

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 1907

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v EXETER

Exeter have previously figured on the Gloucester card, but the Devonshire men had not been seen at Kingsholm for a long time. The visitors had A. J. Roberts, G. D. Roberts, Moore, and Friend away, whilst in the Gloucester team Purton displaced G. Vears.

The weather was dull, but there was a fair crowd of spectators when at 3.10 the players took the field as follows : –

Gloucester. – A. Wood, full-back; A. Hudson, H. Smith, C. Smith, and F. Smith, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent (captain) and J. Stephens, half-backs; B. Parham, W. Johns, A. Purton, W. Holder, F. Pegler, H. Collins, J. Merchant, and A. Hawker, forwards.

Exeter. – Bale-Brook, full-back; Harris, Scoines, A. Kerswell, and Cook, three-quarter backs; S. Kerswell and T. Kerswell, half-backs; Gibbs, Shorland, Pike, Webber, Record, Mills, Youlden, and Lawrence, forwards.

Referee : Mr. A. J. Lawes (Bristol).

THE GAME

Exeter having lost the toss started from the Worcester-street goal, Wood replying with a fine punt. Cook misfielded the return, and Parham coming up dribbled on, but the ball was subsequently lost and a visitor sent back. Here Stephens picked up and started passing. The ball came across to Hudson, who put in a short punt, but he failed to get it again, the leather going out of play. From the ensuing scrum Gent received and passed out, but Hudson threw back wildly, and C. Smith could do nothing else but punt to touch.

By fast following up Exeter gained an advantage, and a pass from Gent going astray the visiting forwards were nearly over. The ball was actually taken over the line, but H. Smith touched down just in time. On the drop-out the game was taken to the centre, where Gent fed Stephens beautifully, but Hudson again passed badly. F. Smith, however, gathered and put in a neat kick to the centre. Here the Exeter half-backs got the ball away neatly, but a forward transfer stopped the movement.

A minute later the visitors again got the ball, and Scoines kicked down well, the ball rolling to touch at the Gloucester 25. H. Smith brought relief with a timely punt, and the same player further improved matters a little later with another good punt. Gent was tackled by S. Kerswell at the scrum, but the City captain managed to get the ball away, but Stephens was upset before he could travel far.

Some exchange kicks followed, and then the Gloucester backs brought off a pretty bout of passing, but H. Smith was tackled before he could part with the ball. A clever cross kick by Gent put Gloucester in a good position, but the ball was missed by a couple of players.

Some faulty play resulted in Exeter breaking away, but C. Smith picked up cleverly and passed to Gent, who sent to Hudson, but the movement was checked on the quarter line. More passing by the City men looked promising, but from Hudson's punt Bale-Brook marked. For off-side by Exeter, the home players were awarded a penalty, and Wood made a fine attempt for goal, but the ball went wide of the posts.

Weak play by the Gloucester backs allowed Exeter to clear, but Wood stopped a dangerous rush by making a mark. With his kick he found touch beyond the centre. From a line-out the Gloucester forwards opened out, and there was a series of capital exchanges, but the final transfer was ruled forward. Gloucester heeled from the subsequent scrum, but H. Smith was well tackled in trying to break through.

Aided by mistakes by the home team Exeter gained a footing in Gloucester's half, and with a lucky kick a visitor sent to touch close to the home line. Exeter worked hard for a score, and the home lines narrowly escaped.

Wood relieved the pressure, but the visitors worked back, and from a kick over the line Gloucester conceded a minor. The City dropped out, but their play was very disappointing. The Devonshire forwards were fast, and tackled well, and all attempts by the home men to open out were stopped.

At length H. Smith received near the centre and punted to the open. C. Smith raced down, and fielding on the run passed to F. Smith. The latter accepted the ball nicely, and tricking the opponents ran round behind the posts. Wood, however, missed the easy place.

Exeter re-started, and good play by the brothers Kerswell resulted in the Gloucester end being visited. C. Smith was prominent with some good work, but Stephens, missing a pass from Gent, the visiting forwards dribbled to the home 25. Exeter made further headway, and from a long line out there was a possibility of a score, but the Smiths saved.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 1 try
Exeter Nil

Parham resumed, and operations opened in the Exeter half. Following up a loose kick Johns upset Moore in the visitors' 25, but the ground was subsequently lost in some scrambling play.

Hudson, receiving from H. Smith, tried to clear, but he was hemmed in. He, however, got in a clever screw kick, gaining some twenty yards. Receiving from his forwards, Gent broke away cleverly, and feinting went clean through, when he was upset from behind. The ball rolled away, and C. Smith picking up transferred to F. Smith, who was rolled into touch-in-goal.

After the drop-out H. Smith made a mark, and Wood, taking the kick, punted high. Following up Wood again secured and tried hard to get away, but he was pulled down by an opponent. The visitor was injured in the tackle and had to be carried off the field.

Resuming, Gloucester at once got the ball out, and H. Smith whipped out the ball to Hudson. The latter, after hesitating, had a dash, and with a fine effort only missed a score by a yard or two. From a line-out close in, the Gloucester backs got set going, but Moore effected a beautiful tackle of F. Smith. Gloucester lost ground through wild passing, and Exeter, taking advantage, reached midfield.

Here Gloucester were awarded a free, and Wood put in a huge kick, the ball going over the line for a minor. Ensuing play was not of much class, Gloucester especially doing poorly. A series of mistakes lost considerable ground, and Wood saved luckily right on the line.

