

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1897

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. COVENTRY

A SPLENDID GAME

BRILLIANT WIN FOR THE CITY TEAM

Played at Kingsholm. This was the only fixture arranged between the clubs this season, so that the match had additional interest.

Last week Coventry defeated Burton by 2 goals to 1 try; whilst Gloucester, as is well known, easily triumphed over Cheltenham by 4 goals, 2 tries to nil.

Previous games between the clubs have generally resulted in close fights, and to-day's contest was looked upon as a very open affair.

Gloucester were again without A. Stephens, whilst Albert Pitt (owing to the injury he sustained last Saturday night by falling out of a swing boat) was also an absentee. Car Cummings again officiated at half-back, and Pitt's place in the forward ranks was filled by Bert Lewis, the old St. Mark's player.

The visitors were short of F. R. Loveitt, their crack centre three-quarter, and one or two other good men.

The weather was fine, and there was a capital crowd round the ropes. Hinton's band played a selection of music previous to the kick-off. The visitors did not arrive on the ground till 3.40.

The players entered the field a couple of minutes later, the men lining up as follows :

GLOUCESTER	Positions	COVENTRY
B. Hipwood	Backs	W. Comrie
W. H. Taylor (capt.)	Three-quarters	G. H. Tuke
R. Goddard	"	A. H. Frith
P. W. Stout	"	R. Orton
G. F. Clutterbuck	"	C. L. Piggott
Car Cummings	Half-backs	O. Lloyd Evans
J. E. Roberts	"	C. Pole
C. Williams	Forwards	J. Harvey
C. Hall	"	T. E. Stephens
C. Rose	"	W. Cleaver
F. M. Stout	"	T. Jones
A. H. Click	"	E. A. Murphy
Bert Lewis	"	T. Powell
C. Goulding	"	H. E. Neave
T. Hatherall	"	E. H. Maddocks

Referee : Mr. F. Gill (Gloucester County Union).

Coventry won the toss, and Frank Stout started for Gloucester from the Dean's-walk end. A good return was put in, and play opened at the centre. A rush by the Coventry forwards looked dangerous, but Taylor saved by kicking into touch near the 25 flag.

From some loose play the ball got into mid-field, where Percy Stout received and put in a huge kick towards the visitors' goal. The ball went beyond Comrie, and there was a big race for possession. The visiting back, however, managed to get to the leather first, and effected a capital save.

The effort led to a sharp attack on the Coventry line, but the visiting front rank brought relief, and Taylor failing to pick up Coventry dribbled right away. Hipwood, however, saved in the nick of time.

Ensuing play favoured the visitors, but Clutterbuck, with a useful punt into touch, sent play to the centre. Here Arthur Frith was prominent with a tricky run and useful punt, which enabled his side to assume the aggressive again. A penalty kick to Gloucester, taken by Percy Stout, resulted in operations being transferred to mid-field, where the Gloucester forwards went away with a brilliant rush. Despite all attempts of the Coventry back division the ball was taken almost to the line, when it unfortunately went into touch-in-goal.

On the drop-out Taylor was conspicuous with a capital run down the touch-line, but the Gloucester captain could not get beyond the quarter flag. Play at this time was very fast and open, both sides working with great energy. A free fell to Gloucester in a favourable position, but Percy Stout failed at the shot for goal, a touchdown only resulting.

On the drop-out play was keenly contested near midfield, but at length the city team set themselves going, with the result that the Coventry line was hotly attacked. The visitors, however, showed a fine defence.

Gradually the Midlanders worked out of danger, but on getting to the quarter flag they were penalised for off-side play. Percy Stout had the ball placed for him, and with a lovely kick sent the ball beautifully over the cross-bar, amidst ringing cheers.

Coventry re-started, and play continued to be fast and furious. A smart bit of play by Frith gave Tuke possession, but the latter was finely grassed by Taylor before going far. Play was confined for a moment or two to the Gloucester half, but a fine punt by Hipwood gave Gloucester the upper hand.

The visiting forwards, headed by Cleaver, were conspicuous with a good dribble, but Gloucester, who were not to be outdone, replied in superb fashion. Another fine kick by Hipwood was well followed up by the Gloucester forwards, who deprived Frith of possession. A grand opening presented itself, but over anxiety lost the opportunity.

A minute later, however, the ball again got amongst the Gloucester men, and having been handled by one or two players, it was finally sent out to Clutterbuck on the wing. The Gloucesterian made a grand attempt to cross the line, but he was well collared by Comrie and rolled back into play. A scrum followed five yards out, and some exciting play followed. Gloucester, however, could not get over despite their strenuous efforts.

