

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1917

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. ROYAL NAVAL DEPOT

ATTRACTIVE MATCH AT KINGSHOLM

With the praiseworthy object of aiding the funds of the Gloucestershire Royal Infirmary, an attractive Rugby match was arranged at Kingsholm on Saturday by a Committee of the Gloucester Football Club (with Mr. A. Brown as Hon. Secretary).

The local side was mainly composed of Gloucester and Cinderford players, with the valuable assistance of F. Birt and Reg. Plummer, the famous Newport and Welsh International three-quarters; whilst the opposition was provided by the Royal Naval Depot, Devonport – a strong combination of Rugby and Northern Union players who have experienced a wonderfully successful season.

Fine weather favoured the match, and a large crowd (including a numerous contingent of wounded soldiers) was present when the Mayor of Gloucester (Sir James Bruton) kicked off to the accompaniment of loud cheers.

Before the game started the Wagon Works Silver Band (under the direction of Mr. A. Dowers) played selections of national and popular airs.

There was no change in the advertised teams, the players lining out as below :

GLOUCESTER

Back : J. Hall (Cinderford).

Three-quarters : A. Hudson (Gloucester and England), capt., T. Stone (Bream and County), F. Birt, and R. Plummer (Newport and Wales).

Half-backs : A. Hall and J. Baker (Gloucester and County).

Forwards : G. Halford and N. Hayes (Gloucester and County), A. Redding, G. Bowkett, and G. L. Jones (Cinderford and County), A. Ward, W. Robbins, and A. Hewlett (Cinderford).

ROYAL NAVAL DEPOT.

Back : J. Jarvis (Somerset).

Three-quarters : A. Hoar (Somerset), W. A. Davies (Wales), capt., S. G. Tovey (Monmouthshire), and A. W. Ackroyd (Halifax, N.U.).

Half-backs : J. Brittain (Leeds, N.U.) and S. J. Budd (Bristol).

Forwards : H. Snell (South and Devon), J. Atkinson (Aberavon), T. Williams (Swansea), E. J. Davies (Neath), H. Reynolds (Stroud), J. Urquhart, D. Keift, and W. Luddington (United Services).

Referee : Mr. A. Brown (Gloucester Referees' Society).

Play opened at the centre, and from a line-out the visitors secured and Davies burst through. He was tackled but let the ball go, which was kicked down to J. Hall. The latter failed to gather, and Hoar, who had cut across, dribbled over the line, and beating Plummer for possession scored in the first two minutes. Luddington landed a fine goal.

Restarting, Gloucester worked to their opponents' end but the naval men soon changed the venue. J. Hall, with a nice screw kick to touch, sent play back, but a loose rush by the visitors took the game beyond midfield. A useful run by Brittain looked promising, but Hoar stepped into touch on receiving the pass.

Quick on the ball the Naval forwards got dangerous, but they were successfully checked. Then a smart breakaway by Gloucester made some 30 yards, Hayes finally punting well down. The City further improved, and a smart bit of combination between Baker, Hall and Hudson nearly broke through the defence.

Gloucester still pressed severely, but found a stubborn opposition. At length the home forwards broke clean through in a body, and the defence being swept aside the ball was taken over the line and Hayes credited with a try. Birt failed at goal, though the attempt was a good one.

Resuming, play was fast and exciting in the Navy men's half. Stone was prominent with a good touchfinder, and later J. Hall kicked well. Good punts by Davies gave the visitors relief, but subsequent cross-kicks proved of little advantage, Bowkett mulling one, whilst off-side lost them ground another time.

Midfield play followed for a time until the ball got loose, and Hoar was given possession. A dash down touch and a repass beat the three-quarters, and Hoar again securing he raced over in splendid style with a try. The place-kick failed.

Gloucester dropped out, and play hovered in the home half for a time. Then Baker opened out, but the passing went wrong. However, a minute later, Baker and Hall secured a splendid opening, but again the ball was mishandled with only Jarvis to beat.

