

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1910

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. LEICESTER

RAIN AND HAIL AT KINGSHOLM

A BRILLIANT SECOND HALF

LEICESTER OUTCLASSED AND WELL BEATEN

This was Gloucester's last match on the card, but the City Club have been granted an extension of another week in order to play off the County Cup Final with Lydney at Kingsholm next Saturday.

It was rather a pity that such an attractive fixture as the one with Leicester should have been so late in the season, as both teams were bound to be feeling the effects of the strenuous work of a long programme.

Gloucester fielded short of Egerton, Holford, and Stephens, and this necessitated a re-arrangement behind the scrum, W. Hall playing outside half, J. Hamblin coming in at centre, and Burns appeared at full back.

Leicester brought a powerful team, especially forward, W. L. Oldham (Coventry) and R. Jackett (Cornwall) assisting .

There was a disappointing attendance, and the "gate" could hardly have been sufficient to cover the expenses to Leicester.

Just before the start there was a heavy hailstorm, followed by rain, which made the conditions very unpleasant.

The teams were : –

Gloucester. – T. Burns, back; A. Hudson, J. Hamblin, H. Barnes, W. Washbourne, three-quarter backs; W. Dix, W. Hall, half-backs; W. Johns, G. Vears, H. Berry, D. Hollands, J. Wyburn, G. Griffiths, F. Pegler, W. J. Pearce, forwards.

Leicester. – E. J. Jackett, back; J. R. Watson (capt.), K. B. Wood, J. W. D. Smith, P. W. Lawrie, three-quarter backs; F. Taylor, G. W. Wood, half-backs; S. Penny, A. J. Hobbs, W. L. Oldham, J. C. Burdett, G. Hopkins, R. Jackett, G. Greasley, G. Ward, forwards.

Referee : Mr. J. Milburn (Bristol).

THE GAME

Gloucester, who had had their photographs taken, kept the crowd waiting, and when Vears kicked off Dix and Hamblin were missing. The men, however, soon appeared, receiving a sarcastic ovation from the spectators.

Gloucester at once rushed to the Leicester line with a loose rush, but the Tigers retaliated, and the centre was the scene of operations.

The rain and hail had made the ground very slippery, and it was evident from the opening that mistakes would be numerous, the players being totally unable to handle the ball.

A smart bit of work by Washbourne, who cross-kicked, gained Gloucester ground, and Hollands further improved matters with a useful punt.

Scrappy play followed, and then Leicester opened out, but Watson fumbled, and Barnes coming along took a flying kick which sent the ball to the Leicester 25. Lawrie tried to turn the ball to touch, but sent it straight over his line, and Hudson being well up touched down for a try. The goal kick failed.

Leicester resumed, and by the aid of a penalty reached the home 25. Berry and Johns led a fine dribble half the length of the ground, but E. Jackett saved some 20 yards outside. Another penalty gained relief for the Midlanders, Burns making a mistake in fielding and then kicking poorly. Leicester again lost ground in attempting passing, but later a fine touch-kick by Dixie Smith gave the visitors a good position near the City line.

The Midlanders attacked strongly, and G. Wood, from a scrum close in was only held up in the nick of time. The next minute Wood got the ball and passed to Watson, but the latter failed to take it and Hamblin dribbled to beyond half-way. The ground was now in a fearfully sloppy condition, and several Gloucester men, in trying to check a Leicester rush, slipped and fell all over the place, to the amusement of the crowd.

Good football under such conditions was impossible, and luck largely entered into the game. The City forwards once or twice broke away with good rushes, but the men over-ran the ball just as they were doing well. Leicester, with kicks over the line, twice forced the City to concede minors, but in subsequent play the Midlanders had the better of the exchanges. A nice bout of passing, initiated by G. Wood, saw the Leicester backs indulge in a splendid bout of handling. Dixie Smith, when near the line, cross-kicked over the mark, but Gloucester saved.

Following the drop-out Gloucester gained a footing in their opponents' end, and Washbourne had hard lines in knocking on when he had a splendid chance of scoring. Following this effort, Barnes failed to take a sharp pass from Hall with a nice opening, and then another infringement just robbed the City of a try.

Fine kicking by Jackett changed the venue, and Leicester had a period of attacking. There was just a chance once of Watson going in, but he was well tackled, and losing the ball Gloucester rushed away to mid-field. Jackett checked a dangerous rush of the City front, and punted well down, but Hollands returned finely.

Centre play followed, some smart work forward being seen on both sides. Gloucester twice heeled, but Hamblin made little headway on receiving from Hall. Good play by Washbourne earned applause, but later both teams lost ground in attempting to open out.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 try
Leicester Nil

Penny re-started, Gloucester resuming short of Hudson, whose place on the wing was taken by Pearce. The Midlanders at once became dangerous, but the backs throwing the ball about aimlessly Gloucester got possession and dribbled down touch beautifully and crossed the ball to the centre, where Jackett fielded on the run and sent to touch. Hudson now appeared, and Gloucester gained a footing in the Leicester 25. The visiting forwards, carrying a scrum, rushed away in good style, but they were checked successfully.

