

# **THE CITIZEN**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1921.**

## **Gloucester Rugby Supporters' Club.**

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### **ENTHUSIASTIC MASS MEETING AT KINGSHOLM.**

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### **NEW ORGANISATION SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHED.**

A mass meeting of followers of the Gloucester team was held in the Gymnasium at Kingsholm Football Ground (by kind permission of the Gloucester F.C.) on Friday evening for the purpose of forming a Rugby Supporters' Club in the city.

Mr. C. A. F. Ridsdale presided over a crowded attendance, and had for supporters on the platform Messrs. S. T. Freeman, A. Brown, S. Roberts, and A. H. Margrett, who with other enthusiasts were mainly responsible for initiating the movement.

In opening the meeting Mr. Ridsdale read a letter from Mr. A. Hudson (Secretary of the Gloucester Rugby Football Club) stating that the Club had considered the suggested formation of a Supporter's Club, and had expressed pleasure at the proposal, and hoped that the efforts to form such a club would be successful and beneficial to the Rugby game in the city.

Letters had also been received from supporters of the City Club favouring the idea; and communications had also been received from many of the Supporters' Clubs in the large towns wishing success to Gloucester's efforts to form a club.

Continuing, the Chairman said he wanted to point out first of all that the object of a Supporters' Club was not to form a "ginger society" to buck up the Rugby Football Club. Its direct business was to support the club in every possible way. It might be that in the course of time they would have suggestions to make to the Rugby Club. They would be sent forward in a proper and reasonable manner and consideration would be asked; and when they had considered the suggestions their decision would be binding upon the Supporters' Club, and would be accepted without any resentment. It would be the worst possibly policy for them to take a more or less critical attitude towards the Rugby Club, and they wanted to assure them that their attitude would be to support the club.

Supporters' Clubs were doing a great amount of good. Their objects were manifold, but he would ask them not to expect anything like the activities in the first season they would aim at later when the times were more propitious for excursions.

One of the chief objects was to "lift up" the tone of Rugby football. Their motto would be "The game is the thing." They wanted the game to be clean and friendly. Of course they had to consider the existence of local patriotism, because everybody liked to see their own team win, but there was nobody worthy of membership of a supporters' club who wanted to see their team win by any method but good, sound, clean football.

Their duties also should include the giving of a good hearty welcome to those friendly teams who came to play at Gloucester. They wanted to lift up the tone of the behaviour of the spectators at matches. They wanted to stop all barracking of referees and to get the spectators to realise that a man would not be placed on the ground as a referee unless he was thoroughly competent.

Then, again, they wanted to stop all gambling, and also the use of foul language. They wanted to make it possible for members to bring their women-folk, and to feel that they would not be upset by anything they might hear. He also hoped that the existence of a supporters' club would make for comradeship amongst the followers of the team.

The subscription to the club would be 2s., which would entitle a member to a badge and also a card of membership. Mr. A. Brown said he considered the existence of a supporters' club was long overdue. Most of the large football clubs had supporters' clubs, and they were particularly strong down in Wales.

In further explanation of the objects of the club, Mr. Brown touched upon the arrangement of excursions, and also the formation of a benevolent fund for helping any player who was down on his luck through no fault of his own, and to make it possible to give any retiring player some memento of his services to the Club.

One of the important objects of the club would be to support local clubs and schools football, and another to form a scheme through which members could pay weekly instalments towards the purchase of their season tickets. By that means it was anticipated that a larger number of extra season tickets would be sold. Touching upon the barracking of referees, Mr. Brown said he thought much of it was due to the fact that supporters of clubs did not appreciate the finer points of the game. By getting the members of the supporters' club to study the rules of the game, a good deal would be done in stopping the criticism of referees.

Mr. Margrett supported, and Councillor S. J. Gillett expressed pleasure at the formation of the club, and said he thought the proposed benevolent fund would be of great advantage.

Mr. T. Murdock supported, and Mr. Arthur Fielding, Mr. Arthur Hudson, and Mr. J. T. Brookes expressed the appreciation of the Gloucester F.C. Committee at the formation of the club. They felt that the organisation of a body of supporters would be of great assistance to the Committee.

Officers were elected as follows :- President, the Mayor (Councillor J. O. Roberts); Chairman of Committee, Mr. C. A. F. Ridsdale; Vice-Chairman, Mr. A. H. Margrett; Hon. Sec., Mr. S. A. Roberts; Hon. Treasurer, Mr. F. Ballinger.

Committee : Messrs. A. Brown, S. Pickford, W. Matthews, R. Cole, C. F. Foote, J. Thornbury, W. Morris, W. E. Nolder, E. Allen, C. Herbert, S. J. Gillett, Herbert C. Balchin, A. Frith, W. Johns, B. Harris, W. Eggerton, George Clutterbuck, F. Pitt, A. Kiddle, Eric Keys, and Captain C. Lodge.

A resolution approving of the initial steps taken by the temporary committee was passed on the proposition of Councillor Gillett, and at the close of the meeting Mr. Risdale was thanked for his services.

The Committee wish it to be known that ladies are eligible for membership, and are cordially invited to join.

After the meeting members were enrolled to the number of 150.

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