

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1907

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

WESTERN COUNTIES v. LONDON

FARCICAL TRIAL AT TAUNTON

LONDON ON TOP

Unfortunately for the success of this International trial match, stormy weather prevailed at Taunton, and the ground was very heavy, a pool of water lying behind one goal-line. As had been announced, Rankin and Shewring took the places of Wilson and Hudson and there was a further change, H. E. Hughes (Devon) coming in for Woods. There was a poor attendance, not more than a thousand being present, and a shower fell as the players took the field.

WEST: A. Wood (Gloucester), back; B. Bennetts (Cornwall), B. Solomon (Cornwall), H. W. Shewring (Bristol), M. Neale (Bristol), three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent (Gloucester), A. Davey (Cornwall), half-backs; W. Mills (Devon), T. S. Kelly (Devon), R. Gilbert (Devon), Lieut. Hughes (Devon), R. Dibble (Somerset), H. Gunningham (Somerset), A. Teague (Cinderford), J. G. Milton (Cornwall).

LONDON: G. H. Lyon (United Services), back; D. Lambert (Harlequins), J. G. Birkett (Harlequins), W. N. Lapage (United Services), G. Longhurst (United Services), three-quarter backs; H. J. Sibree (Harlequins), H. M. Coombs (Blackheath), half-backs; F. J. V. Hopley (Blackheath), J. R. Pound (O. M. Taylors), E. L. Chambers (Blackheath), N. Houghton (Leytonstone), W. B. Grandage (Harlequins), H. R. Mullins (Guy's Hospital), W. H. Rankin (United Services), A. B. Crook (Guy's Hospital), forwards.

Referee : Mr. E. B. Holmes (Midlands).

London kicked off against a cross-wind, and reached the West 25, and then hail and rain fell heavily. Mills headed a rush by the West forwards, and reached the centre. Lyon got in a good kick, but Solomon put in a good return, the West going back to the centre. Kelly led a good dribble to the London 25, Lyon being a trifle slow in getting the ball. Lambert effected a good save for London.

The play was of a scrambling order, and was mainly confined to the forwards. Kelly dribbled well again, but there was too hard kicking at the finish, and Lyon touched down. From the drop-out the London forwards worked down, getting well within the West 25, where the West were penalised. Shewring cleared with a good kick to the centre.

Lyon stopped a West forward rush, but Wood kept the pressure on London by finding touch. The attack, however, was brief, Lambert tackling Neale, but the West forwards broke away again, using their feet well. A penalty, well taken by Birkett, sent the West back, and this was followed by a nice piece of work by Sibree.

Davey was making a good opening when he was collared well by Bennetts, the left wing, and a fine chance was lost. Lambert, failing to take his pass, also lost a chance, but the ball was difficult to handle. A little later Sibree started a movement that was nearly successful, the game being carried right on to the West line, but their forwards cleared.

Kelly made another good dribble, but Lyon saved, while the London forwards replied with a good rush, reaching the West quarters, where a keen struggle was witnessed. The West cleared, and then Lambert made a long dribble. London nearly scored, and a little later there was another attack on the West line. London got down again afterwards, but West touched down.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

West Nil
London Nil

Play in the second half opened in the centre, but London got down with a penalty. West cleared, but the London forwards, who played well, worked the ball back again. The play continued to consist mainly of forward rushes, the backs doing little more than saving, and kicking.

Coombes broke away with a dribble, but the ball going over the West line, Wood kicked dead. A little later Lyon got in a fine kick. London were pressing when the West forwards, after collaring Lyon, rushed half the length of the field. Then for some time the play was in the centre, until Sibree dribbled past Wood, Solomon getting up and saving.

London again pressed, being nearly over, but the West forwards rushed the ball out. London, however, went back and were having much the better of the game, but lost ground through their forwards heeling out. Longhurst had his kick charged down, but Birkett saved the situation by a mark.

London pressed again, the West forwards once more clearing. West were penalised, but Lambert's kick fell short. Then in a forward rush Lapage scored for London, and kicked a goal, the score coming about a quarter of an hour from the finish.

Afterwards West dribbled to their opponents' quarters, but were unable to maintain their position, the London scrummagers rushing to the other end. In the closing stages London had the best of it.

RESULT :

London 1 goal (5 points)
West Nil

REMARKS

The game was a perfect farce as a trial of form, for the ground was like a quagmire. Heavy storms of rain made matters even worse. The London side deserved to win, and had much the best of the scrambling forward play.

Their pack went in for the kick-and-rush game, which was just suited to the state of the ground, and by their footwork completely beat their rivals. There was not a decent round of passing throughout the afternoon.

Gent was better than Davey, but the three-quarters had no chance, and Neale was limping from a kick for half of the game. The only men who really played well were the two backs, and Wood, who had a tremendous lot to do, was in capital form, some of his saves from the feet of the forwards being of a most daring character.

The game was a terribly disappointing one.

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