

GLOUCESTER JOURNAL

SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1890.

The Week's Sport.

The supporters of the Swindon club are said to have looked forward with considerable confidence to last Saturday's meeting with Gloucester, encouraged by the fact that the team have not suffered defeat at the hands of any XV. other than the city representatives during this season.

Their calculations were proved to be somewhat premature, however, and, as was only to be expected, considering the form the Gloucester team have maintained of late, the Wilts men were not good enough for their opponents, who returned home with a two goals and two tries victory.

The visitors did not take up a full team, Page and Cromwell being absent, making room for Ellis and Gorin, but otherwise the team was representative, and quite strong enough for the occasion. The ground was in good condition, and the outward conditions generally favourable to a good match, the result being that a very fair number turned out to witness the game, and were not disappointed. Swindon had whipped up their most formidable combination, and gave the visitors a good game, though they had to content themselves with a clean sheet at the end.

The Gloucester team arrived upon the scene of the encounter late, and the spectators were kept waiting until after four o'clock before a start was made.

The game had not been in progress long when Jackson got possession in his own half of the ground, and, handing the leather to A. Collins. The latter passed to Powell, who succeeded in crossing the Swindon line and registering a try, which did not prove to be the only score effected by the second team captain during the afternoon.

No goal resulted from Hughes's kick, and notwithstanding good play by Ball, Williams and Healing, Swindon got past the halfway again, but A. Collins shortly afterwards giving Powell another pass, the latter once more evaded the home backs, and planted the ball over the goal line, Hughes's place-kick having a similar result to the first.

The next item of moment[*sic*] was a run by Brown, which was only prevented from ending in a try by the sound of the referee's whistle, and this was followed by the usual "lemon" interval.

During the second portion the home team had the advantage of the slope, and at once showed to better advantage, Finch running dangerously, the danger being averted by the Gloucester custodian in his usually reliable style.

The scene of the warfare was shortly transferred to the other end of the field, and Ball caused some anxiety to the Swindonites by a threatening run, which was, however, checked in time. Wainwright was instrumental in gaining the desired relief for his side by putting in a substantial punt, which he followed up, and, again getting possession, endeavoured to make tracks for the visitors' goal. His object was, however, frustrated, by his being surrounded by the "maulers" on the other side, who proved an effectual stumbling-block in his way.

The home men did not relinquish their efforts here though, and Collins (Swindon) followed up the advantage with a dashing run, but he did not prove dashing enough to elude the embrace of Hughes, but succumbed to the latter near the goal line. Now the excitement of the spectators reached its climax, and great was the cheering when twice the home men nearly scored.

They could not quite succeed though, and Gloucester putting forth a special effort raised the siege, and drove their opponents back, the advance continuing until the home 25 was reached, when Powell, for the third time proved one too many for the homesters, and placed the ball behind the uprights, Hughes capping the effort with a neat goal.

This practically decided the issue, and Jackson, who had all along required a good deal of watching, evoked loud applause by making the best run of the match. He picked up near the centre, dodged one or two opponents who were in close proximity to him, slipped past Collins, the Swindon full back, and raced over the goal line between the posts. Hughes landed another goal, and Gloucester had the satisfaction of having secured a decisive win for the second time this season over the otherwise unbeaten.

Powell and Jackson played brilliantly in the attacking line, and the old war horses, Bagwell and Brown, were safe and reliable; Hughes was fine at back; Ball and George rendered a good account of themselves; and the forwards on the whole played well, Healing, Jenkins, J. Williams, and A. Collins being perhaps the best.

The home men played a plucky game, and kept their opponents going up till the last minute with commendable spirit and persistency.

The Gloucester team was : –

A. F. Hughes, back; T. Bagwell, C. E. Brown (captain), W. Jackson, and T. B. Powell, three-quarter backs; S. A. Ball and W. George, half-backs; T. Collins, A. Collins, J. Williams, C. Williams, E. Ellis, A. H. Gorin, A. E. Healing, and E. Jenkins, forwards.

- Gloucester II received a visit from Stroud, whom they succeeded in vanquishing to the tune of four tries and as many minor points to a couple of minors.

The visitors arrived in the city with a complement of players sufficient under the Association code, but four short of the requisite number for Saturday's game. However, four substitutes were found, and these acquitted themselves well on the whole. Neither were Stroud the only sufferers from absentees. Several II team men were assisting the 1st XV, at Swindon, and others could not play.

Hubert George would not risk his injured ankle in the last match of the season, Dere and James did not turn out, and Gorin went with the first team. Thus Stephens was the only usual $\frac{3}{4}$ who was in his place, the two halves and Bartlett making up the quartet, whilst two forwards performed on the skirts of the "scrum."

The weather was bitterly cold, the snow and rain of the morning had rendered the ground very heavy, almost muddy, and the prospect was not sufficiently captivating to attract more than a mere sprinkling of spectators, the majority of whom could not have been sorry when the whistle sounded for "no-side."

Gloucester had by far the best of the play, but they also had by far the best of the luck. The visiting forwards were by no means run over, although they were one less than the home pack, and considerably less in height and weight. They could not always hold the home men, who gained a lot of ground in the throw-out from touch, and generally were a little too strong for their opponents. However, occasionally the latter, assisted by their backs, were seen to advantage in combined dribbles, which often transferred the scene of action from one end of the ground to the other, and seriously threatened the home goal.

Twice or three times the visitors were on the point of scoring, when, as fortune would have it, their efforts were thwarted by a home player saving just in time. One of the three-quarters ran over the line on one occasion, but was collared and rolled out again and another maul-in-goal ended in a scrummage five yards out.

Except for these spasmodic efforts, and a brief period of warm siege of the home goal in the second half, Gloucester did all the pressing. Phelps scored two exceedingly clever tries, Stephens ran in neatly, and Huggins scored in a forward rush, but Watts, who, however, accomplished a lot of hard work during the game, failed to convert either of the tries. Morgan, Giles, and Huggins were the pick of the home forwards.

The visitors' three-quarter backs played a good game, considering that they were not fed by the halves at all, the kicking of one of the quartet being especially serviceable to his side.

The following were the teams : –

Gloucester. – E. Smith, back; H. Bartlett, J. Watts (captain), A. Stevens, and T. Phelps, three-quarter backs; Price and Williams, half-backs; W. C. Giles, G. Jones, E. Kilminster, A. G. Morgan, T. Huggins, –. Gillman, J. Mayo, and W. A. S. Ely, forwards.

Stroud. – Luker, back; Blakey, Orchard, Wyman, and Hill, three-quarter backs; Abbey, Butcher, and Blick, half-backs; Mills, Jeffries, Pile, Denning, Close, Osborne, and Gent, forwards.