

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1907

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

TRIAL MATCH AT KINGSHOLM

PROBABLES v. POSSIBLES

The Gloucester Football Club arranged a trial match at Kingsholm as a preliminary opening of the season, and the fixture attracted a few hundred spectators. There were several absentees from the Probables side (Wood would have turned out but for the fact that he had to work), and they started with 13 men against their opponents' 15. The teams were as follows : –

Probables. – A. Bagwell, back; A. Hudson, F. Bloxsome, H. Smith, and F. Smith, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent and J. Stephens, half-backs; G. Vears (captain), B. Parham, G. Matthews, H. Quixley, J. Merchant, and D. Hollands, forwards.

Possibles. – E. Butler, back; W. Egerton, W. Robinson, G. Cook, and J. M. Baldwin, three-quarter backs; F. Arthur (captain) and S. Arthur, half-backs; W. Blackford, J. Griffiths, W. Holford, W. Bailey, Hayward, Melhuish, C. Barnes, and Taylor, forwards.

Referee : Mr. F. Abbey.

Vears started the proceedings, and there was a spell of even play at the centre. The Possibles got off with a passing run, but it broke down at the wing man. Gent was prominent with a neat effort and pass, but Bloxsome was well tackled before travelling far. A kick down saw Baldwin at fault, and Vears picking up just failed to cross. The Possibles changed the venue with some useful kicks, but the premiers got back, and the defence was sorely taxed.

Gent and Stephens displayed all their old combination and cleverness at half, and they initiated some pretty bouts of passing, but the handling behind was faulty. Following some close play at mid-field, Gent opened out, and a lovely round of passing ensued, ending in Bloxsome scoring wide out. Hudson failed at goal.

Resuming, operations continued to go in favour of the Probables, but the movements behind lacked finish. A long kick by Cook went to Bagwell, who ran round and passed to Bloxsome, but the latter was forced to kick to touch. From the throw-out Hollands and Parham indulged in some neat exchanges, but the former lost possession on the line, a minor only accruing. Soon after the drop-out Gent started a fine movement, and after Stephens, H. Smith, and Hudson had handled, the latter sent F. Smith over with a smart try. The goal-kick failed.

There was some more good work on the part of the Probables on the resumption, a fine dash by F. Smith being stopped in the nick of time by Butler. The Possibles relieved from a dangerous position with good footwork, but near the centre Hudson picked up and dashed away in fine style. He eventually transferred to H. Smith, but the latter's transfer to Bloxsome, with the wing man well placed, was not accepted.

The Possibles did better after this, and weak play by the opposing full-back gave them an opening. The situation was saved but in some loose play Cook secured, and with a clever left foot kick dropped a neat goal.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Probables 2 tries
Possibles 1 goal (d)

When the second half was commenced, it was found that Cook and Bloxsome had changed over, the former playing centre to Hubert Smith for the Probables. Pegler also appeared for the latter. Hudson put in a fine return to the kick-off, and play opened in the Possibles half. A passing movement was nipped in the bud, but a minute later H. Smith was nearly through.

The Probables hung round their opponents' line, but the latter came away, F. Arthur and Bloxsome taking part in a pretty movement. Gent sent play back, but the Possibles returned, Robinson shining. Ensuing play was fast and fairly even, the Possible forwards holding their own and heeling well. From a long throw-out Cook secured and burst through, but stumbled on reaching Butler, and fell to the ground.

Merchant, Vears, and Quixley were conspicuous for the Probables, but the back play was at fault, and one or two promising movements were spoiled. Following some exchange kicking, Gent started Stephens from a scrum, and a lovely opening was made for Frank Smith. The wing man, however, was overhauled by Baldwin and thrown to touch. On the other wing H. Smith made a fine effort to cross, but Butler pulled him down just outside.

The game continued to hover in the Possibles end, but scoring ability was lacking on the part of the premiers. For off-side the Possibles were penalised in a good position, but Parham's shot went wide, and a Possible forward kicked out to Bagwell. The latter fielded and came through a bunch of opponents, finally starting a bout of passing. H. Smith and Gent carried the ball nearly to the line, when the ex-captain (though collared) yielded to Stephens, who ran behind the posts. Hudson added the extra points.

After the re-start the Probables took the game in hand, and after pretty work by Gent, Stephens and Hudson, the International raced half the length of the ground and notched a fine try. The same player converted.

After this Hubert Smith came near scoring on a couple of occasions, but Butler's tackling was very sound. The Possibles, after repelling several hot attacks, assumed the aggressive, and a fine dribble by Blackford took them right to the line. From the ensuing scrum the Possibles forced themselves over the mark, and Bailey was credited with a well-deserved try. A goal resulted.

On the restart the Probables took up the attack, but Matthews overran the ball with practically a clear field. Mistakes by the Probables lost a lot of ground, and they were eventually forced on the defence. Once or twice their lines narrowly escaped. Bloxsome did actually cross, but was called back for a forward transfer.

Before the end the Probables came again, and a capital run by H. Smith put the side in an attacking position. Just on time a passing movement was well carried out, and Frank Smith scored in the corner. The place kick failed.

RESULT :

Probables 2 goals, 3 tries (19 points)
Possibles 2 goals (1 d) (9 points)

REMARKS

The game provided an interesting exhibition, and the form generally was highly satisfactory for an opening match. The Probables for the most part held a big advantage, especially behind the scrum, but in the front the reserves put up a good show. The game was treated seriously throughout, and there was a keenness about the players not usually associated with a trial.

One of the most interesting features of the match was the splendid form shown by some of the old hands. At half, Gent and Stephens were wonderfully smart at times, handling the ball with cleverness and accuracy, and initiating a number of fine movements. At three-quarter, Hudson, who played centre, showed splendid dash, and he has early dropped into his best form.

Hubert and Frank Smith, too, did remarkably well, the only fault being occasional mishandling. Cook is a sturdily built young fellow, and gave evidence of ability in attack. He should make a useful reserve, and the same may be said of Bloxsome. Robinson and Egerton did not get many chances on the Possible side, but when opportunity served they were all there.

J. M. Baldwin, the Soccer player, made his debut at the handling game, operating at wing three-quarter. He used his pace to advantage on several occasions, and with more experience should do well. The Brothers Arthur accomplished good work at the rear of the Possible forwards, and should train into a serviceable pair.

Of the forwards, Vears played a hard, strenuous game, and set an example to his men in following up. He was well supported by Hollands, Merchant, Parham, Matthews, and Quixley. Blackford, Bailey and Melhuish were prominent on the other side. In the full-back positions deputies had to be requisitioned in Butler and Bagwell, and both shaped creditably in defence. Their kicking, however, lacked length.

Wood will be available next week, and with "Whacker" Smith in the team a strong fifteen should take the field against Clifton. The latter are expected to be strengthened by T. Watkins Baker (the old county player), who has returned to England, and with Eddie Baker and the Brothers Eberle will form the third line. Clifton can always command a splendid pack of forwards, and they are hoping to give the City a good game.

The following week Gloucester are due at Northampton, and the East Midlanders are pretty certain to make a big effort to avenge the double defeat inflicted on them last season.

JC