

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1912

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v CHELTENHAM

KEEN GAME ON THE TOWN GROUND

SIX POINTS' VICTORY FOR GLOUCESTER

Favoured by fine weather, the return match between the City and the Town at Cheltenham to-day provided a big attraction for local enthusiasts, and the Athletic Ground held a large company, including a goodly contingent of Gloucester supporters.

Gloucester easily beat their opponents in points at the first meeting at Kingsholm, and the City were confident in their ability of recording another victory this afternoon, despite Cheltenham's triumph over Cinderford a fortnight ago. Both clubs were well represented, the return of W. Johns to the City team being a notable feature. The old International assisted in the holiday matches, and he apparently cannot rest idle. Owing to the claims of the College, Stanley Cook was not available for the visitors, but A. Hudson, though his shoulder still troubles him, resumed. Owing to the Gloucester team being late, the kick-off was delayed nearly half an hour. The ground was in capital condition.

Gloucester. – C. Cook, back; A. Hudson (capt.), J. Hamblin, L. Hamblin, W. Washbourne, three-quarter backs; W. Dix, W. Hall, half-backs; G. Vears, W. Johns, H. Berry, S. Smart, J. Meadows, N. Hayes, G. Holford, A. Lodge, forwards.

Cheltenham. – B. Davy, back; H. Hughes, W. B. Williams, A. Bendall, J. M. Baldwin, three-quarter backs; S. Young, J. Webb, half-backs; W. N. Unwin, C. Bennett, L. Peckover, H. Wixey, F. T. Wixey, A. Waite, J. Townsend, F. T. Hopkins, forwards.

Referee : Mr. P. J. Parkes (Midlands).

THE GAME

Vears kicked off for the City, and the return being prevented, play opened in the Cheltenham half. Berry early tried to dribble away from a loose scrum, but he lost the ball, and Bennett and Unwin sent to touch near the centre.

Wheeling a scrum the Gloucester forwards broke away, but Williams gathered from his opponents' feet and got in a clever touch finder.

A good kick by Young sent the ball close to the line, where Hudson received and kicked out. Webb made his mark, and Davy had a drop for goal, but fell a long way short. Holford received and passed to Hall, who fed L. Hamblin. The latter ran splendidly down to beyond the centre, where he was tripped by Webb, and fell over the touch-line.

Dix and Hall worked the blind side of the scrum prettily, but not much ground was gained. Bennett made another mark from a kick by Hall, and Cheltenham worked down to the City line, where Cook relieved splendidly. A clever run by Berry gave Gloucester an opening, but a good tackle by Waite spoilt matters.

Near the centre Dix opened out, and L. Hamblin again ran cleverly. He timed a nice pass to Washbourne, but Williams upset the wing man well. In some loose play Johns picked up and threw wide to Dix, but the latter was pushed over as he was about to pass, and nothing resulted.

A fine kick by Meadows gave Gloucester an advantage, until a loose rush by the Town forwards took play back to the centre. Another break-away by the Cheltenham forwards looked dangerous, and Cook, running back over his line, was collared by Bendall. From the scrum five yards out the City relieved, but Johns unfortunately got off-side, and a penalty followed.

Cheltenham maintained the upper hand and Hall, missing a pass from Dix, the City were hard pressed. Off-side by Cheltenham lost them their position, though Davy made a capital reply to Cook's kick.

Gloucester heeling, the ball got amongst the backs, but though the handling was smart, the desired opening did not come. Cheltenham replied with a passing bout, Hughes punting down to near the line, where Hall ran back and sent to touch.

A penalty was given against Gloucester, but the placer made a muddle of things, and the kick was checked. Hall and L. Hamblin brought Gloucester out to more favourable quarters, and the contest waged desperately near midfield.

Gloucester gradually forced ahead, and for the first time gained an attacking position. A big punt down by Young was fielded by Cook, who was collared in attempting to beat a couple of men. He threw the ball back, and Hughes kicking on it went to touch a few yards from the line.

Cheltenham attacked strongly, and Hughes cross-kicking there was an anxious moment in front of the City goal. J. Hamblin, however, was handy, and got in a nice touch-finder.

Cheltenham were holding their opponents well in front, though they did little heeling. Gloucester at length came to their own, and near the centre Dix got the ball out. Hall received from Dix, and Hudson and L. Hamblin handled in turn. The latter broke through cleverly and ran straight up to Davy, and then passed to Washbourne, who raced ahead and scored a fine try. L. Hamblin failed at goal.

