

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1930

GLOUCESTER NIL LYDNEY NIL

KEEN STRUGGLE FORWARD AT KINGSHOLM

LYDNEY'S DASHING WORK IN THE LOOSE

BACK PLAY AT A DISCOUNT

The change in temperature from the sultry conditions which prevailed for the opening matches of the season was very welcome to footballers today, but the drenching rain was not so much appreciated by spectators.

Lydney, as usual, provided the opposition to Gloucester for the "kick-off" at Kingsholm, and another keen struggle for victory was anticipated.

Both teams had previously been engaged, and came through with decisive victories, the City defeating Stroud on Thursday by 26 points to 3, whilst Lydney triumphed over Cardiff Scottish last week by 32 points to nil.

Lydney's one and only victory over Gloucester at Kingsholm was recorded 26 years ago, when they won by 8 points to 6.

Of recent years, however, the Foresters have put up some gallant struggles, and on more than one occasion were a trifle unlucky in being defeated.

The rain eased up before the start, but the downpour had come at the wrong moment from a "gate" point of view, and the attendance was considerably affected, though 300 or 400 enthusiasts came up from Lydney.

With the exception that Comley, injured in the Stroud match, had to stand down, both sides fielded as selected and turned out as follows : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : T. Stephens.

THREE-QUARTERS : R. N. Loveridge, L. Abbey, Roy James (capt.), and A. Hough.

HALF-BACKS : F. Price and Don Meadows.

FORWARDS : F. Wadley, A. Carpenter, J. Hemming, G. Fowkes, J. Davies, L. Franklin, J. Russell, and T. Hiam.

LYDNEY

BACK : J. Jay.

THREE-QUARTERS : W. Probert, Ron Moore, E. Kelsey, and E. Pritchard (capt.).

HALF-BACKS : T. Wellington and W. Thomas.

FORWARDS : P. C. Taylor, P. C. Morris, P. C. Anderson, J. Willis, L. Howells, F. Fletcher, S. Nelmes, and C. Price.

Referee : Mr. Sheppard (Bristol).

THE GAME

Gloucester started, but opening play favoured Lydney who kicked through to Stephens for the latter to punt to touch. Inside the home half Gloucester pass went astray, and was captured by Wellington. A couple of transfers took the visitors close to the line, and a player went over, but a scrum five yards out was ordered.

The City cleared through Stephens and James, and later the home backs handled, but Hough was easily checked by Pritchard. A penalty to Gloucester, well taken by Stephens, sent play to the Lydney 25, but the visiting forwards broke away and carried play to near midfield.

PLAYERS HANDICAPPED

Again the City front heeled, but James slipped and fell on the treacherous surface. He, however, managed to get the ball away to Meadows, who found touch well after a short burst. The wet ball took a lot of holding, and mistakes were pretty frequent on both sides.

Keen forward play followed at the centre, where Stephens again came into prominence with a capital pick-up and splendid touch-finder. So far there had been little work of any note, and the exchanges were fairly even. Russell, securing from a line-out, had a good opening, but his pass was not accepted, and Taylor ran back, though obviously gathering the ball off-side.

LYDNEY'S STRONG ATTACK

A lucky kick through placed Lydney on the attack, and Gloucester were hard pressed. Though holding an advantage in the scrums the City pack were beaten in the lines out, and loose, and playing with great dash the Foresters went very close.

Stephens was fortunate in gaining the touch for a minor from a short burst over the line, but this relief was only temporary. The Lydney forwards came back very strongly, and the home defence was tested. Useful punts eventually cleared, and the Gloucester forwards further improved with a couple of dashing bursts. A penalty against the City saw Jay gain a nice slice of ground, and play centred again.

CITY HARD PRESSED

From a loose pass back by Davies the ball rolled away from Meadows, and a Lydney player kicked through to Stephens, under his goal. The City full back was immediately collared and matters looked ugly for Gloucester, but the situation was saved. The City eased the pressure slightly, but further mistakes behind nearly let the visitors in.

Lydney continued to have the better of the actual play, but it was mostly with the forwards. Davies, with a fine punt, gained 30 yards for his side, but a dropped pass by the home backs gave Pritchard the ball.

The Lydney captain ran hard and got round Hough. He was going strongly for the line when Meadows dived for his legs and brought him down.

BACK PLAY AT A DISCOUNT

The football was keen enough for anything, but back play was at a discount owing to the greasy condition of ball and ground. Hough was again sent away by James, but found Pritchard too much for him. Clever kicks by Meadows gave Gloucester a good position, but when the ball came out ground was lost owing to faulty handling. Jay, who was doing capital work at full-back, and kicking well, kept Lydney on even terms, and later distinguished himself with a splendid touch-finder from a penalty.

Good work by Wellington followed by a dashing forward dribble, placed Gloucester on the defensive again, and only determined tackling kept the line intact.

