

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1907

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. NEWPORT

A FAST AND EXCITING GAME

USKSIDERS WIN ON THEIR MERITS

For this important match at Newport, Gloucester had to make two changes from the side which defeated Cheltenham last week. Fortunately Gordon Vears was able to resume leadership of the team, and his presence was welcomed by his colleagues, with whom he is very popular.

C. Smith had to stand down owing to the injury he sustained last Saturday, and this let in his brother (Hubert) at left wing three-quarter. H. Collins was absent from the forward ranks, being detained at work, and Pegler was thus retained in the pack.

Newport selected practically the same team which put up such a great fight against Cardiff, and the side carried the confidence of their supporters.

Gloucester. – A. E. Wood, back; H. Smith, G. Cooke, E. Hall, A. Hudson, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent, J. Stephens, half-backs; G. Vears (capt.), W. Johns, B. Parham, D. Hollands, H. Quixley, F. Pegler, R. Craddock, G. Matthews, forwards.

Newport: – F. S. Burt, back; S. H. Williams, D. McGregor, W. J. Winfield, R. Plummer, three-quarter backs; T. H. Vile, W. J. Martin, half-backs; C. M. Pritchard, G. Boots, E. Thomas, E. Jenkins, W. Webb, F. Jenkins, P. Walter, H. J. Pritchard, forwards.

Referee : Mr. Willis James, Crumlin.

THE GAME

The weather was fine overhead, but heavy rain in the night had rendered the ground heavy in places. The kick-off was ten minutes late, by which time the attendance reached 5,000.

Gloucester won the toss and C. Pritchard started, Stephens replying to Winfield. Newport worked down with loose kicking, and later the forwards heeled, but the passing went astray. More mistakes in handling lost Newport ground, and Gloucester, headed by Johns, Hollands, and Matthews, rushed past mid-field, Winfield saving.

Immediately after Gent opened out nicely, and the City backs passed brilliantly, but the transfer to Smith was ruled forward. Working well together Gloucester attacked strongly, and the home defence was severely tested. Clever play by Gent and Stephens found an opening for Hall, who fed Hudson. The International got off at a big pace, and beating Plummer scored a fine try. Wood failed at goal.

Stephens fumbled the drop out, and a scrum followed at the centre. Weak passing by Newport saw Cook dribble through, and his cross-kick looked to give Gloucester a nice opening, but Newport saved luckily. A loose rush headed by Boots took the Usksiders to the City half, where Gent, and then Wood, cleared from a kick. Burt dropped for goal, but the ball went wide, and Cook effected a good clearance.

Grand kicking by Wood enabled Gloucester to reach mid-field, where some exciting forward work was witnessed. Owing to the greasy ground and ball accurate play was rendered difficult, but at length the Newport backs handled smartly. Williams put in a lovely cross-kick, but Wood saved grandly in the face of determined opposition.

Newport made an attack on the right wing, but they were beaten off, and the City came away beautifully to mid-field. Smart work from a line-out by Smith took Gloucester nearer.

Cook, with a flying kick, sent to Burt, who slipped and fell. He was immediately pounced on, and the ball getting loose Gloucester had a possible chance, but luck was against the citizens. In attempting to make a mark Hall fumbled badly and allowed Newport to get clear. Plummer fielded and raced away with a good opening, but the subsequent transfer was missed.

Newport made desperate efforts to get on terms, but the defence was great. Hudson once intercepted, but slipped to the ground as he was breaking away. Parham was injured in a tackle and retired. Resuming, Gloucester brought off a grand bit of play, Gent shining, and a score was only just missed. Parham now returned, but Gent had to go off. Just before the interval, McGregor scored for Newport, and Burt goaled.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Newport 1 goal
Gloucester..... 1 try

Gent resumed when the second half commenced, but he limped badly. Boots was early prominent with a breakaway, in the loose, and further dashing play by the home team caused Gloucester to defend. From a kick down Wood was collared on his line, and Newport were nearly over. Martin tried to dash over from a scrum, but he lost the ball, and Cook punted out to the quarter line.

An interception by Smith enabled the latter to make headway, and Gloucester reached more favourable quarters. Neat passing by the city backs, and a fine run by Hudson took the visitors well inside the Newport half. From a quick lineout Smith was nearly over, being pushed to touch a few yards from the line.

Gloucester pressed severely, but big kicking relieved for Newport. Burt subsequently found touch just outside the Gloucester line. Vile getting possession started passing, and after neat exchanges Williams crossed wide out. The place kick failed.

Resuming the pace was very hot, but play favoured Newport. From a sharp pass McGregor gathered nicely, and, with a terrific burst, beat the defence and scored another try. No goal resulted.

For fouling an opponent in the dropout Matthews was penalised, but the kick was well returned by Wood.

Subsequent play was a great struggle forward, Newport doing grandly. Then Hudson, with a splendid effort, raced away and punted over Burt's head. The Gloucester man tried hard to get up, but the home player just beat him by falling on the ball.

Newport were getting the ball in the scrum pretty often, but the backs were not safe in handling. Useful work by Hall kept play at the centre for a time, but Newport came strongly again, the whole team playing with great dash. Inside the Gloucester 25, Vile fed Martin, who slipped through cleverly, and beating Wood, scored behind the posts. Burt converted, the ball striking the post and bouncing over.

Gloucester re-started, and the City showed up well with some loose footwork, which invaded Newport territory. Hudson still further improved the City's position, but Burt gained relief. The light was getting very bad now, and it was difficult to follow the game accurately.

Operations were confined to the Newport half for the next five minutes, but few openings presented themselves. Gloucester worked with great vigour in the hope of reducing the lead, but the home defence was strong. Stephens once cut through and punted high, but McGregor marked, and Burt kicked to mid-field. The City rushed back and got to the 25, where they were pulled up, and the end came immediately afterwards.

