

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1907.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. CARDIFF

WELSH METROPOLITANS ON VIEW

AN EXCITING FINISH

CITY BEATEN BY TWO POINTS

TWO PLAYERS INJURED

Despite the dull and threatening weather the annual visit of the Welsh Metropolitans to Kingsholm proved a big attraction. Both teams had beaten Swansea this season, and the meeting to-day was expected to furnish a keen and exciting game.

Unfortunately injuries kept two prominent players out of the game – Gent (Gloucester) and Bush (Cardiff). The ex-City captain sustained an injury to his shoulder against Bristol, and though he resorted to every means to get fit he had unwillingly to cry off on Friday night. Gent's defection was a serious one for the home team as owing to Arthur also being on the crooked list and Albert Hall unavailable, it necessitated a re-arrangement of the back division. Stephens went up to the scrum, Hubert Smith was introduced as outside half, and Bloxsome filled the vacancy on the wing.

Cardiff, too, were experimenting at half-back. Gibbs was not a success in the position against Swansea last week, and a trial was given to Edgar Thomas, of the A team, as partner to David. J. L. Williams (three-quarter) had to resign his place in the visitors' team at the last moment, and there were two changes forward.

There was a splendid crowd of spectators when shortly after 3.30 the teams entered the field, the players being heartily received.

Gloucester. – A. Wood, back; F. Bloxsome, C. Smith, E. Hall, A. Hudson, three-quarter backs; H. Smith, J. Stephens, half-backs; G. Vears (capt.), W. Johns, B. Parham, G. Matthews, H. Collins, D. Hollands, R. Craddock, H. Quixley, forwards.

Cardiff. – H. B. Winfield,* back; R. A. Gibbs,* R. T. Gabe (capt.),* W. Spiller, R. C. Thomas, three-quarter backs; R. David,* E. Thomas, half-backs; J. Brown, W. Neil,* F. W. Lewis, G. Northacre, J. Casey, F. Smith, J. Pugsley, E. S. Gillard, forwards.

* Welsh Internationals

Referee : Referee : Mr. A. L. Sloper (London).

THE GAME

Gloucester lost the toss, and Vears started, the ball going to Winfield, who ran round and put in a fine punt to Wood. The latter replied to beyond the centre, but with his return Winfield found touch near the home 25.

Cardiff heeled from the first scrum, and after a series of exchanges, Spiller kicked down, but the ball went to touch. The visiting forwards again sent out to David, but the latter's pass was missed, and Gloucester with a fine rush, reached mid-field.

Off-side by Stephens gave Cardiff a penalty, and Winfield found touch in the Gloucester 25. David got the ball smartly from a scrum, and Thomas ran across and punted, but Gibbs failed to take. Cardiff were still in the City quarter, and David getting possession sent out a long transfer. Hall dashed up and tried to take, but the ball bounced the wrong way, and Spiller secured.

Feinting to pass he put in a nice run and transferred to Thomas, who took the ball well. He subsequently punted over the line, and the Cardiff forwards coming up there was a scramble for possession, ending in Gillard being credited with a somewhat lucky try. Winfield converted, and at the end of ten minutes' play Cardiff had secured a nice lead.

Gloucester re-started, and the visitors were early penalised for off-side. Wood took a shot for goal, but was not successful. Winfield dropped out, Wood returning to touch in the Cardiff half. Ensuing play was scrambling, but another penalty fell to Gloucester for off-side by the Cardiff forwards. Wood punted high, and the Gloucester forwards followed up, but Spiller gathered, and with a clever run ran to mid-field, where he passed to Gibbs. The latter, however, missed, and Stephens kicked to touch.

Cardiff got off after this, and Gabe brought off a brilliant run. His pass, however was knocked on. Exchange kicking followed between Winfield and Wood, ending in the latter gaining ground. The Cardiff custodian, however, had the advantage in a kicking duel a little later.

In subsequent play the Gloucester forwards twice got possession, but the backs could make no headway. Hudson once threw yards back to Wood, but luckily the latter fielded all right, and got in his kick. The ball went straight to Winfield, who found touch with a beautiful kick. Gloucester were pressed in their 25, but nothing occurred of interest.

At length in some loose play, there was a lot of kicking, and Hudson and Spiller coming in collision they were both injured on the leg. There was a delay of several minutes, and the game was resumed without the injured men. Hollands came out of the scrum in place of Hudson, and Lewis did duty for Spiller.

From a line-out Vears secured and broke away, but was well tackled. Then the Cardiff backs tried passing, but Hollands effected a grand tackle of Gabe amidst cheers. Hudson now returned, but was limping.