GLOUCESTER NEARLY SCORE

With a combined forward effort Gloucester relieved, but Jay checked his opponents finely. Then Price, punting high, Jay misfielded. A colleague got back and gathered, but he was bundled over and lost the ball. The City forwards dribbled on and to the line, where they made a big effort to cross. Russell actually touched down near the mark, but there had been an infringement and a scrum five yards out was ordered. Lydney cleared from a desperate position and the interval arrived soon afterwards.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER Nil

LYDNEY Nil

It had been a strenuous fight between the forwards, with Gloucester superior in the scrums, and Lydney better in the loose. The City's advantage in getting the ball, however, was not of much use for the backs could do little in combination, and the handling was weak. Both full-backs had shaped well.

LACK OF FINISH

Gloucester had the better of the exchanges on the restart, but the attacks attempted proved ineffective against close marking and determined tackling.

The football was poor in quality and finish, but the keenness of the rival teams maintained interest. Following a cross-kick by Meadows the ball was sent over the Lydney line, but Jay was able to gain the touch before Loveridge could get up.

RUSH AND COUNTER RUSH

Subsequent play was all with the forwards, rush being met with counter rush. Occasionally Gloucester opened out, but the players could make no impression, and all the attacks petered out feebly. Gloucester were awarded a penalty inside the half way, but Stephens' kick was a long way short of its mark. There was no improvement in later play, and on the whole the football was very disappointing.

OPENINGS MISSED

Gloucester were having more of the game this half territorially, but it availed them little, for the backs could not do anything with the openings which came their way. At length, a long raking kick by Fletcher found touch a couple of yards from the City line. Hot work followed close in, but on Lydney trying to open out the ball was dropped, and Gloucester cleared. Offside by Fowke in a dribble ahead gave Lydney a penalty, but Thomas failed with his place for goal.

Lydney, with loose forward bursts, gave trouble during the next stages, but like Gloucester, finish in attack was lacking, and nothing resulted. Meadows was instrumental in changing the situation to mid-field, where Jay was collared in possession. He let the ball go, and Abbey was up, but the City centre knocked on.

Meadows, who was the best of the Gloucester backs, put the home team well down with a well-judged kick, and Jay being at fault close to his line, there was a chance of a score. But the Lydney custodian got out of the difficulty, and with help from his colleagues, a dangerous situation was averted.

The closing stages were contested with great keenness, Lydney coming strongly. Anderson made one big burst, but was upset headlong. Lydney were on the attack at the finish.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER	Nil
LYDNEY	Nil

REMARKS

A pointless draw was a fair criterion of the merits of the rival teams, for if Lydney had the better of the opening stages, the game veered round in Gloucester's favour after the change of ends. It was keen, hard football all through, but at no point did the display rise above the ordinary standard.

The back play on both sides was disappointing, even when making full allowance for the handicap under which the players had to perform. There was no outstanding feature in attack, and scarcely a combined movement attempted which ever looked like "getting there." Individually, I should give Meadows chief praise for the best all-round display in the Gloucester back division. His relief kicking was of immense service, and he was the one man who did experiment by varying his tactics. Meadows' efforts were not rewarded, but there were one or two occasions when Lydney were a bit fortunate in escaping.

Stephens, if not so prominent as at Stroud, again made a good impression at full back, and what tackling he was called upon to do he did effectively. I understand Boughton will not play for a fortnight; in the meantime Stephens should "carry on" and gain experience which should be helpful.

Jay, like the rest of the players, made one or two mistakes in gathering the ball, but he served Lydney splendidly and kicked a fine length at times. He was also very effective in checking rushes.

The Gloucester three-quarters had the ball sufficiently to do something in the way of scoring, but there was no real sting in the attacks, and Lydney's sterling defenders did the rest. James was the pick of the line, the captain doing especially well in the first half.

The complete change of conditions no doubt affected the players, but Gloucester will need more speed behind to cope with the fast divisions possessed by the leading clubs. Pritchard looked a dangerous wing for Lydney, but fortunately for the City he had few chances.

Price and Wellington were fairly well matched at scrum-half, but Meadows was more impressive than Thomas in the outside half position, though in justice to the Lydney player it must be stated very few opportunities came his way. As a matter of fact, the occasions when the visiting backs were able to open out seriously could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Forward, two splendid packs were in opposition, and it was in this department the contest waged fiercely. Gloucester held a commanding superiority in the scrums, and the visitors were continually beaten for possession. The heeling, too, of the City men was creditable, but the players behind did not possess the requisite skill and cleverness to press home the advantage.

Lydney's best work was in the loose, and here the Foresters bunched well together, and kept close on the ball, which made it difficult to check them. The visitors' line out work was also superior.

Wadley, Davies, Hemming, and Carpenter were very noticeable for the City, and Taylor, Morris, Price, Fletcher, and Anderson hard workers for Lydney.

Next week : Gloucester v. Moseley, at Kingsholm; Gloucester United v. Bath A., at Bath.

JC