Relief was brought to Coventry by their forwards, but they could not get beyond the quarter line. Here a line-out ensued, and Goddard securing nicely made off towards Taylor, and giving his captain a pretty pass, the latter raced over in fine style. Percy Stout failed at goal.

Coventry restarted operations, but Gloucester were now playing a brilliant game, and took a lot of stopping. Cummings and Roberts were getting the ball away very cleverly, but the passing behind was not perfection, and one or two chances were lost. The home men, however, nothing daunted pegged away.

Heeling out nicely, Roberts got the ball away in splendid style, and a brilliant bit of play ensued. Cummings was the first man to receive, and beating a couple of opponents in capital style, the half-back secured a good opening. He then yielded possession to Goddard, who after going a few yards passed to Roberts, who completed a fine bit of combination by scoring near the post. Percy Stout landed an easy goal, and thus Gloucester held the valuable lead of 11 points to nil.

Resuming, the fast pace which had been set was well maintained. Both sets of forwards worked with great energy, and some really excellent play was witnessed. Gloucester continued to hold the advantage, but Coventry stuck to their opponents splendidly.

By the aid of a splendid combined dribble Coventry secured a footing in the home half, and for the next few minutes kept Gloucester well at it. Play was just now mainly confined to the forwards, and in this department the visitors shaped exceedingly well.

A mistake by Roberts once gave Coventry a grand opening, but just as one of the visitors was in the act of falling on the ball Cummings dashed up and saved – a very near thing. On the drop-out Percy Stout was conspicuous with a brilliant bit of individual play, dodging several opponents in superb fashion, and finishing with a great kick into touch in the Coventry 25. Play was being waged at this point when half-time was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 2 goals (1 p), 1 try
Coventry Nil

Coventry started the second half, and a good return being made the first line-out took place well inside the Coventry half. Gloucester very early looked like scoring but they were beaten off, and a good kick by Tuke sent play into the home end. Percy Stout with a short run and screw kick quickly sent the game back, and Coventry were severely pressed. Useful kicks by the visitors gained them relief, and eventually one of their forwards got away in good style. Hipwood, however, waited for his move and hauled him down in grand style.

Ensuing play was very even, but Gloucester gradually got the upper hand again. Clutterbuck, getting a pass from Percy Stout, made some 20 yards before being upset, and this effort led to Gloucester going very close to the line. Being thus in a favourable position the city team worked their hardest to effect an addition to their score, but luck was against them. Car Cummings several times displayed great trickiness in getting away from the scrum, but the passing was at fault. Once a nice bout between the two Gloucester halves, P. Stout and Taylor, looked promising, but the latter was pushed into touch.

The Coventry backs, taking advantage of an opening, appeared to have a chance, but the passing was too slow, and Clutterbuck being on the alert he secured and kicked down to the Coventry line. Here a scramble followed ending in Frank Stout and Comrie going over the line together, but only a minor was awarded.

Coventry dropped out, but Gloucester were now continually on the aggressive, and forced three minors in quick succession by long kicks over the line. Some twenty minutes had elapsed of the second half without a score, and the Gloucester men were urged on by the spectators for another try. Answering the call, the home men played up in grand style, and a nice bout of passing between the backs gave Taylor an opportunity. Frith, however, was waiting for the Gloucester captain on the touch line, and prevented his getting dangerous. Gloucester, however, were not to be put off, and kept up a hot attack on the visitors' line. Car Cummings, who had been playing a great game, got away from a scrum in capital style. His pass, however, went astray, and it looked as if a good chance of scoring would be thrown away. Cummings, however, got hold of the ball again, and after dodging a couple of opponents handed out to Clutterbuck, who scored a nice try in the corner. Percy Stout landed a splendid goal.

Coventry resumed once more, but Gloucester returned to the attack immediately, and playing in excellent fashion gave the visitors a very warm time. On several occasions the City men were within an ace of scoring, it being really marvellous how the Coventry line escaped. Click once secured a lovely opening, and he took the ball over the mark, but he could not ground it. It was not long ere another score was recorded, Roberts this time being the needful from a line-out [2, 3 words unreadable] goal was kicked by Percy Stout bringing the Gloucester points up to 21.

For the next five minutes play was all in favour of the home team, and but for the lively defence of the Coventry men Gloucester would have run up a very big score. Twice in quick succession Taylor was only just stopped in time, whilst Clutterbuck did get over once, but was called back for being off-side. The closing stages were very exciting, Frith making a splendid run for Coventry just before the finish. He, however, was checked by Hipwood, and the ball getting loose, Gloucester sent into touch. Soon afterwards the whistle went for "no-side."

