

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1913

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v. STROUD

GOTHAMITES' PLUCKY FIGHT

BEATEN BY A GOAL KICK

The County match with Cornwall again made heavy calls on the City Club, and for the return fixture with Stroud, at Kingsholm, Gloucester had eleven reserves doing duty. Practically the same team defeated Stroud last month at Fromehall Park by 17 points to 3, and being at home to-day Gloucester fully expected another easy journey. Ideal weather favoured the fixture, but the attendance was moderate.

GLOUCESTER	POSITIONS	STROUD
C. Cook	Backs.	G. Bingham
T. Powell	Three-Quarter	C. Smith
S. Sysum	Backs	G. Tyler (capt.)
W. Wilkes	"	E. Larque
A. Hudson	"	P. Buckle
T. Burns	Half-Backs	A. Humphries
A. Wotton	"	A. Watts
J. F. Lawson	Forwards	L. Dudbridge
A. Cook	"	V. E. P. Smith
J. Meadows	"	F. Westbury
W. Parham	"	R. Ramsay
C. Mumford	"	P. King
A. H. Williams	"	A. Willsher
W. Dovey	"	Jack Angell
L. Smith	"	F. Field

Referee : Mr. J. L. Davis.

THE GAME

A. Cook kicked off for Gloucester, and there being no return a scrum was formed in the Stroud half. The visitors early showed up with good footwork, which took them inside the City 25, where Powell saved by dropping on the ball. Gloucester heeling, Wilkes received from Burns, and after cutting through smartly passed wide to Hudson, who, however, failed to accept, and the ball rolled to touch. Gloucester again got the ball away smartly, and after some clever exchanges Wilkes shot through and raced to Bingham, when he yielded to Powell, who ran well and scored a good try. Sysum failed with the kick at goal.

Stroud resumed, and for a few minutes play operated at mid-field. A loose kick was sent to C. Cook, who gathered well in the face of opposition and got in a good kick to touch. Stroud came back with a fly kick, but Westbury was off-side and a penalty followed to Gloucester. The kick did not gain much ground, but a minute later Wilkes broke away cleverly down touch and cross-kicked into the centre of the field. A knock-on, however, ensued, and Stroud was saved from a dangerous attacking movement.

Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges, but twice in succession the visitors broke up attacks by some sound tackling. Ensuing play was even, Stroud showing good form in the loose, and kicked well. Lawson, with a strong effort, made headway, but was tackled by the leg when likely to clear. The same player was again prominent with a smart dash, but was stopped in time.

Stroud came away well with useful kicks, and Watts following up well tackled C. Cook. Gloucester tried to work away, but fumbling took place, and the visitors took full advantage. Gloucester were hard pressed on their line, and Wotton being at fault in attempting a pass close in, Westbury snapped up the ball and dropped over with a try. Bingham made a poor attempt at conversion.

Stroud resumed with plenty of vigour, and at once worked to the home quarter. Here Wotton opened out, and all the backs handled. Powell ran to the full-back, when he gave a reverse pass to Wilkes, who failed to take, but dribbled on. His last kick turned the ball towards the goal posts, and a colleague sent it over the line, but a Stroud man got back and just won the touch – a fine effort going unrewarded.

Stroud dropped out, and by smart forward work gained a position in the home half. Gloucester tried passing, but it broke down at Sysum and nothing resulted. Neat work by Watts, Larque, and Buckle put Gloucester on the defensive, the City being lucky to escape. Gloucester again made the mistake of heeling near their own line, and Hudson and another player being at fault Westbury was quick to seize an opening and scored his second try. The goal kick failed, but Stroud secured a lead of three points.

Gloucester's play for the last quarter had been very slack, the fumbling being very pronounced. Resuming, Watts made a good attempt to drop a goal, but only a minor resulted. Continuing to exert pressure the visitors came near scoring, and Cook had to concede another touch down from a kick over the line.

