

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1908

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. PLYMOUTH

CITY TEAM IN DEVON

TERRIFIC STRUGGLE ON A HEAVY GROUND

GLOUCESTER BEATEN BY SIX POINTS

Gloucester were again unfortunate in being unable to command the Club's full strength for this important away match. Hudson and Vears were both unable to get away from business, and Johns was suffering with a cut over the eye obtained last week. In addition, Beard (reserve three-quarter) was not available, and this necessitated Stephens being played at centre three-quarter, and Dix partnering Gent at half-back. Pegler and Wyburn filled the vacant positions forward.

Gloucester beat Plymouth at Kingsholm by 4 tries to 1 goal, this being the Devon men's first defeat by an English club. For the return Plymouth selected a powerful side, and were bent on avenging the disaster at Gloucester. The City team made the journey to Plymouth overnight.

Teams : —

Gloucester. — F. Welshman, back; C. Smith, J. Stephens, G. Cook, F. Smith, threequarter backs; D. R. Gent, W. Dix, half-backs; F. Pegler, J. Wyburn, B. Parham, H. Quixley, D. Hollands, R. Craddock, G. Holford, G. Griffiths, forwards.

Plymouth. — Hosking, back; De Smidt, Ireland, Knight, Gilbert, three-quarter backs; Peters, Richards, half-backs; Begbie, Hughes, Eddis, Edwards, Cumming, Willcocks, Robinson, Yandell, forwards.

The weather was terrible, rain having fallen continuously all night, and the turf was saturated. Straw was required on a considerable portion of the field. There were 3,000 spectators.

Plymouth started and got close to the Citizens' 25, where from a scrum Craddock broke away and kicked well inside Plymouth's half. A rush by the home forwards was daringly stopped by Welshman going down in front of the whole pack. Smart footwork by the Citizens' forwards took them inside the home quarters, but Hosking stopped them.

Smart work by Stephens kept Plymouth strenuously defending, but De Smidt with a flying kick sent out to centre. A smart run by Hollands again took Gloucester within a few yards of the home line, but an infringement by Gent gave them relief. Gloucester were persistent and reached the Plymouth quarter line, but Cook and Stephens were unable to hold the greasy ball, and Plymouth, with a round of passing, got close to the Gloucester line, where Welshman saved a certain try by a quick punt to touch. A minute later he tackled De Smidt, but the Plymouth man grounded the ball, Peters failing to majorise.

The home team kept up considerable pressure, and for several minutes play was close to the Citizens' line, but they defended gamely. Welshman, when severely pressed, ran over his own line, and, dropping the slippery ball, Peters scored another unconverted try.

This further reverse spurred Gloucester, who attacked vigorously, and Cook kicked over the line, but just too hard, the ball rolling dead. Within half a minute F. Smith executed a fine run and kick, forcing Hosking to concede a minor. Plymouth, by loose forward work, got close down, and twice crossed, but were recalled, and they were pressing heavily at the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Plymouth 2 tries
Gloucester Nil

The ground was like a quagmire when the second half opened with Gloucester playing down the incline, and a mistake by Wilcocks let the Citizens inside the home quarter. Plymouth eased out, but a series of mistakes let Gloucester again in the home 25. Tall kicking by Plymouth took them to the other end, where Stephens hauled down De Smidt within two yards of the line.

Plymouth continued on the offensive, and the Citizens were penalised right on the line, but the kick was faulty, and Gloucester relieved to the quarter flag, but a high punt by Peters over the line forced Stephens to save. Plymouth were persistent in their effort, but the Citizens put up a great defence.

A magnificent forward rush by the Citizens' forwards took play from one line to the other, and Gent looked like a certain scorer, when Richards fell on the ball within a yard of the line. Cook made a great effort to cross, but was held up, and a mark by Knight brought relief to Plymouth.

By short forward sturdy rushes Gloucester again found a footing inside the home quarter, but a remarkable run by Hosking took play to the City's quarter line. The game was fought out at a terrific pace considering the state of the ground, and the spectators were kept in a continual state of excitement when the ball travelled continuously from end to end.

The rain cleared off, but the ground was in such a condition that football was precarious. From a scrum inside their own half Gent got away, and dodging Hosking passed to Dix, who threw to Craddock, and he dribbled over for F. Smith to score an unconverted try.

A minute later Cook was nearly over, being put to touch five yards out. Plymouth relieved, and got to the other end, where misses by Welshman, Stephens, and Gent enabled Edwards to score for Plymouth. Gloucester defended strongly to the end, and kept the line from further downfall.

Another account states that Plymouth's superiority forward was early manifested and throughout the first half they kept up a continuous pressure by desperate loose rushes, which resulted in scores by De Smidt and Richards. After the interval Gloucester adopted similar tactics, and tested Hosking severely.

RESULT :

Plymouthtries (9 points)
Gloucester 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

It was a terrific struggle considering the state of the ground. Two of Plymouth's tries were lucky. One was due to the greasy ball slipping through Welshman's fingers.

Taken on the whole Gloucester were slightly inferior to Plymouth. Their forward work was deserving of all merit, and had the day been fine the result would have been very different. The defence was magnificent, whilst the forwards were faster in the loose, but Dame Fortune was against the Citizens, and smiled broadly on the home team.

Berry played forward for Gloucester, but our message does not state the player who stood down for him. Ed.

