

# **GLOUCESTER JOURNAL**

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## *The Week's Sport.*

All the remarkable and amusing exhibitions in football matches at the Spa this season, and they have been rather numerous, were completely eclipsed by that of Saturday, which was rendered ridiculously comical by the prodigious quantity of rain that had fallen during the week preceding.

The ground, before the match, was partially covered by water, large puddles being visible in various parts of the field; after the match, the turf had been worked into a soft pulp, which was several inches thick, and in which the players had wallowed until they were enveloped in a coating of wet mud, which rendered them decidedly unenviable spectacles.

Considerable difficulty was experienced by the home club in getting their men together. The two halves – Ball and George – were unable to turn out owing to indisposition, and Healing, A. Collins, Cromwell, and Jenkins were all absent from various causes.

Four second XV men were requisitioned, and Clifton being in as bad a position as the home team, a couple of substitutes had to be found for them, and then both teams turned out one man short, and the game was commenced half an hour late, Clifton setting the ball in motion from the Beaufort end.

The game requires very little description, and was chiefly remarkable for the repeatedly ineffectual attempts of the players to pick up the ball, which, being covered with a thick layer of mud, was so slippery that it could only with the greatest difficulty be handled at all.

Directly after the start a dribbling rush was started by the home forwards, and not so much in consequence of the clever dribbling, for the forwards kicked too hard, as the entire inability of the visiting backs to pick up or hold the ball (the manner in which it slipped from their hands evoked roars of laughter), the advance was not stopped until the goal line had been crossed, and the leather taken behind the goal, where several players having tried unsuccessfully to touch it down, C. E. Brown rushed up and secured a try. Page, with his unvarying certainty, sent the ball over the bar, and midway between the uprights.

Gloucester continued to give their opponents a warm time of it, and play of a very similar character to that already described prevailed. The home men were most unfortunate in the matter of scoring, for several times the ball was sent into touch close to the goal line, when a score appeared imminent; on three occasions it went into touch-in-goal; and as many times Carter just succeeded in saving the try by touching down, at least two of these being very near things for tries.

At length T. B. Powell, the 2nd team captain, who was filling the vacancy at three-quarter back, added another try in a difficult position after a fine run, in which he kept his feet surprisingly in the mud and distanced all his opponents. Hughes failed at goal, and half-time was called.

The second half was all in favour of Gloucester, with the exception of one or two incursions into the home half. Powell scored another exceedingly clever try, and Bagwell was also too good for his opponents and landed a fourth, both the kicks by Hughes, though good ones, failing. The score at the end read : – Gloucester one goal, three tries, and seven minors; Clifton nil.

It is hardly fair to judge of a player by his exhibition of Saturday, but we may mention that Powell acquitted himself admirably, and seemed quite at home in the mud and water; Brown played a fine game; Bagwell also did well; and Jackson had little or no opportunity of shining. The halves, placed at an enormous disadvantage, did not show up like the usual pair.

Hughes played exceedingly well, some of his kicks being indeed fine, considering the state of the ball. Whitcomb was the best of the forwards, his dribbling and all round play being splendid. Page was also prominent, and Collins and the brothers Williams played well.

Of the visitors Hill and Budgett were the pick of the back division, though Purton, who played half-back during the greater portion of the game, also got through some hard work, and tackled splendidly. The forwards were not equal to the home pack by a big stride.

The teams were as follows : —

Gloucester. — A. F. Hughes, back; T. Bagwell, C. E. Brown (captain), W. Jackson, and T. B. Powell, three-quarter backs; T. Phelps and Watts, half-backs; G. J. Whitcomb, H. V. Page, T. Collins, C. Williams, J. Williams, S. Clutterbuck, and C. Jones, forwards.

Clifton. — P. Carter (sub.), back; Hill, Harvey, and Edmunds, three-quarter backs; Budgett and Shaw, half-backs; Edwardes, Peck, Garnett, Greenwood, Smith, Boyle, Price, and Purton, forwards.

- Gloucester II. played the return match with Lydney at the latter place, the ground being partly under water. The visitors ... (*manuscript damaged; word/words missing*) ... severely from the depredations of the 1st ... (*manuscript damaged; word/words missing*) ... had to find substitutes for no less than seven players. The game was an even one, and resulted in a win for Lydney by one try to nil. Gloucester crossed their opponents' line three times, but were called back on each occasion, whilst the visitors assert that James touched the ball down before the Lydney forward fell on it and scored the only try. We have simply to record the result of the match, and cannot express any opinion upon the action of the referee, not having witnessed the game.