

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1908

## FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. NEWPORT

CITY PUT UP A GREAT FIGHT

NEWPORT LUCKY WINNERS

For this attractive match at Kingsholm, Gloucester had hopes of strengthening the side by the return of T. Elliott and Stephens, but both players had to decline their places, and Hamblin and Hubert Smith were again called upon. In the forwards F. Pegler displaced Hollands, who was crocked in the match with Cheltenham last week.

Newport have been beaten four times this season – Cardiff (twice), Leicester, and Swansea – but for to-day's game they were reinforced by the inclusion of C. M. Pritchard, the captain and Welsh International, and Jack Jones, the Pontypool centre three-quarter. Great things were expected of Jones, who has made a big reputation with Pontypool.

Last season Gloucester beat Newport at Kingsholm by 9 points to 3, and anticipations pointed to a close game this afternoon.

Gloucester. – F. Welshman, back; F. Smith, J. Hamblin, W. Hall, J. M. Baldwin, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent, H. Smith, half-backs; G. Vears (capt.), W. Johns, H. Berry, B. Parham, G. Griffiths, G. Holford, J. Wyburn, F. Pegler, forwards.

Newport. – F. W. Burt, back; A. M. Baker, J. P. Jones, R. C. Plummer, S. Williams, three-quarter backs; T. H. Vile, W. J. Martin, half-backs; C. M. Pritchard (capt.), E. Thomas, P. Waller, J. Adams, J. E. C. Partridge, V. Evatt, G. Staite, H. Jarman, forwards.

Referee : Mr. A. J. Lawes (Bristol).

## THE GAME

The teams fielded at 3.10 before the best gate of the season, though the attendance was not up to what is usually expected when Newport are on view. Pritchard started for the visitors, and the ball going to Holford the latter made his mark. Welshman took the kick, but sent to Burt, who sent to touch at the centre.

Gloucester got possession from the first scrum, but H. Smith missed Gent's pass. Hamblin, however, picked up and got in a useful kick, but Burt returned well. The City again heeled, and some neat exchanges ended in Hamblin punting to Burt. The latter fielded smartly, and with a fine kick found touch inside the Gloucester half. The City changed the venue with a capital movement, but off-side spoiled it.

Play was fought out in the Newport half of the field, where Gent opened out beautifully. Hall received, and brought off a capital run, but in trying to cut inside an opponent he was collared. Gloucester were playing strongly, and Jones, in trying to clear, was upset in grand style by Berry and Johns. In some loose play, however, a visitor picked up and threw to Baker, who put in a capital kick. From a line-out the ball was kicked across by a Gloucester man. Williams, coming up, took the ball nicely on the bounce, and finished up in a strong run by scoring a good try. Burt failed at goal.

Gloucester dropped out, and centre play was witnessed. Newport tried passing, but Hall intercepted and dribbled cleverly to the Newport 25. Gloucester now set up a hot attack, and some really clever work by Hall nearly took him through. Newport were hotly pressed, and only desperate defence kept the City out.

From a scrum ten yards from the line Hall received from H. Smith, and with a well-judged pass to Baldwin gave the latter a walk in. The wing man, however, unaccountably missed to the accompaniment of a groan of disappointment.

After the drop-out Gloucester were on the attack again, but the visitors saved by kicking out. The ball went to Welshman, who, on the 25-line and from a difficult position, only just missed dropping a goal, a minor resulting.

Following the restart Gloucester continued to have nearly all the game, and F. Smith marking, Welshman had a shot for goal, but missed. Clever play by Gent put Gloucester in a good position, but Newport worked out with a desperate forward burst. Inside the home half Holford gathered from a line-out, but threw back wildly. Jones was on the alert, and picking up ran to Welshman, and then threw wide to Baker, who had an easy journey behind the posts. Burt kicked a goal, and Newport held a lucky lead of eight points.

Gloucester resumed, and at once took up the running, but weak play spoiled some nice openings. A mis-kick by Baldwin nearly ended in disaster, and a little later the same player was at fault in not timing his pass when there was a possible chance. Still, the City played grandly, the forwards doing fine work.

Breaking away from a line-out in a bunch Burt was pressed, and Newport had an anxious time. Berry picked up and tried to break through, but was tackled. He, however, let the ball go, and some more passing was witnessed. This ended in Hall securing, and the City centre, deceiving the opposition beautifully, crossed with a fine try. Welshman failed at goal.

Newport again got in front of the ball on the drop-out, and a scrum was ordered on the 25. Gloucester worked very close, and some neat combination gave Baldwin a chance. The wing man made a rare dash, but was bored to touch

Keeping up the pressure, Johns opened out from a long line-out, but Hall was hemmed in, and taking a drop at goal forced a minor. Loose play by the home team enabled Newport to find more favourable quarters, and from another interception Jones looked likely to clear.