Cheltenham dropped out, and they were soon penalised for an infringement. L. Hamblin had a shot for goal, but a fine effort, straight and true for the centre of the cross-bar, fell a little short. Gloucester maintained their lead to the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 try
Cheltenham Nil

Unwin restarted, and play opened in the Gloucester half. Early on Baldwin, gathering the ball on the run, brought off a fine dash down touch, being stopped just in time. The City forwards with a fast dribble changed the venue, but Cheltenham quickly worked back. A home player marking, Hughes had a shot for goal, but made a feeble kick. The ball, however, was gathered by a Town forward, who dropped for goal, but his kick was charged down.

Immediately after Young was prominent with a sharp dash, but his pass was missed a few yards outside. On the 25 line the Gloucester backs handled, L. Hamblin cutting up the field and securing a grand opening. His colleagues, however, were too far back, and as soon as Hudson received he was tackled and pushed to touch by Hughes.

From an opening by Johns, Gloucester had a possible chance, but a visitor failed to gather and Cheltenham kicked to the centre. Gloucester at once worked back, Hall doing some splendid kicking.

Then came a pretty movement, and Hudson, with a strong dash was only held up on the line. Cheltenham were hard pressed now, and Dix was nearly over through burrowing his way through a scrum. Dix made another good effort to put Hudson over, but the captain just failed to take the pass.

Gloucester, however, kept pegging away, and following a brilliant run by Hall and neat passing, J. Hamblin crossed in the corner. L. Hamlin failed at goal.

With a lead of six points Gloucester did not relax their efforts. L. Hamblin was distinguished by another smart effort, but his pass was intercepted by Hughes, who punted high instead of going on.

Gloucester quickly made an impression, and Hall forced a minor with a fruitless drop at goal. Gloucester obtained another touchdown from a shot at goal, and on the restart there was a spell of even play at midfield where Hayes was prominent with a great smothering tackle.

Gloucester attacked again with passing, a moment which was nearly attended with success. Cheltenham were being outplayed in all departments, but sound tackling kept their lines intact.

Gloucester made one or two sharp attacks on the right, Washbourne having hard lines more than once. Useful punting brought relief to the Town, and Cook, getting a kick charged down, they reached the centre. Here J. Hamblin, picking up in the loose, brought off a marvellous run through a bunch of opponents. A score seemed probable, but Hudson was collared from behind directly he received the ball. Clever play by the City backs looked all over for another try, but the ball was lost on the line. In the last few minutes Gloucester worked hard to add to their lead, L. Hamblin and Hudson both experiencing hard lines in not crossing.

RESULT :

Gloucester 2 tries (6 points)
Cheltenham Nil

REMARKS

The game was keenly and desperately fought, with a good deal too much roughing at times, but as a spectacle the play, at its best, was very moderate.

Cheltenham surprised everyone by their dogged persistency in the first half, and had the team possessed a modicum of cleverness in any single department they might have scored more than once. But finesse and ability were sadly lacking when possible openings presented themselves.

Gloucester were good winners on the day's play, for in the second half the Town were, for the most part, hopelessly outplayed. Rarely indeed did Cheltenham initiate attacking movements. The times the half-backs opened out could be numbered on one hand, and when passing was attempted it was weak and ineffective.

The Town did far better in defence, and it was lucky for the Town the men did not often fail in this respect, or the tally against them at the finish would have been a heavy one.

All the bright football displayed behind the scrum came from Gloucester. The two tries were brilliantly worked for, and there were several other occasions when scores should have resulted with the least bit of luck.

All round the City backs were far too clever for their opponents. Cheltenham had a couple of wing forwards to watch Dix, and Webb, too, attempted a lot of smothering, but the Gloucester scrum-worker nevertheless got the ball away repeatedly. And Hall seldom failed to make headway. He accepted the large majority of the passes given him in perfect style, ran and passed with judgment, and kicked beautifully to touch.

Against Bristol, the Brothers Hamblin were not up to form, but there was a vast improvement to-day. The younger of the two (Lionel) was the best three-quarter on the field, and besides having a big hand in both tries, he contributed several brilliant runs, cutting up the field in fine style.

J. Hamblin was less conspicuous, but he played soundly. Washbourne did many good things in the second half, and Hudson was also distinguished with some strong dashes.

In the Cheltenham third line there was no outstanding player. Williams and Bendall tackled well in the centre, and Baldwin was the more useful of the wings. His chances in attack were very limited, but he made one capital effort early in the second half. Webb, behind a pack beaten for possession of the ball, played pluckily, but he was often on the wrong side of the scrum. Still he showed promise in his general work, and should improve with more experience. Young was useful without being prominent at stand-off half.

Forward, it was a rare tussle in the first half, with Cheltenham the stronger though not so clever in the finer points of the game. The packing by the City forwards left something to be desired, and there appeared to be too much hanging on the fringe of the scrums. There was a distinct improvement in the second half, and then the Cheltenham pack were generally beaten. In the loose Johns was a shining light, with Berry, Meadows, and Holford always lending support.

