

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1927

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S FIRST DEFEAT

CARDIFF HANDSOME WINNERS

WELSHMEN'S ALL-ROUND CLEVERNESS

For their important match with Cardiff, at Kingsholm, Gloucester had several changes from the side which drew with Guy's Hospital last week in London. Thompson was replaced by Crowther at wing three-quarter, and with Voyce and McIlwaine unable to play, F. Russell and A. Hall were included.

The recall of the veteran occasioned a good deal of surprise, as except for an occasional appearance he has been out of first-class football for two seasons.

Cardiff were short of Roberts and Bowcott, returned to Cambridge, and Delahay (scrum half) also stood down.

The weather conditions were ideal, and the attendance was easily the best of the season.

Teams :

GLOUCESTER

BACK : H. Boughton.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. R. Crowther, J. Stephens, Roy James, and L. Abbey.

HALF-BACKS : R. Milliner and A. M. David.

FORWARDS : L. E. Saxby (capt.), H. Pitt, G. Foulkes, T. East, F. J. Seabrook, J. Hemming, F. Russell, A. Hall.

CARDIFF

BACK : B. O. Male.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. Gwyn Davies, D. E. Davies, B. R. Turnbull, and R. A. Cornish.

HALF-BACKS : H. Poole and R. Gabe Jones.

FORWARDS : K. P. Turnbull, P. Bunce, T. N. Williams, Cliff Williams, W. Watkins, A. Barrell, S. C. Cravos, and T. Lewis.

Referee : Mr. F. G. Stephens (Moseley).

THE GAME

Saxby kicked off for Gloucester, but the ball going to touch a scrum followed at the centre. Cardiff heeled, but Turnbull missed a pass from Gabe Jones, and Stephens, kicking through, caught the ball on the rebound and went straight ahead. He dodged Male beautifully, but was collared from behind by Cornish a dozen yards from the line – a sensational opening.

A free to Cardiff gained some 20 yards, and this was followed with a loose dribble which Boughton saved nicely. A flying kick by David sent the ball to Male, who dodged a couple of opponents and found touch on the 25 line. Here Pitt had to be led off with a cut on the head, and Gloucester resumed with seven forwards. Cardiff tried to open out, but failed, and the Gloucester forwards rushed away until checked by Jones.

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. . . Abbey, with a good tackle, caused D. Davies to pass forward with a possible opening on the left. Play hovered at midfield for a few minutes, Milliner doing some good smothering, and twice stopping Poole opening out. A rush by the Cardiff forwards was spoiled by off-side, and with the penalty kick Boughton gained touch at the centre.

Gloucester heeled for the first time, and Milliner beat Poole and went straight up the field. He passed to Russell, who tried a wide transfer to the wing, but Abbey had no chance.

Gloucester, however, persevered, and the forwards rushing well Cardiff were placed on the defensive. The City players again heeled, and Milliner, slipping Poole, fed DAVID, who cut through and, beating Male with a side-step, scored a nice try. Boughton failed at goal.

From the restart Milliner made his mark, but directly the ball fell into his arms a Cardiff forward dashed into him, and there was a crash heard all over the field as Milliner went to the ground. It was feared the City half-back was seriously hurt, but after attention he was able to resume.

Cardiff at once looked dangerous, but Boughton checked nicely, and the Welshmen being penalised twice in succession the City full back with good kicks enabled his side to pass the centre line. Another penalty fell to Gloucester, but Boughton's shot for goal was unsuccessful.

Cardiff worked out of danger, and then came a wonderful piece of combination by the visitors. Some half-dozen players handled, but with the goal-line in sight a great tackle saved the situation. The ball rolled loose, and David picking up punted well to touch.

HALF-TIME :

CARDIFF 2 goals (1d)
GLOUCESTER 1 try

On the play Cardiff deserved their lead, for they had done heaps more attacking, thanks to the superior heeling of their forwards. Gloucester tried to open out directly after the restart, but it was fatal; for Stephens, being partly tackled, threw an impossible pass to Abbey, who missed the ball. Gwyn Davies dashed up and gathered and easily rounding Boughton scored behind the posts for Male to add the goal points. A soft try, but Davies deserved every credit for his opportunism.

Following the restart another Gloucester attack broke down, and the ball was kicked to Boughton, who again fell into the fatal error of attempting a flying kick. He missed the ball, and there was an open line, but fortunately a Gloucester man got back and saved. A big effort by the City forwards took play to the other end, where Male, hotly pressed, was forced to run back and kick straight to touch. Cardiff later touched down.

Gloucester did better in succeeding play, Pratt bringing off a strong run, but there was no finish and Jones sneaking a pass, broke right away. He was well supported, but though the ball went through several pairs of hands a timely tackle saved a try close in. Gloucester cleared from a dangerous situation, but a home player getting off-side, MALE kicked a fine goal, giving Cardiff a 14 points lead.

