

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1924

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTERSHIRE v ALL BLACKS

This Afternoon's Match at Kingsholm

Beat Devon 11 points to nil.

Beat Cornwall 29 points to nil.

Beat Somerset 6 points to nil.

Three victories, with an aggregate of 46 points to nil. Such was the record the 1924 All Blacks brought to Kingsholm this afternoon when they opposed Gloucestershire, County Champions for three successive seasons – 1919-20, 1920-21, and 1921-22.

Would Gloucestershire be added to the defeated list? The splendid fight put up by Devon and Somerset encouraged the hope that the tourists would be given another stiff contest, but this was the best that could be hoped for in view of the fact that practically a scratch side had to meet a perfectly trained team which had the further advantage of having played together in several games prior to visiting England.

The Gloucestershire Fifteen which triumphed over Yorkshire, Surrey and Leicestershire so decisively would probably have given the New Zealanders a real test, but the County team to-day had to be largely taken on trust, and players were introduced who had no previous knowledge of one another's play. This was especially the case immediately behind the scrum, a department in which the All Blacks are recognised as being particularly efficient.

With Chantrill injured, T. Millington, the Gloucester centre, was chosen for the full-back position, a post he filled against Cornwall last season. Bristol supplied three players in the three-quarter line, Sid Brown (Gloucester) completing the quartette.

Here there were decided possibilities of a successful attack if the Gloucestershire forwards could make anything of a show, and Carter, Thomas and Taylor combine sufficiently to give Corbett and his colleagues a service of the ball. But in the previous matches neither Devon, Cornwall or Somerset were able to do much behind the scrimmage, and it was feared the Gloucestershire backs would be similarly restricted in opportunities.

The County forwards included five players who appeared against Cornwall last December – Shaw, Prowse, Bayliss, Preece and Dubberley – the new men being Hore and Rickards. Hore was an old County cap, but Rickards (who played under a birth qualification) was making his first appearance for Gloucestershire. He is a member of the Cardiff team, and came prominently under notice last season, when he gained his Welsh International cap. On paper Gloucestershire did not appear such a strong combination as that which represented Somerset at Weston on Saturday; and so little had been seen of the players that it was impossible to weigh up the chances of the side.

The New Zealanders made several changes from the side which opposed Somerset. A. E. Cooke and K. S. Svenson, two of the cleverest players in the back division were slightly injured at Weston, and were rested, and Robilliard, Paewai, Parker, and Mill also dropped out, the vacancies being filled by H. W. Brown, G. Hart (who was playing his first game of the tour), N. P. McGregor, M. Nicholls, W. Dalley, and G. C. Porter, the captain of the side, who had recovered from his indisposition.

The match created enormous interest in the county, and preparations were made for a record crowd. All the reserved seats were practically disposed of before the match, and many applicants for tickets in the covered stands had to be disappointed. Anticipations of a fine day were rudely shattered early this morning. Rain fell heavily during the night and continued solidly for hours, and the prospects of a soaking day no doubt deterred many from visiting the match.