He was, however, stopped in time, and Gent, with a neat mark, enabled Gloucester to get out of a difficult position. Gloucester worked past the centre with capital all round work, and when the interval arrived play was in the Newport half.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Newport ..... 1 goal 1 try  
Gloucester ..... 1 try

Newport had played the last ten minutes prior to half-time without Pritchard, whose knee gave way again. According to a good many persons who had clocked the first half, the referee had played some five minutes short.

Vears resumed, Williams getting in a fine reply. Newport early started passing, the ball going straight across to Baker, but the transfer from Jones was ruled forward. In attempting to tackle the latter, F. Smith injured his arm, and there was a temporary stoppage. Pritchard, who had been patched up, resumed when Smith had recovered.

Newport came away immediately, but they were nicely stopped by Gent. From the subsequent scrum Vile secured and passed out between his legs to Martin, who fed Jones. The Pontypool crack, however, was finely tackled by Hamblin, and forced to throw forward.

Some fine kicking by Burt and Williams gave Newport an advantage, but Gloucester kept up pluckily. From a kick by Gent, Baker gathered and dashed down touch, but Parham threw him to touch, though he got a nasty knock in doing so.

Ensuing play was contested in the City half, the home team finding the wind troublesome. Gloucester heeling, Smith missed a pass from Gent, but the latter recovered and kicked across to Baldwin, who, however, was not allowed to travel far. Newport rushed back, but Partridge was cleverly robbed of the ball by Gent, who punted to touch.

Ensuing play was evenly contested, but there was not much passing. Vile was twice penalised for handling in the scrum, and Gloucester gained ground as a consequence. Loose play by the visitors gave the City an advantage, and this was well supplemented by some dashing work by Berry.

Newport got back by kicking, but Gloucester were not to be denied, and Berry breaking clear away from a line-out ran to Burt and passed. The ball went astray, but Parham gathered and made an heroic effort to cross, but he was pulled up. Holford was the next to gain possession, but he, too, lost the ball, which was kicked out to Gent. The latter was straight in front of goal and took a drop, which only failed by inches amidst great excitement.

F. Smith replied to the drop-out, and soon after Gent put forth a fine effort and passed to Smith, who, however, succumbed to numbers. Gloucester now attacked desperately, and a combined movement promised well. Williams, however, proved too strong for Baldwin. The latter had another dash for the corner a minute later, but he was headed off. Newport relieved by kicking out, the ball going to Welshman, who essayed a fruitless drop at goal.

On the drop-out Newport had the better of the exchanges, but their attack was beaten off. Gent was instrumental in easing the pressure, but Burt sent them back with a lovely touch-finder. On the home 25 line Gent, H. Smith, and Hall took part in a neat movement. The centre ran through prettily, but he was hampered from behind, and the ball went into touch. Pritchard, with a strong run, put Newport inside the home half, where play was hotly fought out.

Gloucester were doing splendidly, but the left wing was lacking in the necessary finish and dash to beat Williams. Still the City kept pegging away, and a splendid rally looked likely to result in something tangible. Wyburn was prominent with a good dash, and then the forwards broke clear, but were checked at the critical moment. Newport cleared by the aid of a big kick, and centre play ensued.

Here Gloucester got away through the aid of Baldwin, who ran and punted to Burt. The latter kicked back to Hamblin, who initiated a round of passing. Hall and F. Smith both made a lot of ground, but the latter's pass to H. Smith went to touch.

In the concluding stages Gloucester played up magnificently, and there was great excitement. The City once or twice looked certain to score, but something went wrong just at the critical moment. Newport eventually worked out by a desperate effort, but just before the end Gloucester made one final dash. It was a lovely combined movement started by Gent, and H. Smith, Hall, and F. Smith in turn handled. The latter re-passed just outside, but a great tackle resulted in Hall being pushed to touch a yard outside.

#### RESULT :

Newport ..... 1 goal 1 try (8 points)  
Gloucester ..... 1 try (3 points)

#### REMARKS

A rousing game, and full of excitement to the end. Newport were returned winners, but by no stretch of imagination could it be said they were the better team on the day's play. Taking a line through the amount of attacking done by the respective teams, Gloucester were infinitely the more dangerous side, and it was cruel luck on several occasions that robbed the City of two or three well-deserved scores.

Newport snapped up the two chances that came their way, but the City contributed in a large measure to both tries, for it was from indiscriminate passing that the scores resulted. It was Newport's grand defence that saved the team to-day, their three-quarters especially having the pace of the home team.

