

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1925

FOOTBALL

GLO'STER OPEN HOLIDAY GAMES WITH GOOD WIN

FAST AND INTERESTING PLAY

NORTHERN CREATE VERY FAVOURABLE IMPRESSION

The famous old Northumberland club, founded in 1875, opened their Easter tour at Kingsholm to-day, this being the team's first appearance at Gloucester. The doings of the North of England Rugby clubs are little known in the West, but last season Northern had a wonderful run of successes, their record being : Played 27 – won 24, lost 2, and drawn 1; with an aggregate of 481 points for against 1[?]6 by opponents.

This season the team, owing to injuries to players, have not done so well, and for the match with Gloucester there were several important absentees. Whitley, who did so well with the British team on the South African tour, was summoned to accompany the English team to France as reserve for Young, and W. H. Davies and H. Bordass (three-quarters) were also unavailable.

The weather was summer-like, but the attendance was only moderate at the start.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : T. Millington.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. A. Brown (capt.), Lieut. W. H. Wood (United Services), E. H. Hughes, and S. R. Crowther.

HALF-BACKS : G. Thomas and R. Milliner.

FORWARDS : F. W. Ayliffe, M. Short, F. Ford, A. Hall, J. Hemmings, H. Roberts F. J. Seabrook, and E. Triggs-Herbert.

NORTHERN

BACK : J. G. Lawson.

THREE-QUARTERS : D. W. Purdy, L. T. H. Trotter, M. H. Jones, and W. F. Lascelles.

HALF-BACKS : R. Gill and E. H. Lascelles.

FORWARDS : W. R. Arkless, R. W. Weekes, R. L. Clarke, G. Morpeth, R. Armstrong, H. W. Wilson, B. I. Arkless, and J. Harrison.

Referee : Mr. J. Hall (Cinderford).

THE GAME

The visitors lost the toss and kicked off against the sun, but some of the players being in front of the ball a scrum followed at the centre. Northern started off brightly and, heeling smartly from the first three scrums, the backs handled smartly, but the tackling was sound and the City managed to stave off danger.

A loose rush by the Gloucester forwards was well carried on by Ayliffe, and Northern were closely pressed. A touchdown, however, eased the pressure. Ford missed the drop-out, and the ball was kicked to Millington, who returned nicely to touch. The visitors continued to do well in the scrums, and the backs were frequently in possession. They several times looked dangerous with handling movements, but, fortunately for the City the desired opening did not eventuate.

Gloucester so far had played very scrappy football in comparison with their opponents, who were very smart all round. A mistake by a home player on the home 25 saw Northern kick through to the line, where Millington got back just in time for the touch. Just previously the visitors had missed a penalty shot for goal.

Play was fast and open, and at length the Gloucester backs broke away, Hughes, Brown and Crowther making headway. The latter, however, was tackled by W. Lascelles, and there was no one up to pass to.

Gloucester again got the ball back and passing led to Wood getting possession, but the Services player was hemmed in and was pulled down. The City attacked resolutely just now, and the forwards went very close, but the defence was too keen.

Gloucester made a sharp attack on the left, but they were beaten back, and capital touch-kicking by Trotter put the game well inside the home half. Both sides opened out at every opportunity, but there were some risky passes given. Milliner, with a useful punt, brought relief to the City, and later Thomas punted well down. Lawson misjudged the bounce, and the ball went over his head. CROWTHER, hot in pursuit, dribbled through and over the line, and beating an opponent in the race for possession touched down for the first try. Millington added the goal points.

The game on the restart continued bright and interesting. Gloucester were settling down now, and Ford came into prominence with a strong burst. The forwards carried on with strong footwork, and in some loose play Ayliffe gathered and running almost to the line passed to ROBERTS who scored near the posts for Millington to convert.

Ten points down, Northern resumed strongly, but Gloucester assumed the upper hand again. Near the centre Thomas, receiving from Milliner, executed a clever movement which ended in WOOD being given possession. The Navy man dashed down touch, and swerving past Lawson ran round behind the posts for Millington to land his third goal.

The kick-off was muddled, and Northern had a fine chance of a score, but a faulty transfer spoiled the opening. Gloucester cleared smartly, and some fine open play was witnessed. Gloucester attacked again through Hughes, but Purdy picked up in the loose and ran back, being finally upset by Hughes from behind. Immediately after Hall opened out nicely and fed Brown, who ran and yielded to Ayliffe. The latter made a strong bid for the line, but was well tackled half a dozen yards outside. Northern were closely pressed for a couple of minutes, but a fruitless drop at goal by Thomas gave them relief.

Both sides showed no relaxation on resuming. A visiting forward came into prominence with a lovely solo dribble, reaching Millington before the latter robbed him cleverly and ran some 30 yards and passed to Wood, but nothing resulted. Gloucester were well on top now, and the Northern line was subjected to severe pressure, but nothing further was scored before the interval.

The opening half had produced some interesting football, in which the visitors had certainly shown capital football, especially in the first quarter of an hour. Gloucester re-started, and the first incident of note was a dashing loose burst by the home forwards, who travelled half the length of the ground before being stopped. The ground, however, was lost owing to a scrum infringement, the resultant penalty kick finding touch at the centre.