Clever work by the City forwards down touch promised well, but the ball went out of play. Gloucester, heeling, Stephens got the ball away, and Hudson punted down. Winfield, however, fielded in fine style, and got in a lovely touch kick. Gloucester were doing well in the scrums, but the back play left a lot to be desired, the handling being especially faulty.

Stephens, beating David, broke away cleverly from a scrum, and passed to Hubert Smith, but the latter was tackled in trying to burst through the opposition. Palpable off-side by Cardiff gave Gloucester a penalty, and Wood found touch inside the visitors' 25. The home team soon lost the position, and Cardiff came away to the centre. Hubert Smith here sustained a cut hand, and had to retire, Parham coming out at half.

Play was very scrambling, and the form, generally, was poor. Thomas relieved the monotony with a smart run, but holding too long he was fetched down by Matthews. Cardiff tried hard to improve their position, but they were easily checked.

In the home 25 Hudson intercepted an opponent's pass and rushed down touch, finally cross-kicking in the centre of the field. Hall ran up and was just going for the ball when he was foully charged by Thomas, thus allowing Winfield to gather, and get in his kick. The referee allowed the incident to pass, but it was a very bad piece of work, and the spectators showed their disgust by hooting vigorously.

Play hovered in the Cardiff half, but off-side by the visitors caused them to be penalised. Wood took a place mid-way between the centre and 25 lines, and with a grand kick landed a goal amidst great cheering. Half-time was then called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Cardiff 1 goal
Gloucester 1 goal (p)

Cardiff resumed, each side still playing fourteen men. Play opened at the centre, but brilliant passing by the Cardiff backs, and a high punt by R. Thomas put the Welshmen on the home goal. Gloucester were very seriously pressed, and a home player mis-kicking, the ball went back over the line, and Lewis was credited with a soft try. Winfield failed at goal.

Winfield replied nicely to the drop-out, and Bloxsome getting a kick charged down Brown gathered and passed to Neill. The latter, however, was finely tackled by Wood.

Heeling by the Cardiff forwards saw David pass wide to Gabe. The ball went wide, and Hudson coming through kicked past Winfield. Gibbs ran back, chased by Hudson, but the Cardiffian lost possession. Hall came along and picked up, but was collared. The ball, however, was kicked over the line, and Cardiff saved by touching down.

The drop-out was well returned, and Gloucester gained a footing in their opponents' half. Breaking away from a scrum the home forwards dribbled on, and Hudson joining in, the ball was taken over the line, and the International credited with a try. Wood failed at goal, and the City were two points behind.

Resuming, some very hot play was witnessed, both teams working desperately. Cardiff made headway with passing, and Thomas put in a fine kick which gave his side an advantage.

Subsequent operations were contested in the home half. Gloucester tried to open out, but failed badly. Then the Cardiff backs had a turn, and Hall only saved in the nick of time from a cross-kick by Thomas.

David next brought off a tricky run and was nearly through. Stephens was instrumental in bringing relief, but from a kick over the line by Winfield, Gloucester conceded a minor. Winfield fumbled the drop-out, and a scrum followed at the centre. Gloucester worked down, but good kicking by Winfield prevented them getting dangerous.

Stephens was prominent again with a pick up and pass to Bloxsome, who punted down to Winfield. The latter had his kick charged down, and four Gloucester forwards had the line at their mercy. Johns dribbled the ball over, and was about to fall on the leather when Thomas kicked the ball from under him – exceedingly hard lines for the City.

Having been so near to gaining the lead, Gloucester made desperate efforts to score, and for a few minutes Cardiff had an anxious time. Three times in quick succession the Welshmen were forced to touch down.

After this Cardiff took up the running, but their play lacked the old time finish. Thomas and Gabe in turn kicked when there was a possible chance of scoring. Following some centre play David started his backs in motion, and after a fine opening by Gabe, Gibbs raced home with a fine try. Winfield failed at goal.

Encouraged by this success Cardiff attacked strongly for a few minutes, but the City defence was sound. Hudson, with a fine kick, put Gloucester inside the Cardiff half, where some desperate work was witnessed. A visiting forward was cautioned for unnecessary roughness, the spectators cheering.

A well-judged kick by “Whacker” Smith placed Gloucester in a favourable position, and the City worked hard for a score. Just on time Parham got the ball away from a scrum, and handling by all the home backs gave Hudson a chance just on the quarter line. With a superb dash the International went straight for the line, and with a final dive crossed with a fine try to the accompaniment of frantic applause.