Scrambling play followed until Leicester got a penalty, and Jackett found touch in the home half. Pearce, with a fine piece of footwork, brought the game back, and later Hollands and other forwards broke away in a splendid rush. The situation was saved, but later Leicester from a short run and punt by Hudson were placed on the defensive. Mistakes led to K. Wood dribbling clear, but Barnes got back and saved.

Following this there was a capital round of passing by the City backs, Hall opening out very cleverly. Hudson eventually cross-punted, where Jackett, Hamblin and the referee got mixed up. The poor official fell to the ground with the other players on top of him, the amusing situation being greeted with huge laughter.

Gloucester were now playing well together, and Leicester were having a warm time. Jackett twice was forced to run round to relieve, but the visitors could not make much headway. Washbourne was nearly through on the right wing, and then from a scrum five yards out Dix gathered, and passed in amongst a bunch of Gloucester men.

Barnes came through with others, and picking up forced his way over the line between the posts. Hollands took the place-kick, and landed a goal, giving the City a lead of eight points. Barnes was laid out in making his effort, but was able to resume after receiving attention from the ambulance men.

Re-starting, Leicester attacked warmly, and Taylor, with a clever run, nearly beat the defence, being tackled outside by Wyburn and another. The ball getting loose, Berry and Johns used their feet with effect, and the centre was reached. A neat effort by W. Hall saw Hudson served, and the captain putting in a short punt Leicester were hardly pressed. A grand rush by the Gloucester forwards looked promising, and the ball being sent over the line Washbourne had a dash, but a dead ball was given.

Ensuing play was greatly in favour of Gloucester, the forwards doing brilliantly in the loose. Pearce led another grand rush, which was partially stopped, but the City nearly scored a minute later. Leicester gradually worked out of danger, but near mid-field Barnes gathered from the feet of the visiting forwards and got away smartly.

A long pass out to Hudson was nicely taken, and the captain having made ground cross-punted. Berry came up at the right moment, and taking the ball at full pace went over with a capital try, which Burns failed to convert.

Encouraged by this further success, the City played up splendidly, the forwards fairly losing their opponents. Barnes only just missed dropping a goal with a fine kick, and in the next two minutes Hudson was only tackled on the quarter-line when he looked well in for a score.

Still keeping up the pressure, Gloucester got in another fine combined movement. Barnes, giving K. Wood the "dummy," ran clean up to Jakkett and then handed to Washbourne, who raced round behind the posts amidst great cheering. Hollands unaccountably missed the place-kick.

In the concluding stages Gloucester displayed excellent football, and just before the end Dix got away and passed to Hall. Barnes was the next to receive, and there was a glorious opening, but the centre passed badly and the chance was lost.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal, 3 tries (14 points)
Leicester Nil

REMARKS

The pronounced victory of the City came as a big surprise, but there was no questioning the City's superiority. The game was completely spoiled in the first half, and for the most part the play was a fiasco. In the second portion, however, the spectators had their money's worth, Gloucester showing surprising football.

The forwards were up against a formidable pack – the visitors introduced a couple of outsiders (Oldham and R. Jackett) in order to strengthen their front – but the City eight performed magnificently in the loose, and at times fairly over-ran their opponents. The men were exceptionally keen, and the tackling, following-up, and general play was as good as anything they have done this season.

The home front also had a good share of the ball, and they heeled very smartly in the second half. Johns, Pearce, Hollands and Berry were in particularly fine form, and again and again they were in the front of loose rushes. At half Dix played a clever game, and often got the better of such an experienced scrum worker as G. W. Wood. W. Hall again deputised for Stephens, and in a manner that enhanced the reputation of this clever young player.

There was not much done in the first half by the backs, but later in the game, when the ground had somewhat recovered, the City three-quarters got through some very fine work. The passing and running were exceptionally good at times, and Washbourne's try was the outcome of a movement splendidly initiated and beautifully carried out.

Barnes did a lot of smart things, his only fault being a tendency to get the ball up over his head to pass instead of giving a straight transfer. This mistake cost the City probably two tries. Hamblin played a serviceable game, and Hudson and Washbourne on the wings were first-class. Both ran well, and the latter's dash and pace somewhat surprised the visitors. Burns only came in at full back at the last moment, and on the whole acquitted himself creditably.

Leicester, considering the strength of their side, were disappointing. The forwards were by no means up to standard, and in the second half especially they were fairly "left" at times. Wood and Taylor had a good understanding at half-back, but they were not properly supported behind.

Percy Lawrie (the International) did not get many chances, and Kenneth Wood did not shine. Dixie Smith was the most useful of the third line, but he was starved as regards attacking movements. E. J. Jackett, though not the Jackett of old, kicked splendidly at times, and more than once he saved his side when things looked very dangerous.

JC