

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1906.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. CARDIFF.

CITY MEET THE WELSH CHAMPIONS.

PLUCKY FIGHT BY A DISORGANISED FIFTEEN.

Gloucester were severely handicapped for their return match with Cardiff to-day, at Cardiff, as in addition to Gent, Hawker, Harrison, and Wood were all unable to play. It was hoped to secure the services of L. Vears for the vacancy at three-quarter, but he, too, was prevented from assisting. Cardiff, who held an unbeaten club record – the only defeat of the season was against the New Zealanders – had Cecil Biggs and R. C. Thomas away, but as Gwyn Nicholls filled one of the places in the third line, the Welsh champions were strengthened rather than otherwise. The G. W. R. ran an excursion to Cardiff in connection with the match, and a fair company patronised the train. The teams were : –

GLOUCESTER.	Positions.	CARDIFF.
G. Romans	Backs.	* H. B. Winfield
C. Smith	Three-Quarter	J. L. Williams
E. Hall	Backs.	* R. T. Gabe
W. Holder	"	* E. G. Nicholls
A. Hudson	"	G. McCraith
J. Stephens	Half-Backs.	* P. F. Bush (capt.)
A. Hall	"	R. David
W. Johns (capt.)	"	* W. Neill
B. Parham	Forwards.	* J. Powell
G. Matthews	"	* D. Westacott
G. Vears	"	–. Harding
–. Jones	"	G. Northmore
J. Merchant	"	–. Pugsley
F. Pegler	"	F. Smith
H. Collins	"	E. Rumbelow
		* Welsh Internationals

Referee : Mr. T. England (Newport).

THE GAME.

There were further changes in both teams, Harding and Pugsley playing for Brice and Brown for Cardiff. Gloucester arrived two short, Quixley and Jewell failing to make the journey. Jones filled one vacancy, and the City started with fourteen men.

Cardiff kicked off, Smith returning nicely to touch. From the first scrum Cardiff heeled and Nicholls burst through cleverly and punted, the ball going over the line for a minor. Gloucester showed up with passing on the drop-out, but Cardiff soon got away again, and brilliant handling nearly put Williams in. The City cleared, but the Welsh backs were again in possession, Nicholls just failing to cross. Gloucester were severely pressed, and following a run by Bush, Nicholls received and dropped a pretty goal.

At this juncture the visitors were strengthened by another forward. Gloucester did much better on the re-start, and Johns, with clever footwork, put the City in a good position. Later Holder, with a big kick, forced Winfield to touch down. Gloucester confined play to their opponents' half for a few minutes, but Cardiff at length broke away, and following a good run by Gabe, Williams crossed with a good try. The place-kick failed.

Play on resumption was very fast, but Gloucester lost ground several times through bad mistakes, and their lines narrowly escaped. The City tried a bout of passing, but they lost the ball, and McCraith picking up nearly beat the defence.

Play was chiefly in the Gloucester half, but A. Hall, with a smart effort, sent the game to midfield. Later Romans made further headway with a splendid touch kick. Working well together the Gloucester forwards got very close, and the ball coming out E. Hall dropped for goal, but the attempt was not successful. Nicholls gained the advantage with good kicking, but A. Hall retaliated for Gloucester, who obtained a footing in the home end. E. Hall broke through and passed to Holder, who had a dash for the corner, but was held outside.

Gloucester continued to play strongly, but a fine run by Williams changed the venue, and Cardiff set up a hot attack. The defence, however, got out of danger with a couple of frees, and a fine bit of work by Hudson gave Gloucester a possible chance after this, but they fumbled and lost the opportunity.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Cardiff 1 goal (d) 1 try
Gloucester Nil

Gloucester re-started, and there was a spell of even play at midfield. The City pack heeled twice in quick succession, and E. Hall kicked down the field to touch. Gloucester worked close to the line, but Rush getting possession removed the game to the centre with a capital kick. Here the Gloucester forwards got away with a grand burst, and Jones picking up ran and passed to Johns, but a fine opening was lost through a faulty transfer.

Good kicking by Winfield gave Cardiff relief, and then Smith stopped a sharp attack by grand tackling. Cardiff continued on the aggressive, but A. Hall and Johns in turn cleared in fine style. From a line-out Westacott secured and, passing to Nicholls, the latter put McCraith over easily. No goal resulted. Soon after the drop-out David fed Bush cleverly, and after a grand run by Gabe, Williams raced over behind the posts. Winfield added the extra points.

