

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1927

CORNWALL SOUTH-WEST CHAMPIONS

GAME WITH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AT KINGSHOLM

HARD, KEEN GAME BUT LITTLE BRILLIANCE

Defeated by Devon and Somerset at Exeter and Bristol respectively, Gloucestershire were out of the running for group honours in the South-West, but to-day's match at Kingsholm was of vital importance to Cornwall, who only required to effect a draw to qualify to meet Middlesex in the semi-final.

Gloucestershire made several changes from the previous teams, and the introduction of Locke and Corbett, last year's International centres, in the back division was fully expected greatly to strengthen the attack.

Tucker being engaged in the English Trial at Leicester, J. F. Evans (Gloucester) filled the vacancy created in the forwards, and W. Richards (Lydney) took Burland's place in the three-quarter line.

T. Biddle, the Lydney captain, was first reserve, but had to decline the invitation owing to indisposition. Cornwall fielded as selected.

The weather was very dull and cold, and the early kick-off militated somewhat against the attendance, the Worcester-street end of the ground being moderately patronised.

A contingent of Cornish supporters accompanied the team, a special excursion being run from the West Country.

Punctually to time the teams took the field as follows : —

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BACK : T. W. Brown (Bristol).

THREE-QUARTERS : R. James (Gloucester), H. M. Locke (Bristol), W. Richards (Lydney), and H. Baldwin (Stroud).

HALF-BACKS : L. J. Corbett and C. B. Carter (Bristol).

FORWARDS : M. V. Shaw (capt.), F. J. Coventry, W. G. Bryant and B. Parsons (Bristol), L. E. Saxby, J. F. Evans (Gloucester), R. Ling (Clifton), and S. Weaver (Barnstaple).

CORNWALL.

BACK : C. H. Gosling (Keyham Naval College).

THREE-QUARTERS : L. Roberts (Redruth), P. Collins (Camborne), R. Jennings (Redruth) and J. Jago (Penryn).

HALF-BACKS : J. Andrew (Redruth), F. Rogers (Camborne).

FORWARDS : W. Biddick (Camborne), J. Hollow (Redruth), J. Evans and J. Carter (Camborne), N. Peake (Penzance), F. Sellwood (Camborne), E. Maddrell (Penzance), and R. Matthews (Camborne).

Referee : Mr. J. Adams (Cumberland).

THE GAME

Corbett kicked off for Gloucestershire, the return going to touch at the centre. The visitors made ground with sharp rushes from the lines-out, but two clever kicks regained the lost ground. A good punt up the field by Lock saw Gosling misjudge the ball, and the home forwards getting up the ball was rushed to touch.

Opening out, the Gloucestershire backs handled, and Richards made a break-through, but passed forward. Again the ball was got out to the home backs, but Richards was pulled down, and a penalty kick was later awarded the Cornishmen.

Inside their own half the Cornwall backs handled, and Jago, the last to receive, kicked across, but Brown fielded and got in a smart punt to touch.

Fast play followed, ending in Carter opening out, the ball coming right across the third line to Baldwin. The Stroud winger ran a few yards and gave a return pass to Locke, but the International could not do anything. F. Rogers was instrumental in bringing relief to Cornwall, but Gloucestershire pressed back with a passing run, which ended in Corbett kicking to Gosling. Penalty kicks followed to either side, Saxby missing a shot for goal with the first.

The attendance had now reached about 5,000. Keen play ensued at the centre, the forwards working hard. The backs, however, were mainly engaged in kicking, which left matters even. A capital burst by the Gloucestershire forwards promised well, and from the next scrum Carter got the ball away smartly. Corbett, Richards, and Locke in turn handled, and Baldwin was sent away, but fell to a fine tackle by Roberts. A free to Cornwall gained some 20 yards, but Gloucestershire later checked a dangerous rush.

A free to Gloucestershire saw Brown short-punt and start passing. The ball came nicely along to Baldwin, but the wing man could not beat the defence. A big rush by Cornwall ended in Jago picking up and punting towards the goal-line. A home player tried to mark, but missed, and the ball went over.

