

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1927

GLOUCESTER 14 PTS., ST. BART'S NIL

KEENLY CONTESTED GAME

BUT LOT OF SCRAMBLING FOOTBALL

For their match with St. Bart's Hospital, at Kingsholm, Gloucester gave trials to two new players – W. E. Nicholas (formerly of Abertillery) at centre three-quarter, and Stan Short (Berry Hill) at outside half.

Nicholas, who has come to reside in the Ledbury district, has played for Monmouthshire, and also appeared in the combined Abertillery and Cross Keys team against the Waratahs.

Unfortunately the City were deprived of both their wing three-quarters (Loveridge and James) who were suffering from colds.

The Hospital, who were beaten in the corresponding match last year by 17 points to 6 brought a good side, including Gaisford (the Somerset full-back) and Bettington (the old Oxford Blue).

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : H. Boughton.

THREE-QUARTERS : A. Hough, W. E. Nicholas, J. Stephens, and L. Abbey.

HALF-BACKS : R. Milliner and Stan Short.

FORWARDS : L. E. Saxby (capt.), J. F. Evans, E. Comley, T. Wadley, J. Davies, G. Foulkes, N. East, and J. Hemming.

ST. BART'S HOSPITAL

BACK : W. F. Gaisford.

THREE-QUARTERS : T. J. Rowe, G. F. Petty, C. B. Prowse, and E. U. H. Pentreath.

HALF-BACKS : H. W. Guinness and J. T. Taylor.

FORWARDS : R. N. Williams (capt.), C. R. Jenkins, G. D. S. Briggs, H. D. Robertson, H. G. Edwards, R. H. Bettington, V. C. Thompson, and F. G. Scovell.

Referee : Mr. J. T. Curtis.

THE GAME

The attendance at the start was below the average, but the ground filled rapidly with latecomers. Saxby kicked off, the ball going to Hough, who essayed a pass inside to Milliner. The latter, however, was not prepared for the transfer, and with the Bart's forwards well up he was immediately tackled. Gloucester got the ball away from the first scrum, and passing ended in Abbey securing and cross-punting, but the Hospital saved.

A penalty to the visitors took the game to the centre, where the Hospital opened out cleverly, but the passing went wrong and Gloucester worked out.

Smart work by Abbey sent his forwards away with a neat passing move, but the ball was lost close in. The Bart's backs handled neatly, with a final punt to Boughton, who made his mark, but gained no ground with his kick.

A useful forward rush gained ground for Gloucester, but later faulty back play upset a promising movement. Both sides tried hard to open out but though the ball was handled by several players no opening occurred. Nicholas was prominent with a fine punt, but Gaisford came up and took the ball finely and sent to touch.

Subsequent play was rather scrambling round mid-field where Gloucester were penalised. Bettington took a long shot for goal from half-way, but failed, and Boughton, receiving, sent out of play. Some big kicking by the visitors took play to the home 25, where St. Bart's opened out cleverly from a line-out. A series of neat exchanges ended in Rowe (centre) coming outside to take the final pass. He made a bold bid for the line but Boughton got across and swung his man into touch in goal.

From the drop-out Gloucester broke away with a loose dribble, and later Stephens shone in a strong run. He reached the full-back when he gave a sharp pass to Abbey who failed to take with a good chance of scoring.

Gloucester kept up the attack, and Nicholas made a determined cut through but just failed. The City still kept up the attack, but another possible opening went astray on the left. A sharp dash by Milliner took him very close, and he repeated the effort a minute later but again failed to beat the defence. From a scrum ten yards out the City forwards heeled, and Milliner fed SHORT, who slipped round and went over with the first try – a very neat effort. Boughton failed at goal, though the kick went very close.

St. Bart's resumed, and from a line-out a visitor secured and had a good opening but he was held from behind and losing the ball the Gloucester forwards dribbled away. Later, passing was initiated and there was a fine chance, but a knock-on ensued.

Gloucester, working well together, assumed the aggressive. Hough brought off a capital run but after clearing Gaisford he was pounced upon from behind, and though shaking off his opponent he fell to another tackle.

Next Short shone in a splendid solo dribble, taking the ball nearly to the line where Hemming picked up, but with a certain try in view Hough missed, and the ball rolled to touch.

The Hospital cleared from a dangerous position, and centre play followed, but the form lacked finish and numerous mistakes were made in passing. Gloucester's heeling was rather slow, but twice Milliner got the ball away cleanly, but the passing broke down.

Guinness, for Bart's, went away nicely, and a punt ahead sent the ball past Boughton. The City full-back, however, got back and cleared, and following up the Gloucester forwards took play to the other end. Near the centre Short shot away and fed Nicholas, who went down the field strongly. He punted cleverly, and HOUGH following up, gathered. He ran into Gaisford, but shook himself free, and running hard scored a fine try. The place-kick by Boughton failed.

On the restart some fast play was witnessed, Gloucester holding the advantage. Saxby from the loose picked up and punted over Gaisford's head, but a forward following up failed to take the ball with an open goal-line. From a penalty Stephens attempted a place for goal, but it was not successful, and Guinness kicked out. Hemming and Boughton had a bit of passing between them, but the movement eventually broke down.

HALF-TIME :

 GLOUCESTER 2 tries
 ST. BART'S Nil

St. Bart's restarted, and a Gloucester player threw out a long pass to the left in an effort to open out, but the ball was captured by a visitor, who fortunately was pulled down before he could do any damage. A capital rush by the Gloucester forwards promised well, and with Gaisford pulled down in possession the Hospital line was placed in danger. Good kicks by Guinness and Prowse changed the position, but the City went back immediately, and a driving kick by Stephens bounced to near the line, where Pentreath dropped on it. Hough, however, came up and kicked the ball over, only to see it go dead.