The Gloucester forwards were getting the ball in the scrum now, and passing between Baker and Hall saw Plummer eventually receive, but the Welsh International was forced to touch. From this point the visitors came away with a lovely bit of combination, but Hoar was fetched down when within a few yards of the line. It mattered little, however, for from the subsequent line-out, the visitors secured and a forward scored. Luddington added the goal points.

Gloucester paid a brief visit to their opponents' half on the restart, but they were soon beaten back. A penalty to the City gained some 20 yards, Halford following up and preventing a return. There was some close scrummaging work after this, but play was rather scrappy. The visitors once or twice tried to open out, but they could do very little owing to the close tackling.

There was a couple of delays owing to visiting players being knocked out, and in one case the man had to [be] carried off to receive attention from the ambulance men. On resuming Gloucester made slight headway, but Hogg punted back, and operations were in the home 25 when the interval was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Naval Depot 2 goals 2 try.

Gloucester 1 try.

The naval men were short of Tovey (injured) when the game was resumed, Birt replying to the kick-off with a lovely touch-finder. From a mark by Hudson, Stone put in a long kick to Jarvis, who had to run back to gather, and only a poor return was made.

Loose scrambling forward play followed until W. Davies snapped up in the open and raced away. He beat J. Hall, but Hudson ran back and floored him with a smothering tackle on the 25-line. Here the Gloucester forwards, headed by Redding, were conspicuous with a fine dribble, which was not stopped until well inside the visitors' half.

Making further progress, Gloucester went boldly for the line, and the ball was kicked over, Halford being just robbed of a try through the ball going dead. The home team lost ground through faulty passing, the visitors being very quick to seize upon the mistakes.

Gloucester cleared from a dangerous position through Stone, but Jarvis proved very safe at full back. The home forwards worked very hard in the scrums and loose, but when the ball got amongst the backs there was little doing. Still, the City kept plodding on, and their efforts were at length rewarded with one of the smartest tries of the match. Baker got the ball nicely to Hall, and after Hall and Stone had handled Hudson was given possession. The International was off in his old style, and beating Jarvis cleverly scored a try. Birt landed a neat goal amidst cheers.

On the resumption Plummer showed up with a good dash, clearing the opposition in fine style, but he was eventually pounced upon from behind and brought down.

Near the centre Baker passed out; W. Davies intercepted, and had a clear opening, but J. Hall legged him nicely. A kick down the field sent the ball to Jarvis, who ran across and started a passing bout. The ball quickly got out to Hoar, who, putting on full speed, rounded the defence and scored wide out. The place kick failed.

The visitors continued to press on the restart, and following a smart effort by Brittain, Hoar received and ran over with his fourth try, which Luddington goaled.

Gloucester put in a spurt after this, and Bowkett sided with a good punt. Then Hall got in a strong dash and pass to Jones, but the latter was tackled just outside.

After this Hudson shone in a fine effort, and when tackled he started passing. Plummer, the last to receive, made a great attempt to score, but he was ruled to have stepped into touch.

A couple of minutes later, however, there was a smart bit of combination between Hall, Birt, and Plummer, ending in the latter racing over. Birt's effort to goal just failed.

Right on time there was an exciting bit of play. The visitors had started passing, and a score looked certain, but on the 25-line Hudson intercepted the final transfer and had a straight course to the other end. A couple of opponents got across, and a dozen yards outside the line hampered the home captain. The latter essayed a pass, but something went wrong, and the coveted try was not forthcoming.

RESULT :

Naval Depot 3 goals, 2 tries (21 points)
Gloucester 1 goal, 2 tries (11 points)

REMARKS

The Gloucester team put up a very creditable contest against the strong side opposed to them. There was no disparity forward, but the Naval men, thanks to having played together for some time and consequently gained the necessary combination, held a superiority.

Willie Davies and Hoar formed a strong pair at right wing three-quarter, and Brittain and Budd were very smart at half-back. The home backs were at fault a good deal in handling, and mistakes led to two at least of the visitors' tries.

Altogether it was a fast and interesting game, and greatly enjoyed by the large crowd.

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