

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1928

BEATEN BY A DROP GOAL

GLOUCESTER'S FINE SHOW AT NORTHAMPTON

STERN DEFENCE KEEPS OUT HOME SIDE

Owing to the unsuitability of the train service, the Gloucester team made the journey to Northampton to-day by motor coach, this being the first occasion the club had utilised road transport for a long distance. It was arranged to break the journey at Warwick for lunch and on the return for dinner.

This was the return fixture between the clubs, the first game at Kingsholm, in September, ending in favour of the City by 3 tries to a penalty goal. Of the Gloucester backs who did duty on that occasion only Milliner, Thompson and Roy James figured in to-day's team, and the latter again operating at full-back in the continued absence of Boughton. From the side which defeated Leicester last week, Abbey and S. Short displaced Jack Stephens (on the injured list) and Nicholas at centre, and R. C. Thompson filled the vacancy on the wing.

Northampton fielded a strong fifteen, and were pretty confident of reversing the result of the first meeting.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : A. Hough, S. Short, L. Abbey, and R. C. Thompson.

HALF-BACKS : R. Milliner and E. Stephens.

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

NORTHAMPTON

BACK : R. Vaughan.

THREE-QUARTERS : L. Mayes, F. Birch, R. Loverock, and E. E. Haselmere.

HALF-BACKS : R. Jones and J. Millward.

FORWARDS : J. B. Merry, R. Webb, R. J. Longland, T. Harris, E. Fidgett, W. H. Weston, J. W. Percival, and E. Coley.

Referee : Mr. G. Warden (London).

THE GAME

The weather was dull and heavy rain yesterday left the ground in a bad state, especially in front of the grand stand. The attendance was between 3,000 and 4,000.

Saxby kicked off against a rather strong wind and play opened with several scrums at the centre. Jones at length punted to the City 25 but the visitors soon cleared, Saxby dribbling clear.

Vaughan came up and took a flying kick but missed and Gloucester progressed until the ball was turned to touch at the centre. The City opened out but did not make much headway. Aided with the wind Northampton made useful ground and Vaughan had a long shot for a penalty but the kick fell short.

From a drop at goal by Haslemere, James fielded on the line and ran out. He was, however, tackled a few yards outside and a scramble ensued close to the Gloucester goal. The ball getting loose, JONES picked up and with a quick drop landed a goal, giving Northampton first points.

Resuming, some keen forward play was witnessed at mid-field with matters even. Neat passing by the City backs led to Hough making a sharp dash but Coley eventually tackled him and threw him to touch.

Milliner again got the ball away cleverly but the passing broke down and Mayes dribbled some 20 yards before being checked by James, who gathered neatly and put in a useful kick. Penalties against Gloucester enabled the home side to take up a strong position and from a line out the ball was rushed over the visitors' line but was kicked dead.

The wind was proving very helpful to the home team and soon after the drop-out Gloucester were placed under severe pressure. James, however, came to the rescue with a flying kick to touch. Play continued in the City's 25 where a mistake in trying to pick up nearly ended in disaster.

Vaughan missed from a somewhat easy penalty but Northampton came near scoring a minute later. Gloucester eventually cleared through James, but from an opening by Birch, Haselmere had a fine chance had he accepted his pass.

Breaking away with the ball at his feet, Davies dribbled for 50 yards until robbed by Haselmere, who found touch well. Northampton gained further ground and Gloucester's defence was sorely tested. It was keen vigorous football but there were many mistakes and play generally was very scrappy.

For the next few minutes Northampton had all the game and set up a series of strong attacks but failed to get through. For off-side by Saxby Gloucester were penalised and Vaughan had another place for goal from a good position but sent wide and Gloucester touched down.

With useful punts the visitors obtained a position at midfield but they did not stay here long. Northampton through Birch attacked again, but Hough tackled well. For a moment Gloucester were hard pressed and a miskick by Short went to touch a few yards from the City line. Millward sent out a wild transfer from the scrum and this enabled Gloucester to clear from a dangerous position. A penalty was taken by Saxby but his kick was fielded by Haselmere, who sent back finely to the visitors' 25.

HALF-TIME :
NORTHAMPTON 1 goal (d)
GLOUCESTER Nil

Territorially Northampton had had practically all the play in the first half but they were materially assisted by the wind. It had been a stern struggle forward but with little in it, but so far the Gloucester backs had not had a real chance of doing anything except in defence.

From the first scrum after the restart the Northampton halves opened out, but Hough intercepted Birch's pass, though immediately tackled by Haselmere. Millward with a splendid dash went through the City forwards but lost the ball and Davies picked up and gained a nice opening.

He tried a short punt ahead but a home player got back and saved when matters looked dangerous. Gloucester worked strongly for a score but they were beaten off and a penalty further assisted. Northampton twice got away with passing but did not make much ground.

