

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1908

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTERSHIRE v. CORNWALL

THE SOUTH-WEST CHAMPIONSHIP

RE-PLAY AT GLOUCESTER

The second of the series of re-play matches in connection with the South-West Championship took place at Kingsholm on Wednesday afternoon, when Gloucestershire and Cornwall met to decide supremacy.

Great interest was centred in the game, which was expected to furnish an exceptionally keen struggle. When Gloucestershire visited Redruth the Cornishmen administered a crushing reverse to the visitors, and on the same ground a week ago Devon were well beaten by 21 points to 3. Cornwall, on this form, were general favourites, but the home county had great hopes of putting up a much closer fight than when the teams previously met.

The selected Gloucestershire team was much stronger on paper than the side which succumbed at Redruth. Wood came in at full back vice Meek, and in the forwards Hyndman and Redding (Cinderford) superseded Parham and Stinchcombe.

At the last moment there was an alteration in the Gloucestershire ranks, Neale sending word that he could not get to Gloucester and G. Cook (Gloucester) filled the vacancy.

Cornwall also had to make a change owing to Solomon dropping out. Jackett came in at three-quarter, and Eathorne (Plymouth) occupied the full-back position. The weather, though dull, kept fine, and there was a large attendance for a mid-week fixture.

The revised teams were : –

GLOUCESTERSHIRE. – A. E. Wood (Cheltenham), back; A. Hudson (Gloucester), G. Cook (Gloucester), V. F. Eberle (Clifton), E. F. Eberle (Clifton), three-quarter backs; A. Hall (Cinderford), F. Niblett (Cinderford), (half-backs); W. Johns (Gloucester), D. Hollands (Gloucester), H. Quixley (Gloucester), J. L. Mathias (Bristol), F. Teague (Cinderford), J. Nelmes (Lydney), A. Redding (Cinderford), J. Hyndman (Cinderford), forwards.

CORNWALL. – R. Eathorne (Plymouth), back; F. J. Jackett (Leicester), F. Dean (Devon Albion), B. Bennetts (Devon Albion), J. Jose (Devon Albion), three-quarter backs; T. Wedge (St. Ives), J. Davey (Redruth), half-backs; J. G. Milton (School of Mines), R. Jackett (Falmouth), F. Jackson (Leicester), J. Thomas (Devon Albion), N. Tregurtha (St. Ives), R. Lawry (Redruth), R. J. Wilson (School of Mines), R. Davey (Redruth), forwards.

Referee : Mr. T. D. Schofield (Welsh Union).

THE GAME

The ground was in grand condition, and everything favoured a fast and open game. The teams took the field punctually to time, the players being accorded a hearty reception.

Mathias won the toss, and Jackson kicked off amidst great excitement. The ball went to Hudson, who was playing outside to Cook, and he replied finely to touch at the centre. From the first line-out Gloucestershire made ground, but Bennetts fielded nicely and punted to Wood, who returned with interest. Cornwall were early penalised for an infringement, and Wood found touch at the Cornish 25.

Some hot play followed at this quarter, all attempts on the part of both teams to open out being nipped in the bud by deadly tackling. The Cornish forwards were doing better in the scrums and heeled several times, but the attempts at passing did not make much headway. Once Davey fed Dean, who tried to break through, but he was tackled and his pass went forward.

A long punt by Jackett went over Wood's head, but the home custodian got back and kicked to touch at mid-field. From a scrum Hall beat Wedge and dribbled down touch cleverly. Jackett gathered, but he was immediately pounced upon. A free to Cornwall put them in the Gloucester half, where from a line-out a home forward mulled. The ball was kicked down, but Cook secured and found touch, thus saving a dangerous moment.

Cornwall went very close after this, and Dean made a big dive, only to be held outside. At the ensuing scrum Hall got off-side, and Gloucestershire were penalised. Jackson took a shot for goal from a favourable position, but he failed to land a goal.

Gloucester[*sic*] dropped out, Eathorne replying to touch just inside the home half. From the throw-out Teague obtained and put in a nice punt to touch on the 25. From this point Gloucestershire rushed through and had hard lines in not scoring. The home county tried desperately to press home their advantage, but Cornwall luckily relieved with a flying kick.

From a punt by Wedge E. Eberle made his mark, and Wood, with a flying kick, only just missed the goal. At this point R. Lawry, one of the visiting forwards, had to leave the field.

Resuming, Cornwall were awarded a free, and with the kick Jackett kicked to touch near mid-field. Here Niblett opened out cleverly, and Hudson and Cook in turn handled, but the latter was forced to kick out of play. For off-side Hall was again penalised, and Jackett gained some 30 yards with the resultant kick.

A big punt by Wood was only poorly returned by Eathorne, and ensuing play was fought out in the Cornish half. Gloucestershire now got the ball in the scrum, but the Cinderford halves could not open out.

Dashing work by the visiting forwards saw Milton break away, but Wood brought the giant down grandly. From a pass Jose punted high and followed up, but Wood fielded beautifully and got in a nice kick.

Following this, there was some smart handling by the Gloucester backs, Cook dodging cleverly and passing to Hudson, who though collared by Jackett managed to get in his kick.

A clever kick by Cook placed Gloucester[shire] right on the line, and in a scramble Johns picked up and made a desperate effort to cross. He was, however, held up and pushed back to play. Now ensued a terrific onslaught on the Cornwall lines, but the defence was superb.