RESULT :

Newport 2 goals, 2 tries (16 points)

Gloucester (3 points)

REMARKS

It was a fast and exciting game to watch, and splendidly contested. Newport won on their merits but the score exaggerated the superiority they held. Gloucester more than held their own in the first half, and but for Gent's enforced retirement it is probable the City would have led at the interval.

In the second portion Gloucester had one very bad quarter of an hour, and during this period Newport made the game safe. The home forwards played grandly throughout, and to their efforts success was mainly due. The Gloucester pack held out pluckily and accomplished a lot of sound work. But they were generally beaten for possession.

The Newport backs had far more opportunities than the visitors, but until the second half play was very scrappy. Hudson was the best of the Gloucester three-quarters, and he did an immense amount of work.

Wood as usual kicked splendidly, but his defence was beaten by both Martin and McGregor. The latter's second try was a very fine effort. Gent played well at the scrums, but did not get the chances of opening up that fell to Vile.

GLOUCESTER A v. NEWPORT A

SECONDS WIN A HARD GAME

These teams met at Kingsholm before a small attendance. Gloucester were without Arthur, and Newport came without Rowlands and Adams.

The teams were : –

Gloucester. – F. Welshman, back; F. Bloxsome, C. Cook, W. Hall, and W. Pegler, three-quarter backs; W. Wotton and W. Dix, half-backs; A. Purton, J. Wyburn, G. Holford, W. Blackford, G. Griffiths, W. Taylor, W. Bailey, and T. Clarke, forwards.

Newport A. – F. Johnson, back; M. Baker, A. Fisher, A. Dinham, and P. Jones, three-quarter back; W. Bennett, W. Priest (extra half), and A. Thomas, half-backs; C. A. Evatt, W. Johnson, A. Palmer, T. Lewis, G. Staite, H. Uzzell, and C. E. Hews, forwards.

Referee : Rev. D. T. Jones.

Gloucester started, and Fisher failing to find touch Gloucester at once obtained a footing in the visitors' 25. The ball came out nicely, but Bloxsome was nicely collared by Johnson. The Gloucester forwards, however, rushed up in a bunch, and carried the ball over the line, Bailey being credited with a try. Purton took the shot at the long range, but just dropped short.

Gloucester had the best of ensuing play in the Newport 25, but the tackling was very keen. Eventually Newport worked out to the centre. Gloucester opened out, and Bloxsome got going, but Fisher brought him down nicely, and central play followed for some time.

Eventually Newport worked up into the Gloucester end, but Welshman saved cleverly and ran out to the 25 line. Welshman afterwards mis-fielded, and let Newport up. Gloucester were penalised for off-side, but the attempt was a poor one on Fisher's part.

Newport at last opened out the game, and the ball came swiftly across to Baker, the wing man, who came with a reputation as a fast man, but he bungled the pass badly. Fisher dribbled away beautifully, but Welshman sent them back with a nice touch-finder. Gloucester worked down a bit, but they individually and collectively held too long, and did not give the ball enough air.

The character of the football naturally deteriorated, and interest flagged somewhat. Gloucester worked back into the Newport 25 again, and eventually got right down onto the line, but Johnson sent the ball right to the centre with a long kick.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 1 try
Newport Nil

Newport started with one man short, Bennett suffering from the effects of a blow in the eye. Central play followed for a long time. Eventually, however, Gloucester opened out the game, and the ball came right along to Bloxsome, but he could not get through, being bored to touch.

The game now got a good deal brighter, both sides playing up strongly. Baker was responsible for a strong burst, but then Gloucester raced up, but Johnson saved. Gloucester, however, returned to the attack, and the ball came out to Hall, but he held a trifle too long, and Bloxsome mulled the pass close in. Palmer brought relief with a timely kick, which Welshman mulled. A cross-kick gave Baker a chance, and gathering beautifully he raced over with a fine try. The kick struck the upright – very hard lines.

With the scoring level, the game became very strenuous, both sides trying desperately hard to obtain the upper hand. A lucky kick gave Gloucester a footing in the Newport 25, where some very hot scrummaging was seen. Bloxsome made an abortive attempt to drop a goal, and Newport touched down.

Play settled at the centre again, but Gloucester got going again and attacked hard. Thomas, when hard pressed, kicked high, but the ball fell beautifully for Dix, who simply dropped over the line with a try. Purton's kick was a failure.

Gloucester pressed hard again, and in a melee Dix got a nasty blow in the head, which looked like causing a bit of a squabble. The referee, however, smoothed matters admirably, and the game continued keener than ever. Little Dix, who had played an admirable game throughout, was in trouble again, and this time was so badly hurt that he had to be carried off. The end shortly arrived.

RESULT :
Gloucester A 2 tries (6 points)
Newport A 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

The very strenuous tactics adopted by both sides was bound to have its effect on the character of the game, which was of a close and confined nature for the greater part of the time. Although not so interesting to watch as a match of more open character, there was no lack of incident, and Gloucester are to be heartily congratulated on their win.

The Newport forwards were the bigger and heavier, but the home front stuck to them pluckily and made a good fight of it. At half-back Dix played a remarkably good game. He was here, there and everywhere, in the thick of it all the time, and Wotton, his confrere, was a distinct acquisition.

The three-quarters were mainly engaged in looking after their opponents, and with but brief exceptions did not do much attacking. Welshman had an off day, several times fumbling, but he managed to extricate himself from difficulties very well at times.

Forward, Purton, Griffiths, Bailey, and Wyburn showed up prominently, but all did well in this department. For Newport Fisher was a tower of strength, especially with his kicking.