Some exchange kicking between Vaughan and James ended in favour of the home custodian but the Gloucester forwards soon recovered the ground, Saxby being prominent. The Northampton front replied with a couple of dashing bursts but James and Stephens got the visitors out of difficulties cleverly. Northampton, however, were playing with great determination and Milliner missing his kick, Coley had a glorious chance but knocked-on in trying to pick up.

It was hot work in the Gloucester half but chiefly with the forwards. Yard by yard, Gloucester made progress and eventually a splendid left foot punt by Stephens found touch at mid-field. The City, however, could not maintain their position and they were beaten back.

Good work by Jones and Mayes led to a sharp attack on the right but the wing man just stepped over the touch line. Erratic play behind gave Gloucester an opening which they were quick to utilise.

Later Abbey intercepted but fell to a good tackle by Vaughan. Gloucester following up this advantage attacked with energy, but just missed crossing the line. A forward rush cleared for Northampton and an interception allowed Birch to dash away but James pulled him down. This effort led to Northampton making a bold bid to add to their lead but the defence prevailed, Stephens kicking with good judgment.

Subsequent play was very fast but neither side was sufficiently clever to take full advantage of their chances. Gloucester had one good opportunity when Hemming broke away from a pass by a colleague but punting ahead the forward was not fast enough to get to Vaughan.

Bunching well together the home forwards gave trouble with several loose rushes and play was again contested in the Gloucester half. It was close vigorous football but with little skill exhibited on either side. Vaughan being collared in possession in front of his goal Gloucester had a chance of snatching a try but Millward broke clean away to beyond half way. Play to the end was keen and exciting, both teams striving hard to the finish but there was no more scoring.

RESULT :

NORTHAMPTON 1 goal (d) (4 Pts.)
GLOUCESTER Nil

REMARKS

It was a desperately keen game but did not reach a high standard, chiefly due to the heavy condition of the ground and the erratic wind. Northampton's winning point was a snap goal in the first five minutes and on the whole the home team deserved their victory. The forwards were well matched, except in the tight, where Northampton had the pull and heeled repeatedly. Saxby, Davies and Wadley did good work for Gloucester but the whole pack put in some strenuous work.

As a combination Northampton were the more workmanlike and on dry ground would no doubt have given a lot of trouble. James, at full back, did splendidly, but the other City backs were not distinguished.

GLOUCESTER A v. EVESHAM
CITY SECONDS' RUNAWAY WIN
EVESHAM BEATEN BY 56 POINTS

The weather was dull but fine for this match at Kingsholm. There was a stiff breeze blowing from the Dean's Walk end. Evesham included in their team B. C. Barber, who has played for the Midlands against New South Wales this season. The attendance was very small at the kick-off.

Gloucester A : G. Thomas; J. Storrie, F. Benbow, T. Stephens, and R. Holford; D. Meadows and A. W. Lewis; A. Rea (capt.), H. Pitt, A. Danks, T. Hiam, L. Franklin, F. Russell, S. Spiers, and L. Meadows.

Evesham : H. L. Goodall; B. C. Barber (capt.), S. Byrd, A. G. Woodward, and L. B. Barker; P. Byrd and H. J. White; J. E. L. Ward, O. A. St. J. Dawnay, H. O. Roberts, A. R. Harthen, P. Meadows, W. G. Smith, A. S. Hancock, and J. Weekes.

THE GAME

Gloucester kicked off and from a weak return Lewis cut through in brilliant fashion and a try nearly resulted. Following a good cut through by T. Stephens, Halford scored in the corner but the kick failed.

Stephens tried to drop a goal with the three-quarters well placed – bad tactics. Following excellent handling by the forwards, Pitt scored, but the kick failed.

After a forward dribble, Russell picked up and scored, the kick failing. From a scrum in the Gloucester half Lewis broke away in excellent style and handed to Russell who went over with a good try, the kick again failing.

Storrie rounded off a good movement by sprinting over with a fine try after a forty yards run; T. Stephens converting from an easy position. Lewis, with a very elusive run, completely beat the defence and scored beneath the posts, Stephens again converting.

Half-time :
Gloucester A 2 goals, 4 tries
Evesham Nil

On the restart play settled down in the visitors' half. From a poor kick by the visiting back Stephens gathered, and went over, converting himself from an easy position.

Meadows cut through, went half the length of the ground and Franklin scored a try, Stephens converting. Hiam scored after a fine run, Stephens converting.

Thomas, the Gloucester back, punted, and the visitors' back misfielding, Thomas scored a try, Stephens adding the points. Meadows and Storrie scored further tries, Stephens converting both. Meadows dropped a smart goal.

Result.
Gloucester A ... 9 goals (1d) 4 tries (56 pts.)
Evesham Nil

COMMENTS

Gloucester A were overwhelmingly superior in all departments. It would be unfair to differentiate between the forwards, as all did sterling work, carrying the scrums and playing sparkling football in the loose.

Lewis and Meadows were a happy combination at half, the former, particularly, showing great initiative and skill in seizing an opening.

The Gloucester three-quarters did many good things, but must learn to position themselves better. Only too often they were standing level with one another instead of adopting the V formation. On the whole it was a delightful game.