RESULT :

Gloucester ... 3 goals (1 p), 1 try (21 points)
Coventry Nil

REMARKS ON THE GAME

Gloucester well deserved their handsome victory. In every department the winners proved superior, their play at times being really brilliant. Coventry started off with a great dash, but after the game had settled down there was really no comparison between the teams.

The game was a grand one from a spectator's point of view, being delightfully open and very fast. The splendid penalty goal kicked by Percy Stout, which opened the scoring, gave the home men plenty of encouragement, and they played with such dash after this that the visitors seldom got a chance.

The play of the forwards in the second half was a real treat, and at times their combined rushes were well-nigh irresistible. In loose work, perhaps, they held no great advantage, but at all other points the home pack were streets ahead of their opponents. The tackling on both sides was very keen, but the play throughout was contested in the best of spirits.

For Gloucester, Frank Stout played a fine game in the open, and had hard lines in not scoring on two distinct occasions. Williams, Hall, Lewis, and Click also distinguished themselves in the loose, but the whole eight played grandly and exhibited splendid combination.

At half-back Roberts and Cummings fairly had the measure of their opponents, and both did some fine work. Cummings was here, there, and everywhere, and had a hand in most of the tries.

Undoubtedly the most pleasing feature of the match was the improved form of the Gloucester three-quarters. Individually the quartette cannot be improved upon, but in the two previous matches there was something wanting in combination. Though mistakes were made this afternoon there was a distinct improvement, one or two pretty bits of play being seen.

Percy Stout was greatly in evidence with his kicking, whilst he worked better altogether with Goddard in the centre. Taylor and Clutterbuck gave little away on the respective wings, and both players deserved to score more than one try each.

Hipwood was fully up to the form he exhibited against Cheltenham. His kicking generally was all that could be desired, as was also his tackling.

Frith was easily the pick of the Coventry back division, whilst Cleaver, Stephens, and Jones did best in the forwards.

The gate amounted to £29 18s. 9d.

GLOUCESTER A v. GORDON LEAGUE

DECISIVE VICTORY FOR THE A TEAM

The above clubs met on the latter's new ground in Avenue-road.

The teams were as follows : –

Gloucester. – Joe Griffiths, back; H. Broady, C. Curnock, G. Romans, and J. Cook, three-quarter backs; G. Hall and E. T. James, half-backs; G. Barnes (captain), W. Payne, H. White, W. Hughes, G. Smith, F. Oswell, J. Manley, and A. Mills, forwards.

Gordon League. – F. Griffiths, back; W. A. Thomas, J. Cox, W. Long, and R. Miller, three-quarter backs; H. Miller and E. Walden, half-backs; A. Smith (captain), S. Brown, H. Ford, J. Dovey, G. Carter, W. Barnes, W. Brickall, and W. Withers, forwards.

Referee : Mr. A. B. Evans.

Owing to the late arrival of the League team a start was not made until 3.40, when Barnes kicked off for Gloucester A. Shortly after the start Griffiths was kept busy for a moment or two, but brought relief by a well-timed kick into touch.

A smart rush by Gloucester nearly ended in James scoring, but he was pulled up in time. Again the A teamers pressed, but Griffiths saved admirably. Cook soon put in a useful run and kick into touch, and from a scrambling line-out J. Manley managed to struggle over, J. Griffiths' kick at goal failing.

After a pretty bout of passing J. Cook grounded another nice try, Griffiths again failing at the kick.

Some play of a scrambling nature followed, and after an exchange of kicks the ball came out from a scrum and was handed to Cook, who could easily have scored, but he passed almost on the line to Curnock, who notched Gloucester's third try. The kick at goal, taken by Griffiths, was again a poor one.

A free-kick from a mark by G. Romans nearly resulted in a goal, and soon after Cook again scored, G. Romans making a very creditable shot for goal.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A	4 tries
Gordon League	Nil

Soon after the resumption of hostilities a delay was caused by an injury to Barnes, who, however, went on playing. The Gloucester men then rushed the ball down the field, and after a rather palpable foul G. Hall got over the line, and a try was allowed. G. Romans kicked a goal.

Shortly after this Gloucester lost an easy chance of scoring on account of off-side play. Another delay was caused by a slight injury to Thomas.

Some uninteresting play followed, but at last the Gloucester men got into the League's 25, and from a nice pass G. Romans scored a good try right between the posts. The same player kicked the goal.

A free-kick was ceded to Gloucester, and G. Romans took the kick. The general impression was that it was a goal, but the referee disallowed it. Time was soon after called.

RESULT :

Gloucester	2 goals, 4 tries (22 points)
Gordon League	Nil

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