A scrum followed five yards outside, and this being carried by the home forwards, play was taken to the quarter-line, where James fielded cleverly and dashed ahead. He dodged past Gosling, but was pressed from behind, and being forced to let the ball go sent forward. At this stage there was a stoppage owing to a Cornwall player being laid out and having to go off.

Resuming, Gloucestershire gained ground with a passing run and punt by Locke. Play veered to the other wing from an attack initiated by Carter, but Richards' pass went wide of James. Gloucestershire had the better of the exchanges, and Gosling missing the ball from a short punt on the blind side of the scrum, EVANS dashed up and, gathering the ball neatly, dashed over in the corner with a good try. Brown failed at goal.

Cornwall restarted, and play was evenly contested at the centre. Gloucestershire were holding the advantage in the scrums and heeling well, but Andrews was smart on the ball and worried Carter a good deal. Play generally was not very inspiring, but at length Lock shot through finely, but an overhead pass to the left wing went astray. Again the Gloucestershire backs broke away, Shaw opening up finely from the loose, but the attack broke down.

After Gloucestershire had been beaten off on the left, Jennings put Cornwall well down with a big kick. There was some misunderstanding as to who should field it, and Brown was lucky in getting the ball away. Gloucestershire came right away after this, and Saxby, receiving from a line-out, punted high and hard. There was a possible opening, but the ball bounced awkwardly and Cornwall saved. In the next minute Cornwall had to touch down from a carry-over, and from the resultant scrum the ball got loose, and Locke had a dash down touch. He eventually kicked across a few yards out, but a knock-on ensued.

Gloucestershire were doing all the attacking just now, but penetration was lacking. By the aid of a free Cornwall gained a footing in the home 25, where the visitors were awarded a penalty, but Jennings shot wide. Corbett fielded, and after running a few yards passed to Richards. The young Lydney centre brought off a brilliant run through the Cornish defenders, but after travelling half the length of the field he was tackled from behind in trying to beat a Cornishman, and a great effort ended. Immediately after Richards cut through brilliantly again, but his pass was ruled forward.

Ensuing play was fast and keen, the Gloucestershire forwards holding advantage in the scrums, while the Cornwall pack was strong in the loose. Heeling by the visiting pack saw Rogers break away smartly, and served Jennings. There was a possibility of a good opening, but sound tackling saved Gloucestershire. Play was in the home 25 when the interval arrived.

HALF-TIME :
GLOUCESTERSHIRE 1 try
CORNWALL Nil

Gloucestershire just about deserved their three points lead, but there was very little in it. From Cornwall's restart Gloucestershire started passing, the ball going through several pairs of hand to Baldwin. The latter kicked across, but an infringement occurred and the movement was checked. From a big punt by Brown, Jago fielded on the right, and beating several would-be tacklers kicked up the field, but Gloucestershire cleared. Good kicking tested Gosling, but the latter was safe, and a penalty greatly aided the Cornishmen.

The forward struggle was a terrific one, with Cornwall doing well in the close exchanges. A dangerous rush was stopped by Brown, who made a neat mark, and with his kick found touch at the centre. From here the Gloucestershire front broke away, Coventry shining with a strong run. He passed at the right moment, but a knock-on ensued, though Baldwin took the ball over and touched down, only to be recalled.

Cornwall soon changed the situation, and the Gloucestershire end was visited. The home forwards, however, dribbled back, and from a kick by Gosling, Corbett ran round and fed Lock. The latter handed to Richards, who essayed a return pass, but Jago knocked it on and spoiled it.

Gloucestershire progressed, a clever bit of combination between Carter and James being applauded. Next James made a clever mark and had a drop for goal, but failed to raise the ball sufficiently. Rogers kicked out to Locke, who, with a magnificent left-foot drop just failed to clear the cross-bar, a minor resulting.

From the drop-out Cornwall rushed well, but Brown twice effected clever clearances. It was hard, keen football, but the standard reached was not particularly high. From a penalty kick Corbett ran round, and there was some beautiful passing. Richards gave a return pass to Locke with a fine opening, but the transfer was ruled forward – hard lines. Immediately after Gloucestershire were penalised, and from a place 40 yards out JENNINGS landed a lovely goal, which equalised the scores.