After this Gloucester pulled themselves together and rushed to the other end, where Smith pulled them up. From a punt back Powell received and cross-kicked amongst the City forwards, Bingham being tackled and forced over his line. A scrum followed five yards outside, from which Stroud cleared to the centre with a couple of flying kicks.

A penalty against Humphries for off-side enabled C. Cook to send play to the Stroud half, where there was a delay owing to C. Smith (Stroud) being temporarily laid out. Resuming, Wotton was faulty in his service from the scrum, and Watts dribbled some dozen yards or so before being stopped. Humphries was again penalised for off-side, but Stroud quickly regained the lost ground. Gloucester failed to make any impression before the interval, and weak play by Sysum went a good way towards the visitors gaining a territorial advantage.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Stroud 2 tries
Gloucester 1 try

Stroud restarted short of Smith, and early on Wotton brought off a good bit of footwork which resulted in Stroud being pressed. From the subsequent scrum the City halves got the ball away nicely, and Hudson was fed by Sysum. The old International, however, was finely tackled by Tyler before he could get under weigh.

The Gothamites changed the venue with touch kicking, and though Gloucester returned, off-side spoiled it. With a fine burst Stroud covered nearly half the length of the ground, and the Gloucester line was placed in danger. C. Cook was instrumental in clearing for the City, but the play of the home team was not convincing, judgment being sadly lacking at times.

At length, the Gloucester backs were sent away by Burns, but Wilkes, in trying to break through, was tackled. A little later Larque intercepted a pass from Burns, and had a clear field with the exception of Cook. He was partially checked by the home custodian, and collared from behind when looking all over a scorer.

Gloucester, playing up strongly, were prominent with a couple of passing runs, but both broke down badly with men well placed. Stroud were playing a worrying game in the front, and despite their being a man short were doing excellently. The City, by dint of hard forward work, secured a good attacking position, but Burns lost through punting aimlessly over the line. Gloucester returned to the attack on the drop out, but the attack left something to be desired.

Sysum, gathering from a loose kick, beat several men smartly, and then took a drop at goal, but failed to raise the ball. Powell, however, was on the alert, and picking up on the run beat Bingham and scored behind the posts. Sysum landed the extra points, and Gloucester took the lead.

The City put more life into their play on the resumption, but Stroud stuck to their opponents pluckily. Burns, with a pretty bit of footwork down touch, caused the Gothamites some trouble, but the situation was saved. From a line out the ball was got across to Hudson, who tried hard to cross in the corner, but he succumbed to numbers.

Subsequent play was scrambling and fairly even. Tyler was knocked out in stopping a Gloucester rush, and on resuming another Stroud player was disabled for a time in tackling Hudson. Both soon came round, and the game continued with great keenness.

From some loose play Sysum secured, and there was a fine opening with Wilkes and Powell on his left, but the centre held on, and was laid low by Tyler.

Wild passing by Wotton lost a possible chance on the right wing, but later Powell recovered a mistake in smart style. Play to the end was keen, but there was no more scoring.

RESULT :

Gloucester	1 goal 1 try (8 points)
Stroud	2 tries (6 points)

REMARKS.

The City's ground record was in dire danger of being smudged to-day, and had it happened no one could have complained.

Gloucester's brilliant start suggested something big in the way of scoring, but the home players unaccountably developed a bad patch, and mistakes behind were frequent. Both tries credited to Westbury for Stroud were the outcome of errors on the part of home players close to the line, but I give the veteran full praise for his opportunism. Westbury is by no means played out yet, and despite his tendency to get off side he was one of the most useful forwards in the Stroud pack.

The Gloucester front worked hard, but there was a lack of cohesion in the loose, and a number of good movements were spoiled through want of proper backing up. In the lines out the City men were often beaten, and Stroud, on the whole, were more convincing in loose rushes.

Where Gloucester had a pull was in the scrum, but it must not be forgotten the visitors were a man short the whole of the second half. Bearing this in mind, the Gothamites did uncommonly well, and their performance should afford unbounded satisfaction to that band of enthusiasts in Stroud who are working hard to regain for the Club the prestige formerly held.

