

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1927

RUGBY REFLECTIONS

(FROM W.B.'s NOTEBOOK)

BRIGHT FOOTBALL AT KINGSHOLM

Gloucester's handsome victory over Oxford University Greyhounds was very acceptable, and the open character of the game was greatly enjoyed by the spectators. The City were the better side in every department (writes "E.W.B."), and for once in a way showed more speed than their opponents. The Greyhounds, however, were compelled to make a number of last minute changes, prominent absentees being Marshall, Caccia, and Roxburgh at three-quarter.

The Greyhounds played well individually, but combination was lacking, whereas the home men excelled in short passing movements and forward dashes. The visitors' chief weakness was in defence, for although Doggart was brilliant at times, Atkins, Wright and Wilkinson were not very impressive. Benson, at scrum half, also was not at his best, but the forwards, on the other hand, played quite a good game.

Gloucester seem to have made a habit of opening the game sensationally, and while they failed to keep up the pace against Newport, they held the upper hand throughout in this game.

The City showed greatly improved form, although it must be recognised the opposition was not to be compared with that of Newport. The passing and running of the backs was a feature, and the forwards gave a lively and forceful display, particularly in the loose, where their fast rushes gained a lot of ground.

The return of Boughton at full-back made a huge difference to the home side, his fielding and kicking being clean and well-judged; his tackling also was accurate, and he rarely failed to stop his man. J. Stephens played a great game, and was the inspiration of the third line. He sent his wing away time after time with judicious passes, and made many clever individual dashes.

Roy James was at the top of his form, and was a great thorn in the Oxford defence. The clever and determined way in which he forced himself through was a big factor in his side's success. James was responsible for four tries, and he also kicked two of the goals. E. Stephens and Loveridge had a good match, and Milliner and Meadows did many bright things. Saxby led his forwards with his usual skill, and operated at scrum half with distinct success when Milliner was off the field receiving attention. The rest of the forwards all played well. Gloucester's one failing was in place-kicking – only two of the seven tries were converted – and they certainly could do with a little more practice in this direction.

"C.A.F." writes : –

I should like to say "Well done" to the Gloucester team for the game on Saturday. Congratulations are equally due to the Oxford Greyhounds, for the football served up was very attractive; both teams gave the ball plenty of air, and ventured largely, the result being free scoring and consistent movement – picturesque, exciting, good-tempered and altogether good.

Even if Oxford had scored 25 points to Gloucester's 13, opinions would have been the same, and a fortnight ago when they played Devon Services I had the same pleasure in watching the game. I am confident that more of this kind of football will develop a keen desire on the part of the players to discuss and work out together possible manœuvres of an unexpected nature which will cause surprise to the opponents, delight to the spectators, and bring victory to the team.

The wise words of Dr. Alcock are undoubtedly bearing fruit, and I only wish to say to the team : "Keep it up and chuck the ball about, and have a go every time and vary the tactics."

We all like to see victory, but we like open and exciting football better.

JC