Gloucestershire resumed with vigour, and in a combined rush which Biddick tried to check the Cornishman was knocked out. After attention he was able to continue. Cornwall cleared from a dangerous situation, and taking advantage of home players' mistakes attacked strongly. Once the ball was taken over the line, where James gathered and punted out.

The ball was captured by a visitor, who made a big dash, but succumbed to numbers. Ling was laid out in a tackle, and had to leave the field. Gloucestershire cleared with a penalty, and then some fine combined work took play to the other end, where some exciting work was witnessed. Brown had a drop for goal which missed by a yard, Cornwall touching down.

The last few minutes were hotly contested, but both sides lacked scoring ability. The attempts of both teams to open out failed through faulty handling. Once Jennings, taking advantage of a mistake by Locke, ran strongly, but fell to a great tackle by Brown, and threw forward.

Cornwall made one desperate charge on the left for a score, but the defence held out. Then Gloucestershire came again in a fine effort to snatch victory, but without success.

RESULT ;

GLOUCESTERSHIRE 1 try (3 pts.)

CORNWALL 1 goal (p) (3 pts.)

REMARKS

Congratulations to Cornwall on their well-deserved distinction in gaining group honours after a long wait. They will now have to meet Middlesex in London, and though the Metropolitan champions, with their formidable team led by Wakefield, will enter the contest strong favourites, supporters in the South-West will wish the Cornishmen the best of success.

To-day's game was keen and hard, and though lacking in brilliant incidents, provided a lot of interesting football. On the whole a draw was a fair reflex of the run of play. Gloucestershire, with the advantage they held in the scrums, and Carter's excellent service, should have been capable of making the game safe in the first half, but though the backs showed a great improvement on the displays against Devon and Somerset, the attacks lacked the brilliance of former county teams. Corbett, in his new position handled well and kicked with splendid judgment. Openings were provided the three-quarters, but somehow or other things did not go right, and several fine chances were missed either through an ill-judged pass or faulty handling.

Locke, if not up to his old International standard, played a strong game, and once or twice looked likely to go through, but Cornwall's marking was very close. Richards, the young Lydney centre, made one of the finest runs of the afternoon, and there were other occasions when he proved very elusive. He is a youngster of great promise, his one failure being errors in judgment, which should be rectified with experience.

James and Baldwin, on the respective wings, were afforded several opportunities, but could not quite clear the opposition. Carter, at scrum half, was smart in all that he did, but he was worried now and again by the close marking of Andrews, who was a very keen and hard worker. Rogers, with limited opportunities in attack, was very quick in his movements, and his sound and watchful defence was a great asset to his side.

Forward, the Gloucestershire pack carried off the honours, though after Cornwall drew level the visitors had one splendid period during which the home defence had a testing time. Cornwall's best work was in the loose, though here the home pack brought off some magnificent rushes at times. In the finished open football the Gloucestershire men were superior, Shaw, Saxby, Coventry, and Weaver doing splendidly. The latter infringed the off-side rule occasionally, but he did not give much away, and his skirmishing was very valuable.

Ling, Bryant, and Parsons combined well with their colleagues, and Evans deputised Tucker as the hooker with a good deal of success. As the Gloucester forward had the distinction of scoring the solitary try in the match – and a very smart effort it was, too – he had every reason to be pleased with his debut in County Championship football. Another feature of the Gloucestershire forwards' work was out-of-touch play, and with better support the side should have benefited more than they did.

Cornwall's best forwards were Biddick, Sellwood, and Carter (who was off the field for a period), but all played a vigorous game and tackled determinedly. The visitors lasted splendidly, and deserve every praise for that special effort late in the game to snatch a triumph.

The three-quarters were not much in the picture as regards attack, Collins and Jennings being the pick. Jago made one spectacular run, but was not overworked, and Roberts' sound tackling was his chief recommendation. For the most part the kicking of the Cornish backs lacked judgment, and failure to find touch gave the forwards a lot of needless running about. Both full backs (Brown and Gosling) gave capital displays, the Gloucestershire custodian, perhaps, being the more finished player.

The gate receipts amounted to about £320.

Next week : Gloucester v. St. Bart's Hospital, at Kingsholm.