The Cheltenham front were a hard-working lot, Hopkins, Bennett, and F. Wixey being perhaps the most conspicuous.

Davy and Cook served their respective sides well at full-back. The City custodian's kicking was of better length, but Davy did not give much away.

Scorers for Gloucester : Washbourne and J. Hamblin. L. Hamblin failed at goal.

Next week, Bristol away.

THROUGH CHELTENHAM SPECTACLES

Cheltenham had the best of close play in the first ten minutes. Then a free taken by Davy was made use of by the Gloucester threes, L. Hamblin running cleverly along the line and bringing play into the home territory. Again the City essayed passing, but the right wing was too much bored[*sic*]. Then Cheltenham worked down and got a scrum on the Gloucester line, Cook being bowled over, but managing to ground the ball.

Play hovered in the Gloucester half, the City facing the sun. The Cheltenham forwards had more than held their own, but the first chance the threes had was spoilt by Baldwin passing too soon. Towards the interval the Gloucester forwards played up better, but Cheltenham worked back, and from bad play by Cook Hughes kicked ahead and looked like getting over, but the ball rolled into touch.

Then within a minute or two of the interval Gloucester brought off a thrilling movement from below their half way line, and thanks to L. Hamblin, who was the most brilliant three-quarter on the field, Washbourne scored a well-deserved try.

At the re-start Gloucester soon got the upper hand, Hall repeatedly getting possession from the scrum which the 'Cestrians wheeled in excellent fashion, From one of these movements close on the line Washbourne secured and, running across the field with one or two capital feints, placed J. Hamblin over.

The home three-quarter line were very weak in attack as compared with the visitors, and had no initiative, but they rarely received from the scrums. The Gloucester forwards, too, controlled the game in the second half, Cheltenham being on the defensive for practically the whole of the time. Washbourne was the star player of a good three-quarter line in this half, and Webb, behind a beaten pack, was naturally outplayed by his more experienced rival. It was a keenly fought game, inclined to be a bit rough, with a few bright patches which showed Gloucester at a great advantage.

GLOUCESTER A v STOW

RECORD SCORE AT KINGSHOLM

These teams met at Kingsholm before a small attendance.

Gloucester A. – F. W. Hayward; F. Bloxsome, W. Staunton, H. Cook, and A. Cook; T. Humphries and Carr Cummings, junr.; E. Osborne, G. Griffiths (capt.), C. Mumford, S. Millard, F. Yates, J. Dovey, P. Simmonds, and W. Banner.

Stow. – H. Scarrott; L. S. Price, A. G. Noble, W. Allen, and A. Baldwin; P. Smith and J. Spragg; F. Hookham, H. Goodwin, Lewis Sadler, A. Holland, T. Williams, G. L. Watkins, T. H. Camden, and G. Melhuish.

Referee : Mr. F. Such (Cheltenham).

Stow started, and Gloucester put in a good return. Gloucester carried the first scrum well, and with a quick rush the Seconds got into a favourable position. The ball came out well, and in a loose rush Humphries picked up smartly and scored a neat try. Hayward failed at the goal kick.

Gloucester were very quickly back on the attack again, and the forwards with a strong rush almost reached the line. From the succeeding scrum Humphries again eluded the opposition and scored in the corner, Hayward failing.

Gloucester were already completely masters of the situation, and the opposition was weak in the extreme. A clever bit of work by Cummings and the centres gave H. Cook possession, and doing the "dummy" on his man he went over with a neat try far out. Hayward failed at the kick.

In some loose work the Gloucester men continued to have the best of the argument, and Bloxsome, picking up at midfield, raced clean away and scored. Griffiths failed with the kick.

A pretty bit of passing between Humphries, Cummings, and Staunton ended in the latter scoring behind the posts, and Hayward goaled.

Gloucester continued to have matters all their own way, and after a scrambling rush Staunton picked up and scored, Hayward failing. A clever cross-kick by Staunton gave H. Cook possession, and beating his man he gave to Bloxsome, who scored far out. Hayward's kick struck the upright. Very quickly Gloucester were there again, and Humphries scored, Hayward failing.

The visitors were completely outclassed, and further tries were added by Humphries, Cummings, and Staunton, Hayward improving one.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 2 goals 9 tries
Stow Nil

The second half was a repetition of the first – a mere procession – the visitors being utterly helpless and outplayed at every point.

Tries were added by H. Cook (4), Bloxsome (2), Cummings, Mumford, A. Cook, Dovey, Staunton, and Hayward, and Bloxsome dropped a goal. Hayward majorised seven of the tries. This is a record score for Kingsholm.

RESULT :

Gloucester ... 10 goals (1d) 14 tries (91 pts.)
Stow Nil

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