Exeter once or twice looked likely to pierce the defence, but they were successfully held. F. Smith, Stephens, and Gent were instrumental in changing the venue, and then from some exchanges a score looked promising, but Hudson was brought down in time. Exeter relieved with useful kicking, but Wood always returned with interest.

In the open Hudson fielded and brought off a good run and pass, but C. Smith fumbled at the critical moment. Gloucester continued on the aggressive, but owing to the deadly tackling of the visitors they could not break through. For off-side play by S. Kerswell Exeter were penalised, and from a favourable position Wood kicked a nice goal, giving Gloucester a six points' lead.

Exeter paid a brief visit to the home end after the re-start, but Holder, with some clever footwork, took the game back. From a cross-kick by Hudson, the Gloucester forwards had a fine opening, and Johns was sent over near the post, but the ball was ruled forward. Exeter were kept busily defending, but Gloucester's play sadly lacked finish.

At length F. Smith brought off a lovely run and looked all over a scorer, but just outside he was smothered by a couple of opponents. Exeter gained slight relief, but Gloucester worked back, and from a line-out Hawker secured, and with a strong burst went over the line with a couple of men on his back. Wood added the extra points.

On the resumption Gloucester showed up with some fine football, and the visitors were severely tried. Just inside the Exeter half Gent started Stephens on the move, and the latter gave to F. Smith, who at once yielded to C. Smith. "Whacker" was going strongly when he took the ball, and he was through to the full-back very quickly. F. Smith had followed up, and again receiving the ball sprinted hard and finished up a very fine effort by scoring behind the posts. Wood again converted.

From the kick-off Hawker received and punted in return. Johns got up and secured, but as he was getting clear he slipped and fell, and another possible chance went astray. No-side was almost immediately called.

RESULT :

Gloucester 3 goals (1 p) 1 try (16 points)
Exeter Nil

REMARKS

Gloucester's form to-day was disappointing, and it must be admitted the sixteen points' victory greatly flattered the home team. It was only during the last ten minutes that the City showed really decent football, but some brilliant movements were crowded into this brief period. Exeter displayed a good deal of smartness in all departments, and they were unlucky in not scoring once or twice. Forward, the visitors were a fast and dashing lot. They were quick at heeling, clever in the loose, and tackled with deadly effect.

In comparison the Gloucester players were at times very dilatory, the following up especially being very poor. The home men were also too prone to pick up when it was clearly the best policy to keep the ball at their feet.

Individually, Johns, Parham, Hawker, and Holder were noticeable, but the play of the pack generally was below standard, and there will have to be a distinct improvement against Swansea next Saturday. Behind the scrum, too, Gloucester were by no means satisfactory as a combination. Mistakes in handling were far too common, and judgment was sadly lacking at times. The visitors were a keen lot in marking their men, and the fact that Gloucester were only able to score once in the first half speaks volumes for the defence.

The Brothers S. and T. Kerswell proved a very nippy pair of half-backs, and they employed smothering tactics very successfully at times. Gent worked with great energy, and got the ball out frequently, but until near the end finish in attacking movements was deficient. Stephens made mistakes like his confreres, but better use should have been made of his openings in the first half.

At three-quarter, "Whacker" Smith was in good form, and he had a hand in two of the tries scored by F. Smith. The latter was opposed to a speedy player in Cook, but the Gloucesterian held his own very well. Gloucester claimed that "Tinker" scored a third try, grounding the ball before he was thrown into touch-in-goal, but the referee ruled against them. H. Smith was a hard worker, and he tried his best to make openings for Hudson. The International, when he made up his mind to have a go, was as dangerous in attack as ever, and twice he came near scoring.

Taking the work of the line as a whole, it was by no means good enough to beat a Welsh team, but we hope to see the players rise to the occasion next Saturday. Exeter were without their fast left wing (the Rev. Moore), but Harris proved a useful substitute. Cook did not get many chances to show his ability in attack, but like his colleagues his defence was pretty sound. Wood gave another capital display at full-back, and the Exeter forwards found him a difficult obstacle to surmount. The Gloucesterian's kicking was powerful and well-judged, and he fielded well. Bale-Brook did capital service for Exeter, and brought off a number of fine saves.

The injured Exeter player (Kerswell) had come round by the time the match was over. He received a nasty knock, and was in great pain for some time.

MONMOUTH v. GLOUCESTER A
CITY SECONDS JUST LOSE

The game aroused much interest. Gloucester were first to look really dangerous. The visitors were pressing when Gordon Probyn, the Monmouth left winger, fielded smartly and relieved by kicking to touch near the centre. After this Gloucester fell away. Pegler pushed Probyn into touch when that player looked like opening the scoring for Monmouth. Gloucester were now having a worrying time, but by determined play they again got the upper hand of affairs.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A Nil
Monmouth Nil

The second half saw very exciting play. Monmouth pressed at once. As it was late when the teams fielded semi-darkness soon began to set in. Gordon Probyn scored a fine try for Monmouth after a passing bout which fairly puzzled the visitors. The kick failed.

Gloucester now tried hard to equalise. Cook, from a penalty, just missed giving Gloucester the equaliser. Towards the close Monmouth again looked dangerous, and several times Cook saved well.

RESULT :
Monmouth 1 try (3 points)
Gloucester A Nil