

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1907

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

COUNTY CUP COMPETITION

GLOUCESTER v. BRISTOL

The county cup competition was advanced another stage to-day, when Gloucester and Bristol, and Cinderford and Stroud respectively contested for entry into the final round.

The most important match was the meeting between Gloucester and Bristol, as it was generally considered the winners of this tie would eventually land the trophy.

In the two previous years the rival teams met in the final, with the result that Gloucester were successful in 1905 by 12 points to nil, whilst last season Bristol triumphed by 8 points to 3.

For the third year in succession Gloucester were fortunate in obtaining choice of ground, and this fact it was hoped locally would just about turn the game in favour of the Kingsholm men. It was recognised, however, that Bristol would prove stout opponents, their recent victories over London Welsh and Cheltenham testifying to the team's abilities.

For the Cinderford contest, the Foresters were favourites, though Stroud, who hoped to have the assistance of W. Hyam and E. Wheatley (of Plymouth), were expected to make a close fight. Unfortunately for Stroud, F. Johnson, who has been unwell of late, had to stand down at full-back, and his absence was regarded as a serious handicap.

The final tie will be played on March 23rd, and the contestants toss for choice of ground.

GLOUCESTER v. BRISTOL

Hopes that the match would be attended with fine weather were not realised. Following a dull morning came a drizzling rain, and the conditions generally were about as unpleasant as they could be. This affected the attendance, though there was a capital crowd present, including contingents from Cheltenham, Stroud, Bristol, etc.

Bristol, with a choice of ten forwards, decided to leave out Bale and Kibbey. Gloucester turned out as advertised, so that both clubs were absolutely at full strength.

The teams took the field punctually at 3.30, and lined up as follows : —

GLOUCESTER	Positions	BRISTOL
A. Wood	Backs.	H. Nott
F. Smith	Three-Quarter	F. S. Scott
A. Hudson	Backs.	H. E. Shewring
H. Smith	"	W. I. Llewellyn
C. Smith	"	M. E. Neale
D. R. Gent (capt.)	Half-Backs.	J. Larcombe
J. Stephens	"	J. Spoors
B. Parham	"	W. E. Meyer (capt.)
W. Johns	Forwards.	N. Moore
F. Pegler	"	J. L. Mathias
H. Collins	"	T. Webb
G. Matthews	"	L. G. Meyer
G. Vears	"	P. Down
W. Holder	"	J. Vinnicombe
A. Hawker	"	W. Cooper

Referee : Mr. E. John, Pontypridd (Welsh Union).

Linesmen : Messrs. J. H. Tratt and T. G. Smith.

THE GAME

Gloucester were successful with the toss, and Bristol were deputed to kick off from the Worcester-street goal. E. Meyer failed to send the ball the necessary ten yards, and a scrum was ordered at the centre. Bristol were penalised right at the start, and with the return to Neale's kick H. Smith found touch well inside the Bristol 25. From the subsequent scrum Gloucester heeled, and smart passing saw Hudson go strongly for the line. He passed to F. Smith, but the latter was pushed to touch.

Some exciting work ensued in the Bristol quarter, the Gloucester forwards bringing off a magnificent rush to within a dozen yards of the line. The visitors worked out with a loose rush, and later Larcombe started a bout of passing. Llewellyn, however, missed badly, and Hudson receiving the ball from Stephens, punted to touch cleverly.

Bristol gained a few yards from a line-out, but Gent stopped them cleverly. Heeling by the City forwards saw the Gloucester backs indulge in a lovely bout of passing. Hudson beat Shewring neatly and whipped out a pass to F. Smith, who took the ball and raced to Nott. The latter tackled his man, but Smith re-passed to Hubert Smith, who ran over, but to the disappointment of the home crowd a forward transfer was ruled. This was a lucky let off for Bristol.

Gloucester were beaten back, and then a mistake by C. Smith saw Spoors pick up and clear. Just before reaching Wood the Bristolian punted, but the Gloucester custodian fouled his man, and the visitors were awarded a free.

Some twenty yards was gained by the kick, and Bristol made further headway by a series of exchanges, Scott knocking on and stopping the movement. The same player a moment later put in a big punt to the Gloucester line, but his forwards tackled off-side, and the ball was ordered back to the centre. Here the visitors tried to open out, but the handling was not clean.

Ensuing play was even at midfield, both teams showing good defence. Stephens checked Neale when the latter was fed by Spoors, but the latter regained possession and punted down to Wood. The latter being tackled he threw the ball away rather wildly, and it being missed Shewring had a clear opening. In trying to dribble the ball over the line, however, the International overran it, and Gloucester saved luckily. Neale, however, had a dash a moment later, and was only stopped by a daring tackle by Wood, who was laid out. After a brief interval, however, he was able to resume.

A penalty to Gloucester enabled the home team to get out of danger, but the visitors were soon on the attack again. The Bristol forwards heeled from several scrums in succession, and once Shewring put in a dodgy run, but eventually passed forward. Gloucester at length got the ball out, and Stephens punted down the field for Neale to make his mark. Shewring took the drop for goal, but the kick fell a long way short, and Wood marked. The kick was well returned, and later Spoors made twenty yards with a nice touch-kick.

An interception and punt down by Stephens saw F. Smith race up and force Nott to send to touch inside the Bristol half. Holder gained a few yards from a throw-out, but Bristol were soon back, and Neale forced a minor with a kick over the line. Gloucester dropped out, and play was keenly fought out in the home half. Gent at length opened out, and there was a nice bout of passing. "Whacker" Smith took the ball nicely from his brother, but Shewring came across and tackled him, and his re-pass went astray.