Considering the number of times the ball was out amongst the home backs, it does not say much for the attack that only two tries were scored. The City half-backs did much good work up to a point, but there were many times when both Wotton and Burns were at fault.

At three-quarter, Wilkes and Powell were the best wing, and it was a pity more chances did not come the way of these players. Sysum was very selfish, and he was not at all happy in the delivery of his passes. Hudson was well marked, and though he tried hard once or twice he found the defence too keen.

Humphries, the old Gloucester Seconds' scrum worker, did a lot of stopping, but there were times when he infringed the off-side rule without being pulled up.

Watts, I thought, shaped extremely well at outside half, for without doing anything remarkable he was safe and generally knew what to do with the ball. In the third line Tyler did a lot of tackling, and his colleagues were little inferior.

Both C. Cook and Bingham had plenty to do at full-back, the City player giving the more finished exhibition.

Gloucester's display fell much below the showing made against Bath, and on the run of the play the City may consider themselves lucky to gain winning points.

Scorers for Gloucester : T. Powell (2), Sysum converted one.

Next week : Llanelly, away.

GLOUCESTER A v. OLD BOYS

CITY SECONDS DEFEATED

Gloucester had practically a third string out for this game at Tuffley Avenue, but it was expected that they would prove strong enough to easily defeat the Old Boys, who have not been performing exceptionally well this year. The ground was in excellent condition.

The Seconds started and immediately rushed to the Old Boys' line, a score looking imminent. However, Egerton picked up well, and running a few yards cross-kicked. Cook replied, but then from a kick by Rowles the visitors touched down.

Ensuing play was contested between the two packs, and the Seconds gained some slight advantage. J. Harris was prominent with a nice dribble to the line, but Lewis got back just in time to kick dead. Keeping up the pressure Ruck essayed to drop a goal from well out, and only narrowly missed the mark.

Both sides subsequently attacked in turn, the Old Boys working to their opponents' 25, where they were checked by Ruck. Then Gloucester indulged in a nice bout of passing, but Goatman could not quite reach the line and his reverse pass was snapped by an opponent. Later Ayliffe got away well, but nothing came of the movement, and although the Seconds went very close on two or three occasions they could not manage to cross.

By good footwork the Old Boys changed the venue, but their stay was very short, the visiting forwards making a determined rush. They were, however, pulled up very luckily by Collingbourne, who took a flying kick which went to touch.

Coming back again Adams got the ball, and executing a neat run through, punted for Lewis to race up and gather. The latter beat the back and touched down behind the posts with a neat try. Coulson goaled.

Soon after the interval arrived with the Seconds pressing.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Old Boys	1 goal
Gloucester A	Nil

The Old Boys pressed immediately on the resumption, and for the first ten minutes the Seconds did not get out of their own half. During that period Egerton narrowly missed kicking a penalty from a difficult angle, while Lewis had similar hard lines with a drop for goal. Then Baldwin marked right in front of the posts, and Coulson had no difficulty in adding another three points.

On the re-start the Seconds broke away and Ayliffe indulged in a lovely dribble right down the field, but he was unluckily pulled up within a couple of yards of the line. Gloucester continued to keep up the attack, but scoring ability was sadly lacking.

The Old Boys eventually again took up the running, and Adams had a cut for the line, but he was well tackled by Goatman.

Give and take play followed until the Old Boys' forwards, who were playing a fine game, rushed to the other end, where Baldwin picked up and threw out wide to Adams. The latter could not quite cross, Bloxsome being a little too quick for him and effecting a smothering tackle.

In the closing stages, the Seconds played up desperately, and were several times within an ace of the line, while Ruck only missed dropping a goal by inches.

Eventually, Lewis relieved with a clever run which Adams completed by punting to touch near the centre. Back again came Gloucester, but they could not quite cross before the final whistle sounded.

RESULT :

Old Boys 2 goals (1m) (8 points)

Gloucester A Nil

JC