Play was fast and keen on the kick-off, Gloucester doing fine work, but the attacks lacked sting. David was prominent with a tricky run and later the forwards shone in a good combined movement, but the final pass was dropped. Cardiff, with strong play, reached the centre, where there was some hot work. The tackling of some of the visitors exceeded the legitimate and Bunce was cautioned by the referee.

Subsequent play was wild, and the class of football witnessed in the first half had deteriorated. Cardiff were easily the cleverer side, and they threw the ball about a good deal, but things went wrong at the critical moment. Cornish once went clean away, but hesitated and was pulled down from behind. Scrambling forward play ended favourably for Gloucester, but Cardiff got in one loose rush to Boughton, who brought off a fine save. The play again went in favour of the City, whose forwards worked hard and well. A neat effort by Milliner promised a score, but the passing went wrong and Cardiff cleared.

The game went up and down the field, first one side and then the other gaining the advantage. Bunce, fielding in the open for Cardiff, ran and secured a good opening, but his pass went low and forward and the movement came to an end.

Cardiff pressed hard later. A. Jones kicking across, Turnbull gathered and sent to CORNISH, who raced hard for the corner and scored. Male failed at goal.

The Welshmen held the upper hand to the end and Gloucester's ground record was easily captured.

RESULT :

CARDIFF ... 4 goals (1d, 1p) 1 try (20 pts.)
GLOUCESTER 1 try (3 pts.)

REMARKS

Gloucester surrendered their unbeaten record this afternoon to a side far too clever for them in all the finer points of scientific Rugby. At times the City offered stern opposition forward, but the pack generally were beaten for possession, and the Gloucester backs for the most part were engaged in chasing their opponents.

Cardiff's score was appreciably augmented by Male's goal kicking, but on the run of play the Welshmen were full value for their handsome win. Gloucester had chances of adding to their solitary try, but there was an absence of sting in the attack, the passing movements attempted were far too slow, and the handling was very slipshod. On more than one occasion mistakes in passing gave Cardiff opportunities of setting up aggressive moves, and Gwyn Davies' try immediately after half-time, was the direct outcome of one of these errors.

There was a lot of bright and open football displayed in the match, and Cardiff held such a superiority that there was no need for the "roughing" which characterised the efforts of some of their players in the second half.

At times play was scrambling, but fortunately the Welshmen lifted the game on a higher plane and more delightful passing was witnessed later. Gloucester's attempts in comparison were tame in the extreme, and the City backs rarely looked like scoring.

Behind the scrum Milliner was Gloucester's best man to-day, and the scrum-half was mainly responsible for the home team's only score. There were other occasions when he made valiant efforts to find a weak spot in the opposing defence, and he did a lot of spoiling and saving.

David promptly seized Gloucester's scoring chance, but the Old Oxonian, owing to the poor heeling of the front, had few real opportunities of doing anything an attack.

The City three-quarters, except for some good tackling, were not distinguished. They did not possess the skill and initiative of their opponents when they did get the ball, and as a line they were outpaced. Abbey was not so sound to-day, and Crowther did practically nothing on the other wing. It was a sorry time for the Gloucester backs on the whole.

The forwards played with plenty of dash, and now and again got the better of the opposing eight, but Cardiff generally were on top in most phases of play. Seabrook, Pitt, Hemming, and Saxby were the more prominent of the City eight, though East struck one as being a hard worker. Hall kept going to the finish but naturally at his age, he is not the Hall of old, and many will question the wisdom of the Selection Committee in bringing the veteran out of his retirement.

Boughton distinguished himself with some fine kicking, and disclosed ability of dealing with close forward rushes, but in open tackling the young full-back was fairly "left" by Gwyn Davies. And there was the occasion when he forgot himself again and attempted a fly-kick, missed the ball and left an open goal ! It was a bad blot on an otherwise good display.

Male has been showing great form this season and the Welsh International gave of his best to-day. His fielding of high kicks was perfect and he showed the danger of opponents punting to him in the open. Male, on this form, is certain to play for Wales again.

Cardiff have a clever and resourceful back division, and though there were mistakes in passing a number of delightful bouts were successfully brought off. Poole and Gabe Jones had a good understanding at half-back and Turnbull and Dan Davies, at centre, made some fine openings for their wings – Cornish and Gwyn Davies – both of whom showed capital form.

The Welsh forwards, led by Turnbull, were too clever in the scrums for the opposition, and the men also exhibited splendid control over the ball in the loose and tackled with deadly effect. Turnbull was a good leader, and of the others Bunce, Cliff Williams and T. Lewis were frequently conspicuous.

Next week : St. Thomas' Hospital, at Kingsholm.

JC