

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1912

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v CARDIFF

CITIZENS SIX POINTS DOWN

Gloucester tried their luck in Wales again to-day, but the City's past experiences at Cardiff did not encourage much hope for a victory.

Only once since the memorable triumph twenty-one years ago have Gloucester won at Cardiff Arms Park, and that was in season 1897-8, when the Welsh Metropolitans were beaten by 2 goals (1d) to 1 goal.

Gloucester, however, have put us some capital fights at times, and more than once had hard luck in losing. For this afternoon's game the City were greatly handicapped in being without the services of W. Hall (who was badly crocked at Cinderford last week) and G. Holford (who is troubled with an abscess on the leg as the result of a kick).

The outside half position was filled by J. Hamblin, whose place at centre was taken by W. Staunton. Forward, Gloucester were strongly represented, but the City three-quarters would have to show a vast improvement on recent form to hope to cope with Cardiff's line, which included three Internationals (Dyke, Spiller, and Davies) and a reserve Irish International (Carson).

The City team journeyed to Cardiff by the 1.53 train and changed in the saloon in order to kick off at 3.45, the start being delayed by the home club in order to meet the wishes of the visitors.

The teams were : –

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

Cardiff. – R. F. Williams, back; Ewan Davies, W. Spiller, L. M. Dyke (capt.), J. A. B. Carson, three-quarter backs; E. Hill, J. Rogers, half-backs; J. Powell, J. Casey, J. Daley, E. Mithan, C. Palmer, A. Baker, J. S. Michael, F. Gaccon, forwards.

Referee : Mr. Roberts (Llanelly).

## THE GAME

The heavy rain had made the ground in a shocking condition, being a quagmire in places. The attendance was very moderate for Cardiff, though the weather was bright and fine at the time of starting.

Cardiff kicked off, but the ball failed to travel ten yards and a scrum followed at the centre. Hill was at once penalised for off-side, but the home team soon regained the ground made by a kick inside the Gloucester half. The home backs attempted to open out, but Dyke fumbled, and Dix charging down his kick the ball went to Williams, who was pulled down by the same player. A flying kick sent the ball to the Cardiff 25, where Spiller got back and saved.

Strong forward play by the City looked promising, but the visitors were beaten back to the centre, where J. Hamblin cleared nicely to touch. Attempts at passing by Cardiff broke down, but Spiller recovered and punted high to Cook, who returned to touch.

Penalties followed to either side for infringements in the scrum, and this served to keep play even. A fine rush by the Gloucester front was checked by Rogers, who later started a round of passing, but Davies failed to take, and Washbourne dribbled back.

Hereabouts Berry led a fine dribble of the City pack, and the ball was taken right to the line, where Hudson just failed to make the touch.

Cardiff cleared smartly, and splendid passing between Spiller and Davies gave the latter a certain try, but a forward transfer was ruled. Cardiff now attacked strongly and, following some neat work on the short side of the scrum which was only partially checked, Powell picked up and dashed over. The place kick failed.

Cardiff set up a sharp attack on the drop out, and the City defence was severely tested. Washbourne tackled Carson grandly when the latter looked dangerous, but immediately after Rogers opened out from the loose and Spiller ran over with a good try. No goal resulted.

Gloucester put in some capital work on resumption, Dix being prominent. The City went very close with strong dashes but could not cross. When the greasy and heavy ball came out behind nothing could be done with it.

It was through fumbling that Gloucester lost their attacking position, but Cardiff could not get beyond the centre. Cook was cheered for some clever kicking under difficulties, which gave the City an advantage, but Cardiff replied with neat passing. Carson, the last to receive, cross-kicked, but Cook marked nicely, and Gloucester kept the game in the home half.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Cardiff ..... 2 tries  
Gloucester ..... Nil

Gloucester re-started, and after a spell of scrummaging at midfield the Cardiff halves opened out. Rogers brought off a splendid run and pass, but Carson was well tackled just outside.

The Gloucester line had a narrow escape a minute later, Hudson intercepting a pass from Dyke. Though failing to gather Dix with pretty footwork took the ball to Williams, who turned it to touch.