Eventually the pressure was relieved by Wedge, who dodged through cleverly and fed Dean, who punted down. There was a race for possession, but a Gloucester[shire] man got there and put the ball out of play. Cornwall tried to open out, but E. Eberle intercepted and raced away with several colleagues in attendance.

Exchanges followed, and Gloucestershire looked to have a fine chance, but a knock-on ensued. Cook in this moment was charged over and was knocked out for couple of minutes.

Resuming, Cornwall forced matters, but the collaring was very deadly. From a scrum Gloucestershire heeled, and Hall passed to Niblett, who punted across, the ball going to touch. Cornwall quickly changed the venue with a fine burst, the game eventually settling at the centre.

From here Cornwall opened out, but Jose was smothered. Wood, seizing the ball, burst away in fine style, but Bennetts came along and brought him down, though at the expense of an injured shoulder. He was, however, able to continue. Even play followed until a kick went to Wood, who was collared before he could reply.

Cornwall put in a passing movement, but Cook intercepted, and with a magnificent kick found touch some 40 yards down the field. Gloucestershire, in a favourable position, tried hard to score, but they were held in check. Then from a long drop from the touch-line Wood only just failed to land a goal, a minor resulting.

Cornwall dropped out, only to see Mathias mark and Wood find touch at the 25 flag. Cornwall worked out by the aid of a free, and then the Gloucestershire backs combined in a brilliant movement. All the men handled, but E. Eberle was fetched down from behind by Bennetts. Half-time was then called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucestershire Nil
Cornwall Nil

Cornwall were still short of Lawry (suffering from bruised ribs) when play was resumed. Mathias' kick-off was taken by Milton, who ran across and started passing, a visitor finally punting to touch. Cornwall, from the line-out, broke away with a dangerous movement, but they were pulled up in time.

From a line-out Hollands secured and raced away, handing to Johns, who continued the movement. Later the ball came out to Cook, who transferred to Hudson, but the latter missed the ball.

The Gloucestershire forwards, led by Johns, made a dashing burst, but they were stopped just outside the 25-line. From this point Cornwall came away with some brilliant work, and Gloucestershire were hard pressed. Once the visitors looked almost certain to score, but Hudson smothered Jackson.

The game continued to be desperately fought out, and Davey just missed dropping a goal. On the drop-out Cornwall returned to the attack with great vigour, and excitement was at a high pitch. Gloucestershire were called upon to defend twice in quick succession, which they did successfully. Hall, and later Teague and Johns, were instrumental in easing the pressure, and Gloucestershire breathed more freely.

Niblett, getting the ball from his colleague, initiated a nice bout of passing, but E. Eberle missed his brother's transfer with a good opening. Back Cornwall came through a forward unmarked breaking away from a line-out, Wedge, to whom he passed, being rolled to touch in the nick of time.

Later, from some loose passing by the Cornish backs, E. Eberle intercepted, but he lost the ball with only the full back to beat and an open field. Centre play ensued, there being little in it. The Gloucestershire backs were again put in possession by Niblett, but E. Eberle could not clear Bennetts. From a long throw out just inside the Gloucestershire half Jackson, who was not marked, got hold and started a series of exchanges. Wood had three men to face, and Jose thus had practically a clear run in. Jackson converted.

Gloucester[shire] re-started, and at once made tracks for their opponents' end. They were driven back by fast forward play, and mid-field was reached. Here V. Eberle spoiled a promising movement by passing wildly – a weakness he had previously exhibited.

Ensuing play was evenly fought out for a time, but Cornwall, with well-judged kicks, gained the advantage. A dash by Dean from a line-out looked dangerous, and Wood, being pressed, essayed a pass back to Eberle – a very risky proceeding. Fortunately the Cliftonian took the ball, though it was a close thing.

Cornwall continued to attack strongly, and from a scrum a dozen yards out, Wedge secured and handed to Davey, who slipped the defence cleverly and scored a fine try. Jackson placed a goal, and made the game safe for Cornwall.

Gloucestershire, with a splendid burst, got very close on the resumption, but Dean cleared to near the centre. Here the Gloucestershire backs fumbled in some handling, and Bennetts picked up and raced clear, scoring a very fine try. Jackson again added the goal points.

Just before the end Hudson made a splendid run, but being hampered near the line he passed. The transfer was captured on the ground by a Cornishman, who was penalised for lying on the ball. This took place right in front of the posts, and Wood, from the easy position, landed a goal. “No-side” was then called.

RESULT :

Cornwall 3 goals (15 points)
Gloucestershire 1 goal (p) (3 points)

REMARKS

The South West Championship is decided, and for the first time the honours go to Cornwall. That they thoroughly deserve the distinction everyone will admit who saw the winners to-day. The visitors were lucky in gaining their first points, for the ball was two or three yards out of the straight when Jackson took it from the line-out. Apart from this, however, the Pasties were the better team all round. Their forwards were immense in every phase of play, and though the Gloucestershire pack held out pluckily and accomplished some grand work, they would be the first to admit the superiority of their opponents.

At half, Wedge and Davey were extremely smart, and were too good for Hall and Niblett. The Gloucestershire three-quarters had the ball a fair number of times, but the Brothers Eberle were not a success. Cook shaped capitally in his first big game. Hudson did not get the ball very often, but he, like his colleagues in the line, was marked very effectively. Wood did some fine work at full back, and Eathorne gave little away on the other side.

There was a goodly contingent of Cornish supporters present at the match, and the success of the team was hailed with enthusiasm.