Cardiff were now playing brilliantly, and David only just missed dropping a goal from outside the 25. Despite Cardiff's superiority the City played up pluckily. Johns led a grand rush past Winfield, but Bush got back and saved in remarkable style. Gwyn Nicholls next put in a magnificent run for the home team, but his pass went astray. Hudson replied with a strong run down touch, but he was well tackled by Bush. Gloucester improved after this, and nice passing looked promising for a score, but Holder failed to take. Johns, who was playing a great game, made a dash for the line, but the defence was too good.

Chiefly through the aid of Nicholls, Cardiff relieved, and but for faulty handling a score should have resulted. Gloucester's defence was sorely tested in the next five minutes, but Cardiff could not get an opening. Holder at length punted to the centre, where Winfield tried a shot for goal from a penalty, but the ball went wide and only a minor accrued.

Hudson was prominent with a sharp dash on the drop-out, but subsequent passing was too slow to be effective, and Cardiff easily saved. Gloucester continued to do well, but just before the end Cardiff made a sharp attack, but nothing tangible resulted.

RESULT :

Cardiff 2 goals (1d), 2 tries (15 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS.

Considering their disorganised team Gloucester made a very creditable show against their powerful rivals. Cardiff certainly had the best of the game, and attacked far more often, but the City defence on the whole was reliable.

The Gloucester forwards played a hard, resolute game throughout, and in no department could they be said to have been outclassed. Cardiff had the advantage in the scrums, but the Gloucester pack heeled a fair number of times. Johns played the game of his life, and he stood out as one of the best forwards on the field. He made several strong bursts, and was always prominent. Parham, Collins, and Pegler were also distinguished for good work.

Behind the scrum the Cardiff combination was excellent at times, and Bush and his colleagues had the pace of the City backs. Nicholls and Gabe made brilliant runs, and Williams was reliable on the wing. For Gloucester Smith did a lot of effective stopping at centre, and E. Hall kicked well. Hudson made the best use of any chance that came his way, and Holder was a useful substitute.

Stephens and A. Hall accomplished a lot of good work at half against David and Bush. Romans and Winfield both did excellently, kicking splendidly. The game was wonderfully fast and open, but both teams stood the pace well.

GLOUCESTER A v. CARDIFF A.

GLOUCESTER'S GROUND RECORD IN DANGER.

This match, always one of the most popular in the City Seconds' card, was played at Kingsholm on Saturday. The weather was gloriously fine, and there was a fair attendance.

A good contest can generally be confidently looked forward to for this fixture, but unfortunately on this occasion both teams were severely handicapped in having many of their regular men away, filling vacancies in the premier XV.'s and from other causes.

The teams were : –

Gloucester A. – G. Griffiths, back; F. Smith, H. Cook, F. Rust, and H. Hughes, three-quarter backs; S. Edwards and J. Goddard, half-backs; F. Welshman, J. Wyburn, J. Welshman, H. Taylor, R. Craddock, T. Guy, S. Hayward, and G. Hollands, forwards.

Cardiff A. – F. Woods, back; Wayne Morgan, W. James, G. Jones, and J. Williams, three-quarter backs; Rand Davies and E. Thomas, half-backs; D. L. Evans (capt.), D. Pike, W. Holtham, Rees Davies, E. Lewis, L. Williams, T. Samuels, and W. Jenkins, forwards.

Referee : Mr. E. W. Jordan.

Cardiff started from the Dean's Walk end, Goddard returning to the centre where a Cardiffian misfielded. From the succeeding scrum, however, Thomas started a bout of passing, and Morgan, Williams, and James carried it on well into the Gloucester quarter, where the latter was floored. Gloucester relieved the pressure and got beyond the centre.

Davies opened out the game, but J. Welshman marked and touch was found well inside the Cardiff 25. "Tinker" Smith tried to slip through from the line out but was collared. Edwards handed on nicely from the scrum, but Rust bungled, and Cardiff worked out of danger. The home men, however, quickly got back again, but a telling rush by the Welsh front relieved. Woods was collared in possession but handed back to Wayne Morgan who cleverly cleared from an awkward situation.

Gloucester got the ball back well, but faulty handling behind lost them opportunities, and a free to Cardiff for off-side let them out of their 25. Woods found touch prettily when called upon. A good rush by the Gloucester forwards looked likely to end in something tangible, but they overran the ball. A moment later the ball got among the backs close in, but the chance was thrown away badly. A desperate onslaught on the Cardiff line ensued, but the ball was kicked dead, after Smith, Rust, and Cook had had narrow escapes from a score.