GLOUCESTER A v. St. PAUL'S COLLEGE

CITY SECONDS' HANDSOME WIN

At Kingsholm, before a moderate attendance.

Gloucester A : R. J. Butler, back; J. M. Baldwin, C. Cook, W. Egerton, and A. Pegler, three-quarter backs; W. Wotton and W. Hall, half-backs; A. Hawker, W. Jackson, W. Blackford, H. Wixey, W. Bailey, S. Hayward, G. Vears, and W. Lane, forwards.

College : J. R. Norman, back; G. J. Payne, H. Ferguson, W. Onions, and A. Bishop, three-quarter backs; H. C. Evans and K. G. Williams, half-backs; T. Sevier, W. Julian, O. A. Summers, B. J. George, W. Brooks, J. Kelly, A. E. L. Pearce, and K. Armstrong, forwards.

Referee : Mr. F. Abbey.

Hawker started for the Seconds, and play was at once taken to the College 25. In some loose play a home forward gathered and passed out to Cook, who fed Pegler, but the wing man was pulled down by Norman. Useful kicking by Ferguson changed the venue, but a rush by the City forwards caused St. Paul's end to be visited again.

Off-side by Gloucester brought relief to the visitors, but Baldwin, with a clever run and pass to Hall, sent the game back. Working well in the loose, the Seconds got very close, and the full-back fumbling a score nearly resulted.

From a scrum five yards out the College heeled, and Williams passing to Onions, the latter punted high. Butler ran in to take the ball, but the leather bounced out of his arms, and was taken by Payne, who had a clear field. Racing hard the Collegian travelled three-parts the length of the ground and finished up a fine run by scoring in a good position. The try was converted.

Gloucester resumed, and there was a spell of even play at midfield. Jackson led a fine rush of the City forwards, but the College saved when matters looked dangerous. The Seconds attacked strongly, and following a good tackle by Baldwin the ball got loose. Egerton picked up, and though partly collared shook himself free, and scored a good try. Butler landed a fine goal from a none too easy position, and put the sides level.

Following the re-start the College nearly broke clear from faulty play by Wotton, but Gloucester soon gained a good position. Baldwin receiving on the left, ran and kicked over the line, but was robbed of a try through the ball bouncing awkwardly.

Immediately after the drop-out the College again saved luckily from Jackson. Ensuing play was in favour of Gloucester, but there was lack of finish to the attacking movements. The Collegians played a strong dashing game forward, and keen tackling kept their lines intact.

Off-side by Williams caused his side to be penalised, but Butler's shot for goal went almost straight across the ground. There was a fine opening for a bunch of Gloucester forwards, but the ball bounced back awkwardly and could not be gathered. From a line-out Jackson burst away in fine style, but his pass was knocked on.

Similar mistakes lost further opportunities, and on the right wing Pegler was not fast enough to elude the opposition. Jackson was again prominent with a nice effort, and after Wixey and Vears had handled Egerton rushed over with a try. Butler's shot for goal – a fine attempt – just failed.

The College resumed, and soon after Sevier sustained an injury to his ankle in a tackle, and had to retire.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A	1 goal, 1 try
College	1 goal

The College resumed, but the opening play was of a very scrambling nature. A clever bit of work by Cook sent the ball to Norman, who was floored by the same player right in front of his goal. Gloucester had a good chance of scoring, but it was not accepted.

The Trainers cleared with a lucky flying kick, but Egerton and Hall put the Seconds back. Here Wotton gathered in the loose, and after passing by Hall and Cook the latter scored easily. No goal resulted.

Immediately on the drop-out Gloucester were on the attack again, and Baldwin was just robbed of a corner try through stepping into touch. A couple of minutes later the College defence was again penetrated by Cook, after pretty passing. The same player failed at goal.

The Seconds continued to have all the game, and a nice passing movement, initiated by Wotton, saw Egerton race down. The centre man held on a bit too long, but Baldwin made the best of the situation and notched a good try. Butler failed to convert.

Subsequent play was wholly in favour of the home team, who attacked continuously. After Baldwin and Pegler had been stopped on the respective wings, Cook kicked to Norman, who fumbled. Jackson was on the spot, and gathering neatly went over with the sixth try, which Butler converted.

Lane was the next to cross the College line from a scramble near the goal posts, and this being converted the Seconds' score was increased to 27 points.

The Trainers played up pluckily despite the adverse balance, but they rarely got dangerous. From a line-out near mid-field Jackson broke away, and letting the ball go Wotton ran over with an easy try, the place kick failing. The game to the end was all in favour of Gloucester, and further unconverted tries were added by Pegler and Bailey.

RESULT :

Gloucester A	3 goals 7 tries (36 points)
College	1 goal (5 points)

REMARKS

After a good start the College went all to pieces, and the Seconds had a very easy journey. Tries were put on very quickly in the second half, the combination of the home backs being far too good for the opposition.

The Collegians had men with pace behind the scrum, and Payne's try was a fine individual effort, but their attempts at combination were very poor.

Forward, the Seconds overwhelmed their opponents after the change of ends, Jackson, Wixey, Hawker, and Hayward being very prominent. Wotton opened moderately, but improved later in the game, though he lobbed his passes too much.

Hall worked effectively at outside half, and in the three-quarter line Cook and Egerton were very smart. Baldwin was not too well served, but did well when opportunity occurred. Pegler was outpaced by his opponent, and was not given much scope. Butler played a nice game at full-back for the winners.

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