

The Gloucester forwards were getting the ball cleverly in the scrums, but Hogg was weak at outside half, and could not seem to hold the ball. It was due to an effort by James that placed Gloucester in a good position, but Crowther fielded the ball off-side and a penalty followed to the Hospital.

The Gloucester backs were again placed in possession, but Spence fielded a kick down, and easily eluding Crowther near touch ran and sent to Millington, who was tackled. Gloucester were still having a full share of the game, but on the whole the football was poor and lacking in incident.

The City backs especially were weak in all their attacks, combination being at a discount. With their speedier backs Guy's should have done much better, but they, too, failed badly in open movements.

The Gloucester forwards, taking matters into their own hands, brought off a loose rush which took a lot of stopping, but when the ball came out Hogg persistently kicked straight to Spence, who was never found wanting with his returns.

From a penalty Millington had a long shot for goal, but missed his object, a touch-down resulting. The City, with strong forward work, kept up the attack, but there was no scoring ability. Twice in quick succession Guy's were penalised, but Millington failed with his shots at goal. The seven City forwards held the mastery of their opponents, but though the football was keen and vigorous, the tactics on the part of both sides was downright bad. On the whole it was a wretched display for two first-class teams.

Subsequent play, despite one or two spurts by the Guy's backs, showed no improvement. The Hospital, with strong dashes, gained a footing in the home 25, but they were beaten off, and the City in turn took up the attack. They, however, never looked like scoring, and the game ended with Guy's still leading by 5 points.

RESULT :

GUY'S HOSPITAL 1 goal (5 points)
GLOUCESTER Nil

REMARKS

One of the poorest exhibitions of football it has been my lot to witness for a long time, and it was really a relief when the game finished. Gloucester, perhaps, are to be commiserated with in the fact that an already weakened team was further handicapped by the loss of Hughes, the one three-quarter who was likely to be of any service in attack, but really the form of both sides was such that neither deserved to win.

With the backs fielded by Guy's to-day they should have won comfortably, but again and again movements broke down badly, due to missed passes or bad tactics. It was a long way short of the real Hospital team one sees at Honor Park.

The work of the Gloucester forwards deserved better support. Playing seven men for more than three-parts of the game, the City front performed with great credit, and in the second half especially continually beat the opposition in the scrums. There were times when the ball did not come out as it should have done, but Collins had frequent opportunities of opening out. The scrum half did his part effectively, but Hogg persistently kicked, and nine times out of ten drove the ball straight to the opposing full-back, with the same monotonous result – ground lost. If Hogg was playing to instructions he must be excused, but I can hardly think this possible.

As an attacking force the Gloucester backs were a negligible quantity. Of combination little was attempted, and the passing was too slow and obvious to give trouble. Of the four, James did his best, and with more experience in tactics should improve on the day's display. Prior is not a wing, and recognising this fact, it would be unfair to criticise him. He got about two passes during the game, and was not given a fair show.

Gloucester cannot expect to win matches with the backs on show this afternoon, and one fears as to the future. Sid Brown is suffering from torn ligaments, and is likely to be off for a week or two; Hughes' collar bone is reported "gone again." Hard lines indeed for the Club, which is under a distinct cloud just now.

The full back play of Millington and Spence were the features of the game. The Gloucester custodian effected one or two marvellous clearances, and had another less experienced and efficient player been in charge the City would have suffered badly. Spence, too, gave a delightful exhibition, showing skill in clearing in face of keen opposition, and kicking a good length.

Gloucester lost another record to-day – it was Guy's first victory at Kingsholm !

Next week : Gloucester v. Cardiff, at Cardiff; A teams at Kingsholm.

JC