Larcombe, sneaking away from a scrum on his own, ran and punted over Wood's head. There was a race for possession, but "Whacker" Smith knocked on and saved the situation. Gloucester got out by the aid of a penalty, but the visitors retaliated with a neat bit of combination, and Spoors kicked across to Scott's wing. F. Smith secured and punted out to Nott well outside the 25. The Bristol full-back gathered, and taking deliberate aim dropped a lovely goal.

Gloucester resumed, but the visitors assumed the upper hand. The home backs at length opened out, and C. Smith tried hard to clear, but he was floored by Neale. Operations were well contested at the centre, where Larcombe passed to Spors. The latter missed, and Stephens dribbled away, only to see Shewring bring off a miraculous save.

Gloucester played up strongly now, and held their own in good style. Gent sent Stephens going, and the home backs handled neatly, but a forward transfer was ruled when Hudson looked like clearing. A dash by C. Smith upset some Bristol passing, and the Gloucester forwards had a good chance, but Bristol saved in time.

Larcombe was instrumental in changing the venue but grand touch-kicking by Wood gave Gloucester an advantage. Centre play followed until Scott punted down to Wood. The latter misfielded, and he was immediately pounced upon. Later, Bristol looked like scoring, but the home team cleared with a lucky flying kick. Gent subsequently eased the pressure with a nice punt to touch.

The Bristol forwards were holding the advantage in the scrums and continually heeled, but the attack was met with a stubborn defence, and when the interval arrived no further score had been effected.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Bristol 1 goal (d)
Gloucester Nil

Parham resumed for Gloucester, and the opening stages were fought out at midfield. From the first scrum Bristol heeled, but Larcombe was checked before he could pass out, and the home men sent to touch. Stephens missed taking a pass from Gent, but Bristol were not able to take advantage of the mistake. Breaking away from a scrum the home forwards burst away in good style, but they eventually over-ran the ball, which rolled to touch. Larcombe and Neale tried to work the short side of the scrum, but the wing man was finely floored by "Whacker" Smith. The Bristol backs tried some exchanges, but little ground was made.

The home team responded, and Frank Smith tried hard to break away, but he was well tackled by Scott. Near midfield Spoors punted across, and Wood and Neale jumped for possession. Both missed the ball, but Shewring picked up, and handing to Spoors, the Bristol half ran over with a try, which Moore failed to convert.

Gloucester dropped out, Scott replying to Stephens, who made his mark. Wood kicked well, but Bristol soon worked to the home half. Here Larcombe initiated a bout of passing, and the ball came right across the wing to Scott, who was beautifully thrown to touch by Holder, a certain score being saved.

From a pass by Stephens, Hudson made an attempt to clear, but after going a dozen yards he was surrounded and forced to pass, the ball going wide and to touch. Bristol gradually worked towards the home line, and Spoors, receiving from Larcombe, dropped for goal, the ball going just wide of the uprights.

On the restart Gloucester had a fair share of the play, but Nott stopped a dangerous movement in fine style. Bristol were quickly put on the aggressive again, thanks to a splendid individual effort by Neale, who beat several men in grand style. The same player distinguished himself with another grand effort a minute later, only succumbing to a magnificent tackle by Hudson. Spoors twice gave Gloucester trouble, and the home defence for several minutes was sorely pressed. The defence, however, was very sound. Gloucester eventually cleared with a passing bout, Hubert Smith finely kicking to touch beyond the centre. A big kick changed the situation, and Bristol would have been dangerous again but for a splendid bit of work by Wood.

Gloucester stuck pluckily to their opponents, and at length they came away with a brilliant piece of play which deserved a try. The movement, started by Gent, and "Whacker" Smith taking Stephens' pass, broke clean through and then handed to his brother. Hubert subsequently passed to Hudson, who raced on hotly pursued by Neale. The Bristolian closed with his man and brought off a successful tackle, though he was hurt in his effort.

After a temporary interval, play was resumed, and the Bristol forwards at once broke away. Holder dropped down fearlessly on the ball, and was badly kicked in the back, having to be assisted off the field. On continuing, Bristol attacked strongly, and the Gloucester line had several narrow escapes. A stout defence, however, kept Bristol at bay.

At intervals the home team did capital work, but faulty handling spoiled one or two movements. "Whacker" Smith had one fine dash down touch, but his pass was intercepted by Nott, who punted back to where the Gloucesterian started. Smith was damaged in being tackled, and put his knee out. He was assisted from the field, and Pegler came out as three-quarter.

Only five minutes were left to play, and Gloucester, by grand work, made desperate efforts to score. From well inside the home half, Hudson started a movement which was taken part in by Frank Smith and Collins. The two latter inter-passed beautifully, and clean beat the defence, but Collins was not fast enough, and was pulled down amidst excitement a few yards from the line.

Bristol worked out with a fine dribble, Moore being prominent. The Gloucester defence appeared beaten, and Neale ran over the line, but was called backs for an infringement.

From a scrum on the home 25 Bristol heeled, and a kick went to Hudson, who, seeing an opening, ran down touch and passed to Frank Smith. Inter-passes following, the clever little wing was left with possession inside the Gloucester half. Putting on full speed, Smith raced away, and though followed by Spoors, he finished up a superb effort by scoring behind the posts amidst a scene of great enthusiasm. Wood added the extra points, at which there was a further outburst of cheering.

Bristol resumed, and there were loud shouts for "Another, Gloucester!" but time was near at hand, and before anything further could be done the whistle went for "No side."

RESULT :

Bristol 1 goal (d) 1 try (7 points)
Gloucester 1 goal (5 points)

JC