Cardiff kept the play at the centre after the drop out, but then the City Seconds returned to the attack and Cardiff again had a narrow escape. A moment later the ball came out to Hughes but he missed his pass with a clear run in. The Cardiff front then brought relief with footwork. Thomas and James combined well, and gained a good slice of ground, but Smith was too fast for the wing man.

The Gloucester forwards put in a fine dribbling rush to the Cardiff 25 where again Edwards and Goddard made an opening, but the passing was execrable, Rust, Cook, and Hughes failing. Griffiths misjudged the flight of the ball and let Cardiff past the centre, where the ball came out to Smith on the wing. He went off at a great pace and on being tackled near the line he lost the ball. Craddock being well up dived over with a corner try. No goal resulted.

Thomas started his backs on the drop out, but Hughes spoilt the movement, and the Cardiff 25 was again the scene of operations. The visitors were now getting the ball better in the scrums and for the first time looked dangerous.

A kick across from the wing by Jones gave his forwards a chance, but Griffiths dashed in and saved grandly. Centre play followed for some time, and then Cardiff attacked, but were penalised, and the centre once more became the venue. The Welshmen tried passing, but without success, and Gloucester again got a footing in the visitors' territory. Here, however, a wild pass by Smith gave Thomas a chance and he dashed off to the 25, where he was well tackled.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A 1 try
Cardiff A Nil

Before the second half was a minute old, Goddard and Welshmen, well backed up by the forwards, put in a good run to the Cardiff 25, where Davies was penalised for not putting the ball in straight. Goddard put in a lovely touch-finder five yards out, and from the line-out J. Welshman dribbled, but Cardiff saved. They were desperately pressed, however, and carried over, a scrum five yards out following. Goddard got the ball away nicely, and Rust passed to Cook, but the latter attempted to cut through and was floored.

Cardiff relieved with a flying kick, but Griffiths sent them back with a well-judged touch kick, and Gloucester kept up the pressure. Wheeling nicely the Gloucester forwards appeared to have a good chance, but a Cardiffian robbed them of the ball.

Play in neutral territory of a scrambling nature followed, and Griffiths was called upon, but he found touch nicely, and from the line-out the Gloucester forwards went away nicely. Morgan, however, received, and punted down, more play in the neutral zone following. Cardiff then had a spell at attack, and after James had nearly scored, but for a brilliant tackle by Smith, Williams, the right centre, dropped a lovely goal.

Cardiff were soon pressing again, and a forward crossed after a long kick, but was ruled off-side. After some loose play Gloucester got well into the Cardiff 25, where Woods saved finely when hard pressed.

Cardiff had to concede a minor from a kick, and then play settled at the centre. Woods marked and put in a long kick, but the game did not get far from the centre. Eventually, however, Goddard got possession at the centre and passed to Edwards, who in turn gave to Hollands, the latter dodging Woods beautifully and scoring a clever try amidst cheers. No goal resulted.

Things got rather heated after this, and for a foul tackle and for not taking notice of the referee when spoken to Pike was ordered off. He seemed very loath to go, but his captain's better counsel prevailed and he retired. Play was very hotly contested after this, a good deal of unnecessary roughness being introduced, and the football in consequence suffered, scrambling play in the centre following to the end.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 2 tries (6 points)
Cardiff A 1 goal (d) (4 points)

REMARKS.

The City Seconds' ground record had a narrow squeak; indeed, at one time in the second half it looked any odds on Cardiff winning, but the home men re-asserted themselves, and the winning points were the outcome of some exceedingly pretty play.

The game was very keenly contested throughout, and at the outcome Pike was ordered off for a foul tackle. He probably would have escaped this penalty had he listened to the referee in the first place, but he attempted to go on with the game, and Mr. Jordan very rightly insisted on his leaving the field, which he did on the Cardiff captain's advice. After this the game degenerated into a rough scramble, but Gloucester, in a majority of one, naturally lost nothing in a struggle of that description. On the form, especially in the first half, Gloucester deserved to win by more than two points, but they threw chances away with exasperating frequency. However, they won, and every credit is due to them for the victory.

The forwards, though smaller than the Cardiffians, held their opponents well, Craddock, the two Welshmans, and Hollands, perhaps, showing to best advantage. Edwards and Goddard combined well at half, the latter opening out the game beautifully.

Of the three-quarters all did their share, and although Rust and Cook gave something away in the matter of dropped passes, their defence was good. Smith, with his undoubted pace, shone on the right wing, and Hughes, although not having many chances, was useful, and did some good tackling.

Griffiths gave a fair show at full back, where Cardiff were exceptionally well served by Woods. Thomas and Williams were the best of the others.

JC