

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1897

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. CLIFTON

THE OPENING MATCH AT KINGSHOLM

The City Club commenced the serious work of the season this afternoon, when the representatives of Clifton appeared at Kingsholm to try conclusions with the premier Gloucester team.

The trial games which took place on the Kingsholm enclosure the two preceding Saturdays served to emphasize the fact that there is quite a plethora of young and promising players in the city, but as nearly every one of last year's team was available the Selection Committee were afforded little opportunity to introduce fresh blood into the ranks.

Only one practically new man (Roberts) secured a place in to-day's team, and he, unfortunately, was unable to turn out owing to an injury to the leg sustained at Cinderford on Thursday. This defection let in Car Cummings (who had a permanent place in the team the previous season up to the time he got hurt) at half-back.

Thirteen of the other players took part in the last half dozen matches in 1896-7, the side being completed by the inclusion of R. Goddard, of whom much is expected at centre three-quarter. To all intents and purposes, therefore, the Gloucester team was practically at full strength.

The visitors brought a fairly representative side. The weather was fine, and the attendance very good for a first match. Previous to the game being started, Hinton's Band discoursed a popular selection of music.

The teams lined out, at 3.40, as follows : –

GLOUCESTER	Positions.	CLIFTON
B. Hipwood	Backs	W. J. Liss
W. H. Taylor (capt.)	Three-quarters	T. Watkins-Baker
P. W Stout	"	F. E. Thomas
R. Goddard	"	H. Bostock-Smith
G. F. Clutterbuck	"	J. Williams
A. Stephens	Half-backs	F. Marriott
Car Cummings	"	G. H. Beloe
C. Williams	Forwards	W. Gwynn
C. Hall	"	A. B. Cridland
C. Rose	"	H. C. Sinnott
F. M. Stout	"	J. Senior
A. H. Click	"	B. W. Dakers
A. Pitt	"	P. H. Thomas
C. Goulding	"	W. Blatchford
T. Hatherall	"	W. Marson

Referee : Mr. F. H. French (Gloucester County Union).

Clifton won the toss, and Frank Stout kicked off from the Dean's Walk [end], the visitors having the sun in their faces. A good return was made, but Clutterbuck failed to catch the ball, and the Clifton forwards being on top of him he had little chance to recover himself. He, however, managed to kick across the ground to Goddard, who, gathering smartly, got in a fine corkscrew run. On reaching the full-back he essayed a pass, which, however, was knocked on, and a good opening was lost.

Immediately afterwards Clifton were penalised for off-side play, and Percy Stout had a drop for goal, but the shot went a little wide of the posts. A touchdown, however, was recorded. On the drop-out Gloucester immediately began to press, and a fine rush on the part of the home forwards looked dangerous. Liss, however, saved in fine style, eventually clearing his lines with a useful kick into touch at the 25 flag.

Gloucester, however, were not to be denied, and in less than a minute the visitors' lines were again placed in jeopardy. Liss again proved a saviour to his side, dodging several opponents and getting in a smart punt into touch. For another infringement Clifton again came under the ban of the referee, but Percy Stout's kick for goal was carried the wrong side of the posts by the wind.

Ensuing play was entirely confined to the Clifton half, but the visitors offered a sturdy defence to the attack of the home team. At length Goddard got away with a capital run, but he went too near the touch-line to give Taylor a chance of getting clear. A fine burst by Hall and one or two other city forwards from a line-out gave Clifton an anxious time, but Liss stopped the rush daringly. A free to Clifton gave the visitors slight relief, but it was only momentary, for Gloucester with another rush got dangerously near the line. Goddard was again prominent with another useful run, and he secured such a fine opening that a score seemed inevitable. The centre's pass, however, went astray, and though several attempts were made to get the ball over the line they were unsuccessful.

By dint of hard work Clifton worked out of danger, and a short spell of even play followed at the centre. The Gloucester backs were given several opportunities of exhibiting their abilities, and Clutterbuck once got a nice pass from Goddard. The former, however, was easily overhauled, and his pass getting amongst the opposing forwards the visitors quickly made tracks for the home end. Play hovered in the home quarter for a few minutes, but Taylor by the aid of a couple of fine kicks transferred operations to beyond the centre. Here Car Cummings was prominent with a sharp dash, but the passing was faulty, and little ground was gained.

In some subsequent loose play the ball was handed out to Clutterbuck, who, finding he was hemmed in, took a drop for goal. The ball went very wide of the mark, but well over the line, and Frank Stout, being on the spot, dispossessed the Clifton back of the leather, and scored the first try amidst cheers. Percy Stout was entrusted with the kick at goal, but failed to add the extra point.

On the re-start Stephens was conspicuous with a good run, but nothing tangible resulted. Soon afterwards half-time was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 try
Clifton Nil

Clifton re-started the second half, and after an exchange of kicks the ball went into touch just inside the home half. From the throw-out the Gloucester forwards (Click leading) got away with a fine combined burst, which was not checked until within 20 yards of the Clifton goal-line. A scrum followed at about this spot, and Stephens getting the ball from his forwards went over with a capital try in a fairly good position. The kick at goal, taken by Percy Stout, however again proved a failure.

Clifton dropped out, Car Cummings replying with a short run and punt into touch. From the line-out a Clifton forward got away with a clever dribble, but Goddard checked his career with a very smart pick up.

Car Cummings was now in evidence with a useful run, but he held too long before parting with the ball, and a capital chance of scoring was lost. The effort led to Gloucester being placed in a favourable position, and Stephens, securing from the succeeding scrum, sent out swiftly to Clutterbuck, who dashed over with a corner try. No goal resulted.

Clifton having again set the ball in motion some fast play was witnessed. Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges, but their play lacked finish. The City forwards showed up several times with some capital bursts, but Liss proved a very safe custodian.

Following up a punt by one of the Gloucester forwards Williams brushed a Cliftonian who was in the act of receiving the leather aside, and several colleagues coming up the ball was kicked over the Clifton line, but unfortunately it went over the dead ball line.

During the next few minutes the Clifton men showed up better, and they kept hostilities confined to mid-field for a short period. Then a pass out to Taylor gave the Gloucester captain a possible chance of getting round his opponents, but though he made a gallant effort he just failed, and was pulled into touch by Baker.

Gloucester, not to be denied, made strenuous efforts to effect another score, but each and every attack was warded off. Then Clifton, by the aid of some capital footwork, got down to the Gloucester 25, where hostilities hovered for some few minutes.

The visitors worked desperately hard just now, but the home team always held them safe, and eventually cleared to the centre. Here the ball getting loose Clutterbuck took advantage of an opening, and with a flying kick sent the ball over the Clifton goal-line. Running hard, the Gloucesterian beat one or two opponents, and finished up a smart individual effort with a try near the posts. Stephens this time essayed the kick at goal, and successfully negotiated the point, the ball hitting the post and falling over the right side of the crossbar.

Clifton having restarted, play was immediately taken to their end. Goddard distinguished himself with a capital run down the touch-line, and was only stopped in the nick of time. Operations then drifted to the other side of the ground, where Percy Stout had a glorious opportunity of putting Taylor in practically unopposed, but he attempted to cut inside, and was collared. The visitors were sorely pressed now, but they showed a bold front. For an infringement Clifton were penalised, and the position for a kick at goal being a good one Stephens attempted a shot. His effort was not rewarded with success, though the kick was a praiseworthy one. From now to the finish Gloucester fully maintained their advantage, but failed to add to their score.

RESULT :

Gloucester ... 1 goal, 3 tries (14 points)
Clifton Nil