Following the drop out there was a short spell of even play, but Gloucester at length took up the running, and failure to stop a rush let the City right up to the line, where COMLEY gathered and put the ball over for a try. The place-kick by Stephens failed.

St. Bart's resumed strongly, but good play by Stephens gave Gloucester the advantage. From some loose play Stephens again came into prominence with a strong run. He kept the defenders guessing as to his intentions, and at the right moment yielded possession to ABBEY. The wing man was twice partly tackled, but he got away from the grip each time and finished a capital effort by scoring a try. Saxby this time took the place-kick and landed a fine goal.

Leading by 14 points, Gloucester had the better of the exchanges on the restart, Saxby leading off with a splendid high punt. Bart's cleared through the agency of Gaisford, but the City returned to the attack, and only a faulty pass by Abbey lost a possible score.

Aided by mistakes in gathering, a St. Bart's player kicked ahead and past Boughton, but Foulkes raced back, and with help from colleagues managed to stave off a dangerous situation.

Stephens, who received a smack in the face, went off for attention, but came back in a few minutes. The Hospital confined operations to the home 25, but a penalty for "not in straight" enabled Gloucester to get beyond the centre. Play had fallen off somewhat, though there was plenty of keenness shown.

Boughton showed up with some fine kicking, and Gaisford, too, also distinguished himself in this department. The attempts at passing on both sides were very faulty, the Hospital spoiling one or two possible chances with reckless handling.

Play went up and down the field at a fast pace, but there was little of interest, finish being lacking.

The game continued to be contested with plenty of spirit, chiefly with the forwards, but there was nothing of incident to record. Gloucester, twice penalised, saw Gaisford put in some big punts, the second of which found touch in the City 25. A big forward burst quickly retrieved the ground and centre play ensued.

Just before the end St. Bart's made another burst, and from a bout of passing, initiated by Taylor, Rowe had a sprint for the corner. Boughton, however, effected an ankle tackle, and Rowe fell a yard outside. Just after the visitors had another good chance, but Nicholas intercepted the final pass and ran 30 yards before being brought down. The end came directly afterwards.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ... 1 goal 3 tries (14 points)
ST. BART'S Nil

REMARKS

Gloucester won comfortably enough on points, but the score flattered the City team. At the outset the Hospital showed great promise, and one settled down to witness some spectacular football, but again and again passing movements, cleverly initiated, broke down repeatedly owing to bad handling and wild transfers.

Forward, the teams played with great determination, but there was an absence of ball control and judgment at times which left a good deal to be desired. In the tight scrums the City forwards gained possession pretty frequently, but the heeling was slow, and with a couple of winging forwards Milliner was sadly handicapped. Still the scrum-half did a lot of sound work, especially in stopping rushes.

Short, on his debut in first-class football, shaped promisingly. He had some difficult transfers to overcome, and if he missed a few it was not entirely his fault. He is strong on his feet, and one or two bursts had the defence beaten, whilst he showed judgment in varying his tactics. The Berry Hill player showed good tackling powers, and with more experience ought to train into a very useful player.

The Gloucester three-quarters, if not a finished set, accomplished some meritorious work, and the Second teamers, Abbey and Hough, scored two of the best tries of the match. The line to-day was stronger in defence, and all the players did some effective tackling.

Stephens was to the fore, as usual, with some sterling runs, and his gathering of the ball from the ground – on several occasions with one hand – was a feature of his play. Nicholas did not get sufficient to do to estimate his ability, but he did well enough to warrant a further trial. The City players lacked the happy knack of timing their transfers, and good openings were thrown away owing to this failure.

St. Bart's were strong enough as a combination to make a close fight, but they lacked finish. In the early stages the backs were frequently in possession, and there were some fine individual efforts, but nothing tangible resulted. The scrum half worked hard, and was not afraid to take risks in throwing the ball about. Some of his passes went astray, but Gloucester were not clever enough to take full advantage. Guinness made several good runs, and the centres also shone individually, but the combination was not good.

In the last few minutes the Hospital should have scored twice, but Pentreath fell to an ankle tackle when he looked a certain scorer, and on the other wing the passing went wrong. Forward the Hospital played with great dash, and Williams, Bettington, Jenkins and Robertson were often conspicuous.

The Gloucester front were good in parts, and when at their best they took a lot of stopping. The winging was none too well done, and Hemming, although useful at times, was too prone to get off-side. Saxby was the keen and forceful player we know him to be, and Davies, Foulkes, Evans and Comley frequently came under notice.

Boughton and Gaisford both did splendidly at full-back, their kicking being of fine length. The fielding and catching of high punts by both players were also exceptionally good. Boughton saved two certain tries by his tackling. In the first case he got well into his opponent and swung him into touch in goal; whilst later in the game, finding himself unable to get to his man he successfully effected an ankle touch which caused Pentreath to fall a yard from the goal line – lucky, perhaps, but Boughton's only chance of bringing the visitor down.

Next week : Gloucester v. Lydney, at Lydney; Gloucester A v. Chepstow, at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A'S FIRST DEFEAT
BEATEN BY WIDDEN OLD BOYS

On the Oxleaze. Gloucester A kicked off and Widden were hard pressed. Widden in turn attacked and from a mark on the visiting 25 F. Hawkins dropped a neat goal.

The Second half opened with Widden on the attack. Good play by the Gloucester forwards took them to the Widden 25 and from a short line out M. Evans ran in with a good try which was unconverted. Widden returned, and from a passing movement by the backs Heath went over with a beautiful try, which was unconverted.

Result :

Widden Old Boys ... 1 goal (m) 1 try (6 pts.)
Gloucester A 1 try (3 pts.)

This was the A team's first defeat of the season. Widden thoroughly deserved their win, each man playing splendidly.