Gloucester rushed back, and from a line-out Hall threw out wide to Brown. The latter sprinted down the touch-line and got the ball down in the corner, but was called back for stepping over the mark. From the succeeding scrum Northern were penalised for off-side, and Millington had a shot for goal, but missed.

Gloucester quickly returned from the drop-out, Crowther making a fine dash, finally punting, only to see Lawson run the ball to touch. The City had a couple of possible openings after this, but mistakes occurred and Northern kicked out to more favourable quarters. Missed passes just now were frequent, both teams being at fault. One or two promising movements broke down, but at length Milliner opened out to Thomas from between his legs, and Hughes and Wood handled in turn. The latter was tackled, but he managed to get the ball away to HUGHES, who had come outside, and this centre, beating Lawson, scored wide out. Millington made a splendid effort at conversion.

Following the restart Northern put on a spurt and reached the home quarter, where Millington was called upon to save. The City forwards broke away with a dribble, and Hall gathering started passing. Hughes brought off a tricky run, but just failed to clear.

Back Northern came with a spirited dash, and for a couple of minutes they pressed the City. Gloucester, however, with strong forward work, came to mid-field, where play was keenly contested.

Both teams continued to give the ball air, but the handling was erratic. For Northern, Purdy made one strong run, but was overhauled by Hughes and Brown. The ball going loose, Brown picked up and ran back. He handed to Ford, but the tackling was too good.

Up and down the field the game went at a fast pace, but the defence proved superior to the attack. Millington once cut through smartly after fielding and started passing, but nothing resulted. Then the Northern backs twice handled cleverly, but failed to make any impression. It was good, open football, but just lacking in finish to make it thrilling.

Gloucester had another chance on the right wing, but missed it. From an intercepted pass the visiting backs broke clear, and there were four men up with only Millington to beat, but the score did not come. However, Northern persevered, and after two strong attacks had failed, clever passing enabled W. LASCELLES to score a corner try, Millington effecting a tackle but failing to prevent the ball being touched down. Armstrong missed the goal points.

Gloucester at once got on the attack after the resumption, but fumbling lost good openings. From a penalty kick Millington ran up and passed, but the ball went along the ground and a visitor kicked hard down the field. Thomas got back, and with the help of others the situation was saved.

Each side in turn had a spell of attacking before the end, but there was no further scoring.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 3 goals, 1 try (18 pts.)

NORTHERN 1 try (3 pts.)

REMARKS

Northern created a most favourable impression on their first visit to the City, and, though defeated, can take credit for providing a very attractive display of football. For open work to-day's game vied with any seen at Kingsholm this season; and if the good intentions of the rival players were not always fulfilled – there were many mistakes in handling on both sides – the pace and strenuous character of the play, combined with its ever-changing fortunes, made it decidedly interesting.

Northern started in a style that presaged a bad time for Gloucester, and against a less steady defence the visitors would undoubtedly have opened the scoring. Once Gloucester got the measure of their opponents, however, the City showed capital form, and all four tries recorded were excellent efforts.

Northern were 18 points down before they got their try; but the applause which greeted the score indicated the spectators' appreciation of their success and a tribute to the sporting character in which they had played the game.

A good many well-conceived attacking movements went astray owing to inability to control a somewhat lively ball; but in between there was some clever combination and fast sprints by individual players.

The Gloucester forwards did not open any too well, and in the first quarter they were often beaten for possession in the scrums. In the loose the City were the stronger, though Armstrong, W. Arkless and Morpeth were forwards of a dashing type, and were clever with their feet. Hall, Ford, Short and Ayliffe were conspicuous for the City, the former opening up frequently from the lines-out. Sturge[*sic*] was a hard worker, and should improve with more experience.

Outside the scrum Milliner and Thomas made good use of the opportunities that came their way; but the visitors had a couple of winging forwards who gave a lot of trouble. The City three-quarters were uncertain, and a lot of good work was spoiled by bad finishing.

Hughes was ever prominent in the centre, and Wood showed plenty of dash when he scored his try. Brown experienced hard luck on several occasions, and Crowther was unfortunate in missing passes when there was a chance of his doing something.

Millington fielded splendidly all through, and twice showed enterprise in opening up the game, though his effort in the second instance went wrong.

Northern are a good all-round side, with a distinct tendency for the modern style of game so attractive to the crowd. The forwards played a keen and spirited game, and lasted out well.

Gill and E. Lascelles were more than useful at half-back, and of the three-quarters Jones and W. Lascelles were strong runners in attack and sound defenders. Lawson was fair at full back, being seen at his best when closely pressed.

Easter Monday: Gloucester v. London Welsh, at Kingsholm. Tuesday; Gloucester v. Cinderford, away; North Gloucester Cup final at Kingsholm. Saturday : Gloucester v. Devonport Services, away; Gloucester Boys v. Leicester Boys, at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A v. WHITECROFT

CITY SECONDS DEFEATED BY NINE POINTS

At Whitecroft, before a good crowd. The game had not been in progress long before Baker, a forward, scored an unconverted try for Whitecroft, and Hill added another after fine passing for Wilding to convert.

In the second half Loveridge scored for Gloucester after beating the whole defence. Wilding dropped a goal for the home team, and later Harris intercepted and passed to Moore, who scored another try, which was not converted.

Gloucester A scored a further try, the kick failing.

Result :

Whitecroft .. 2 goals (1d), 2 tries (15 pts.)

Gloucester A 2 tries (6 pts.)

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