Working the short side of the scrum, Dix fed J. Hamblin, who sent quickly to Hudson. The latter repassed, but Spiller got hold and punted to the centre. The Gloucester forwards replied with an excellent loose rush, but they over-ran the ball, and Cardiff took the game to the other end, where Davies was nearly over. Then some sharp exchanges gave Carson an opening, but he was cut off in time.

Cardiff were doing all the pressing, and Davies missed a good chance, the latter failing to take from Spiller. The Gloucester forwards continued to do fine work, but the backs could not compare with Cardiff. A fine touch-finder by Cook took Gloucester to the centre, but the Welshmen immediately returned to the attack, only sound tackling preventing a score.

A penalty to Gloucester brought relief, and Dix further improved. Berry followed up well, and the Cardiff backs being at fault, the visitors had a fine chance, but it was not accepted. From a scrum close in Dix broke away and Hudson received, but the captain lost the ball and Rogers kicked out of danger. Dix again set his backs in motion, but nothing resulted, and a free to Cardiff brought the game to the centre.

The Gloucester forwards rushed back in brilliant style, Williams just turning the ball to touch. Gloucester maintained their position in the Cardiff half but lost ground when the ball came out, and the Welshmen dribbled to the other end. Failure to field on the treacherous turf nearly brought disaster, but the situation was saved at the critical moment.

Cardiff attacked with a passing move, but Spiller's pass went wrong, and Dix dribbled away to more favourable quarters. Dix again came in the picture with more clever footwork, and Washbourne with a fine dash nearly scored.

From a scrum five yards out Dix secured and tried to burst through, but he was tackled and lost the ball, Cardiff rushing out past the centre before being checked. From this point the home team made further progress and Gloucester were forced to defend.

In the last five minutes Cardiff made a strong effort to increase their lead, but Spiller served Davies badly on two occasions. Gloucester exhibited a bold front right to the end, and no further score took place.

#### RESULT :

Cardiff ..... 2 tries (6 points)  
Gloucester ..... Nil

#### REMARKS

Cardiff won by the superiority of their backs, who adapted themselves to the conditions much better than Gloucester. Forward, however, the City performed grandly. They had quite a fair share of the ball in the scrums, whilst their work in the loose was splendid. All the men played finely, and thanks to their united efforts Gloucester were able to emerge from the contest very creditably.

Behind it was a different tale. Dix fully maintained his form, and did a lot of grand work, but J. Hamblin was a poor substitute for Willie Hall. With the latter in his usual place Cardiff would have been run to a closer fight. Of the other backs, Cook alone did anything worth mentioning. He generally fielded with accuracy and kicked well. L. Hamblin and Washbourne did one or two things in the second half, but their chances were few.

Cardiff were best represented by Rogers, Williams, and Davies. The former was playing for Cardiff for the first time, and certainly made an excellent debut. Spiller was erratic, and was at fault in the second half.

#### GLOUCESTER A v CARDIFF A

#### CITY SECONDS LOSE BY SIX POINTS

This fixture, one of the most attractive on the Seconds' list, was played at Kingsholm. The recent heavy rains had made the ground very soft, and there was only a small attendance.

The teams were : –

Gloucester A. – F. W. Hayward; F. Bloxsome, C. Cook, A. Sysum, and F. Pegler; T. Humphries and C. Mumford; J. Harris (captain), G. Holford, J. Dovey, S. Millard, W. Banner, F. Yates, H. Cook, and P. Simmonds.

Cardiff A. – F. Spencer; W. P. Nicholls, D. Ferrier, H. Rees, and C. Bryant; W. Morrish and Ivor James; A. Green, D. Callan, J. Crawley, G. Lewis, A. Jennings, D. Callaghan, H. Hutchins, and T. Thomas.

Referee : Mr. B. H. Nelmes.

Cardiff started, and the first exchanges were quite in their favour. They carried a couple of scrums well, and in a very few minutes were dangerously near the home line. The Cardiff forwards heeled well, and the ball coming out nicely, Nicholls received, and after a brief burst, passed out to James, who went over in the corner. The goal-kick failed.