To the Gloucester forwards all praise must be accorded for the wonderful fight they put up against the powerful Usksiders. There was not a slacker in the pack this afternoon, the eight were clever in the scrums and lines-out, fast in the open, and dashing in loose play.

At one period in the first half the tackling was too high, but the men recognised their fault and soon rectified it. To pick out individuals is a hard matter, but no injustice will be done to the other members of the pack by mentioning the grand work of Berry, Johns, Wyburn, and Vears. The ex-soldier was especially fine in the lines-out, and one great effort, which with a little more judgment might have resulted in a try, will not soon be forgotten.

The Newport front contained several new faces, but all were triers, and they well maintained the reputation of the club. Pritchard stood out prominently all through, and Beddoe Thomas, Waller, and Partridge continually came under notice. In getting possession the visitors had to acknowledge the superior smartness of their opponents, who at periods heeled from six and seven scrums in succession.

Coming to the backs, Gloucester could claim an advantage at half-back, where Gent positively revelled in his work. He was opposed by Vile, the Welsh International, but at all points the Gloucester player beat his great rival. Not only at the scrums was Gent's nippiness and resource frequently in evidence, but the amount of saving he did and getting back to help the three-quarters were of immense value to his side. Gent, by the bye, has been asked to play for the West on Wednesday, but has had to decline.

Vile did many smart things, but he was up to his old game of picking out of the scrum, for which he paid the penalty. Hubert Smith again proved his worth at outside half. He missed a few lightning passes slung out by Gent, but these could be passed over in a player who showed so much high merit in other departments. Quick off the mark, Smith timed his transfers well, and the third line was set going beautifully on numerous occasions. Martin, on the opposite, was more than useful, but as a pair the City half-backs were the more successful all round. At three-quarter, Newport possessed an advantage in speed, and this was where they were able to check the repeated attacks of the home quartette. The Gloucester boys continually handled well, but the left wing was unable to beat Williams.

A conspicuous figure in to-day's great game was W. Hall, and if the young West Ender has a superior in the county we should like to see him. Hall is a footballer to the finger-tips, and now he has gained confidence he stands out as one of the prettiest players the City have turned out for a long time. His try was a beauty, and he only just missed the line on two other occasions. Perfect in taking and giving a pass, Hall is especially dangerous in attack, but he can take a roughing in tackling with the best of them.

Hamblin just lacks that extra bit of pace to make the best use of his work, but the Second teamer will improve in this respect. He has the right ideas for a centre, and one important point in his favour is that he can tackle. He brought down Jones once in the first half in brilliant style.

Frank Smith was opposite a fast man in Baker, but the little 'un showed plenty of pluck, and was by no means outshone. He and Hall play nicely together on the right wing, and should not be separated.

Baldwin was not altogether a success, and that bad miss of his in the first half unnerved him somewhat afterwards. He was marked by too good a man in Williams, who tackled keenly and kicked powerfully.

Except for one or two bursts Jack Jones did not make a great show. He was faulty in handling and passed badly at times. Plummer, the other centre, made one fine run, but was not otherwise distinguished. As a line Gloucester showed the better combination, and with Hudson or Neale in the team in place of Baldwin the City would probably have won by a couple of tries at least.

At full-back we had a brilliant exposition from Burt, and Welshman was very little inferior. Both men fielded grandly, and their kicking was very fine at times.

Gloucester lost their ground record to-day, but the City have no reason to feel disheartened. They played a fine game all round, and if victory was denied them they had the consolation of knowing that in the opinion of many impartial spectators their efforts deserved it.

GLOUCESTER A v. NEWPORT A  
CITY SECONDS' FIRST DEFEAT

The City Seconds took an unbeaten record to Newport, but with such a weakening in their ranks caused by the calls of the premier team, it was in danger of being smudged. Hamblin, Hubert Smith, and F. Pegler were playing at Kingsholm; whilst another serious loss was the absence of Captain Hawker, who was kept out of the team owing to an accident he sustained at Cheltenham last week.

The homesters first attacked and some good passing brought them within an ace of scoring. From a scramble Preece scored for Newport, Rowlands converting. The Gloucester forwards by good rushes changed the venue and looked like equalising, when Rowlands intercepted a pass near his own line, and after running practically the length of the field scored a remarkable try.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Newport ..... 1 goal 1 try  
Gloucester ..... Nil

Gloucester had the better of matters for a long time in the second half, and Newport had to concede a couple of minors to save the position. After a slump in the style of their play, Newport smartened up, and from passing Bennett scored. The Gloucester forwards played a splendid game. Before the end Cook dropped a goal for Gloucester.

RESULT :  
Newport A ..... 1 goal, 2 tries (11 points)  
Gloucester A ..... 1 goal (d) (4 points)