The kick at goal was breathlessly awaited, as a successful shot meant Gloucester saving the game. Wood, however, failed at the difficult angle, and the City retired beaten by two points.

RESULT :

Cardiff 1 goal 2 tries (11 points)
Gloucester1 goal (p) 2 tries (9 points)

REMARKS

Brighter and far more finished displays have resulted in previous meetings between Gloucester and Cardiff, but to-day’s struggle was a desperately keen affair, and was exciting to a degree.

The City's magnificent spurt at the end to save the game was worthy of all praise, and had Wood gained the coveted two points and placed the teams level it would have been no more than the City deserved.

Gloucester lost their great opportunity of taking the game in hand well on in the second half, when Winfield, getting his kick charged down, gave the City an open goal. Luck, however, was dead against the home men, but Johns only lost the try by a fraction of a second, Thomas kicking the ball from under his arms.

The best tries of the match undoubtedly came in the last quarter of an hour, and both the scores put on by Gibbs and Hudson respectively, were really great efforts. The other tries obtained by Cardiff had an element of luck about them, though credit must be given to R. C. Thomas for his clever cross-kicks. In the first instance there was considerable doubt as to whether a Cardiff or Gloucester man first touched down.

The Gloucester forwards added to their reputation to-day. At the start they appeared rather lax, but on settling down they played a sterling game in all departments. For once the City front did not get the usual assistance from Wood, who certainly was off-colour in finding touch. This caused the home players a lot of running about, and the wonder is that the men lasted so well.

The heavy-weights in the Cardiff pack – Brown, Neill, Smith and Casey – took some holding to-day, but the home players never let them travel far. In the scrums the City held their own fairly well, and in open play and the lines-out there was no great difference between the rival sets.

Johns, Hollands, Craddock, and Vears were, perhaps, the most noticeable of the home scrummagers, but every man put in his very best; had there been any shirking they would never have held their powerful opponents in the manner they did.

It was unfortunate that the injuries to Spiller and Herbert Smith caused their permanent retirement. It upset the play of both sides, and in a manner accounted for the mistakes and loose play which occurred.

Gloucester were sadly handicapped by the absence of Gent at the scrum, for though Stephens and later Parham, did their best, they were not quick enough to keep up with such a clever trickster as David. When back in his proper position at outside half Stephens rendered good service with many useful bits of work.

At three-quarter, Gloucester had not the pace of their rivals, and they were far more effective in defence than attack. The handling was generally faulty, and the only really finished bout was when Hudson scored just at the end. Individually, the International did great things, and he was always on the look-out for work. Hall kicked well at times, and "Whacker" Smith did some good tackling. Bloxsome was rarely called upon, and he got very few passes.

Behind the Cardiff forwards David was very quick, and he took a lot of risks with long passes. They were not always well-judged, and more than once the ball went astray. Thomas shaped creditably, but at his best he is a poor substitute for Percy Bush.

The three-quarters occasionally showed glimpses of brilliance, Gabe being frequently prominent. His run which led up to Gibbs scoring was a beautiful effort.

Thomas was often in evidence, and his clever cross-kicking gave a good deal of trouble to the home side. The old Penarth player, however, marred his display with a shocking bad foul of Hall in open field. How the incident escaped the referee's notice is a mystery.

At full back, Winfield was now and again at fault, but he had the advantage over Wood in touch kicking. The Gloucester custodian otherwise did effective work, and his penalty goal was a great effort.

GLOUCESTER A v. CARDIFF A

THE DOUBLE EVENT

At Cardiff. Gloucester were weakened owing to the absence of Arthur (captain), Bloxsome, and Frank Smith, and it was feared the side would be hardly strong enough to hold the powerful fifteen fielded by the opposition.

The game was fast and well-contested. The Gloucester third line lost several opportunities through lack of finish in their work. Dix played well, but was often penalised for off-side. Pegler and G. Cook put in a lot of useful work. Flocks' try for Cardiff was the result of smart passing. The try for Gloucester was obtained by Dix.

HALF TIME SCORE :

Cardiff A	1 goal 1 try
Gloucester A	1 try

The Gloucester forwards played up well during the opening stages of the second half, and Dix frequently put the third line going, but lack of combination spoiled their efforts. The Cardiff three-quarters were smarter all through. G. Cook and Pegler did a lot of work on their own. Cardiff secured a penalty goal through a Gloucester foul. Gloucester were unfortunate in losing several good chances.

RESULT :

Cardiff A	3 goals (1 p) 1 try (16 points)
Gloucester A	1 try (3 points)