Gloucester did a lot better after this, the forwards putting in a lot of solid work. This was supplemented by some excellent kicking by Hayward, and Cardiff had to defend. The visitors cleared very quickly, however, and play was taken to neutral territory. The Cardiff halves had more opportunities of opening out the game, but the passing with the very greasy ball was necessarily difficult.

Gloucester rallied, and the ball getting loose, Pegler gathered smartly, and with a clever dodgy run got within measurable distance of the line, but the recipient of his pass was smothered. The ball came out to the Gloucester three-quarters well, but the tackling was very close and keen, and no one could make headway. The home men, however, were working well together, and they attacked strongly for some time. H. Cook made a desperate dash for the line, but he was held up, and by neat kicking Cardiff cleared.

A free to the visitors gave them more room, and with the forwards rushing the next scrum, the visitors reached the centre. The Cardiff scrum half, who had narrowly escaped several times, eventually fell under the ban of the referee, and Hayward made a good touch kick from the penalty. Gloucester, with Yates and H. Cook in the van, rushed from the succeeding line and collared Spencer in possession. He refused to play the ball right under the posts, but the referee gave a scrum and not a penalty – a decision very rough on Gloucester.

The Cardiff half was caught again, but there was a good return to the free, and an exchange of kicks left play in the neutral zone again. Just before half-time Harris went through brilliantly, but Spencer just managed to clear, and Cardiff worked out to the centre once more. Mumford, however, made another capital opening, and Cardiff were getting very worried. They were letting fly with hands and feet for all they were worth. A minute before half-time Hayward only missed a penalty goal by inches.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Cardiff A ..... 1 try  
Gloucester A ..... Nil

Very soon after the restart Morrish was penalised again, and with a beautiful kick Hayward put Gloucester in a good attacking position. The Gloucester forwards dominated the game here well, and another free was given Gloucester with "no charge" allowed, but Hayward just failed. Cardiff quickly got out of danger. Hayward, marking, found touch well, and then a lot of scrambling play followed at the centre.

Cardiff opened out well, and Nicholls and Ferrier with a pretty bit of passing nearly beat the defence, Sysum being temporarily knocked out in effecting a fine tackle. Spencer gathering well on the run just missed a drop goal.

A minute later he saved well, taking the ball from the forwards' feet. The visitors obtained possession in the scrum well, and Crawley coming right through made a zig-zag run right through the defence and scored a good try near the posts, but the kick failed.

Some good work in the loose by the visitors' front was stopped by Bloxsome, and then Gloucester went away, but Spencer saved pluckily. Hayward, too, shone with a good kick, and some capital work in the loose with some short, sharp passes saw Gloucester well in the Cardiff half again.

A free further improved matters for the home team, but clumsiness behind the scrum lost them their advantage, and the centre was once more the venue.

Gloucester returned to the attack, but the handling was deplorable, chance after chance being thrown away. Just before the end the Cardiff threes got going well, but Hayward tackled Bryant well and saved a certain try. It was a rough, scrappy game to the end, with no more incidents worth recording.

#### RESULT :

Cardiff A ..... 2 tries (6 points)  
Gloucester A ..... Nil

#### REMARKS

The game was a disappointing one to watch, and it was especially "hard Cheddar" on the Gloucester forwards, who worked tremendously hard to try to win the game.

Time after time they excelled, and got the ball back, but the work behind the scrum on the Gloucester side was very poor, and, further than that, the pace of the Cardiff three-quarters was superior.

In the loose there was some tough-ish work put in and at times the scrambling, bashing game was a bit beyond football and verging on the "scrapping" line.

Holford, Dovey, Harris, and Cook put in a splendid afternoon's work; in fact, they were all good, while the redeeming feature outside was the capital game played at full back by Hayward.



He kicked very well and saved admirably several times. Spencer, too, was in good form, but the scrum half was very prone to off-side and escaped a lot more than he got.

JC