

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 1908

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. CHELTENHAM

LOCAL RIVALS AT KINGSHOLM

TOWN WELL BEATEN

GLOUCESTER WIN BY ELEVEN POINTS

There was the usual excitement attendant on the meeting of these local rivals for the third and final match of the season at Kingsholm. The two previous games ended in favour of the City – at Cheltenham by 15 points to 5, and at Gloucester by 3 points to nil. In the latter contest both clubs were weakly represented, and the game was a poor one.

Gloucester were again without the services of Hudson to-day, the popular International being engaged for England against Scotland in the contest for the Calcutta Cup, at Edinburgh.

It was intended to play the same back division which operated against Plymouth, but Dix had been down with influenza during the week and had to cry off. The vacancy was filled by the inclusion of Albert Hall, who in the two previous games between the teams figured in the Cheltenham ranks.

The Town played the two ex-Gloucestrians (Romans and Wood), the International being pressed into service when it was known he had withdrawn from the English team.

The afternoon was brilliantly fine, and in expectation of witnessing a close fight there was a splendid crowd of spectators, including a large contingent of Cheltenham enthusiasts.

The teams lined out as follows at 3.35 : –

Gloucester. – F. Welshman, back; C. Smith, J. Stephens, G. Cook, and F. Smith, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent, and A. Hall, half-backs; G. Vears, W. Johns, B. Parham, W. Berry, R. Craddock, G. Holford, D. Hollands, H. Quixley, forwards.

Cheltenham. – B. Davy, back; H. Beck, G. Romans, V. Ridge Jones, L. W. Hayward, three-quarter backs; A. Goddard, A. E. Wood, half-backs; G. T. Unwin (capt.), W. N. Unwin, W. H. Williams, C. S. Barnett, C. Bennett, G. Cossens, G. G. N. Tinson, F. Fry, forwards.

Referee : Mr. F. W. Nicholls (Leicester).

THE GAME

Cheltenham won the toss, and Vears kicked off against the wind and sun. The ball went straight to Wood, who with a left foot punt found touch near the centre line. From a throw out the City forwards broke away, but Goddard checked them. The ball getting loose it was kicked to Cook, who eluded an opponent and threw out to the wing, but the leather bounced to touch. A sharp movement led by Johns carried Gloucester to their opponents' 25, but a penalty against the City saw Wood send back to midfield with a nice kick.

Heeling from a scrum by the home forwards enabled Gent to open out. Stephens cut through prettily, and transferred to Cook, who fed F. Smith, but the wing man was floored by Davy. A scrum was formed a dozen yards from the Cheltenham line, and the City front breaking away looked dangerous. A visitor, however, gathered and touched down.

Wood came to the rescue of his side with a clever kick, and immediately after Hall broke away beautifully, but after beating a couple of men he was collared. Gent, with a useful kick, sent close to the Cheltenham line, but the visiting forwards relieved with a grand wheel. Off-side, however, gave a penalty to Gloucester. Welshman had a shot for goal, but kicked badly, and nothing resulted.

Good work by Stephens and Cook kept operations in the Town end until a forward burst by the visitors brought play out to more favourable quarters.

A desperate effort by Johns and Holford tested Davy, who saved when things looked dangerous. Play was confined to the Town quarters, and was very exciting. In a long line-out a visitor received and passed back to Romans, who failed to gather. Stephens coming through picked up, but was legged just as the defence appeared to be beaten.

Gloucester attacked strongly, and a fine dribble by Frank Smith nearly ended in a score. Gloucester heeling, Gent gave a nice pass to Hall, but the latter tried to go through himself and was tackled. A flying kick came to Welshman, who took a drop for goal, but just missed his object, and Cheltenham touched down.

Some fine kicking by Wood on the drop-out gave Cheltenham a footing in the City half for the first time, but Gloucester quickly changed the venue with a grand break away. The ball was taken to Davy, who was finely tackled by Berry and other forwards. There was a chance of Gloucester getting clear, but some Cheltenham men got back and saved.

Some faulty passing by Gloucester enabled Romans to kick down, but Cook dropped on the ball and handed back to Parham, who sent to touch. Ensuing play was fought out near the centre, and was fast and vigorous. From a penalty kick by Welshman, Romans failed to take, and his kick being charged down matters looked dangerous. Gloucester, however, missed the opportunity of getting clear. For an infringement at the centre Gloucester were penalised, and Wood had a shot for goal from long range. It was a fine effort, the ball dropping in Welshman's arms just under the posts. The City custodian found touch with a well-judged kick at midfield.

From this point Johns was prominent with a sharp dash, and later Gent went clean away on his own. Facing Davy, the City half-back punted but the ball only went straight up in the air, and Goddard marked.

A glorious bit of work by Stephens gave Gloucester a good position, but Wood's kicking helped Cheltenham out. A strong run and pass by Wood put the Town third line in motion, but Romans was pounced upon directly he received, and no ground was gained. The Cheltenham forwards were getting the better of the scrums just now, and one good round of passing was displayed by the backs. Beck, however, was pushed to touch by F. Smith.

Even play followed in the Gloucester half until Gent punted nicely to the centre. Gloucester made further progress, Parham dribbling finely, but Davy effected a remarkable clearance under great pressure. A clever kick by Wood sent the game to the Gloucester end, where some hot scrummages were fought out.

Hall, from a pass by Gent, kicked beautifully to touch at midfield where there was keen exchanges[sic]. Gent and Parham broke clear, and the latter fielding the ball after Davy had been beaten, there was a grand opening. The forward, however, had not the necessary pace to finish, and was brought down from behind on the verge of the line. Parham was knocked out in falling to the ground, but was soon able to resume. Wood was lucky in bringing relief with a flying kick, and then Cheltenham touched down from a fruitless drop at goal by Welshman.

Restarting there was some capital kicking on both sides which left matters even. From a cross-kick by Hollands, Beck gathered after some fumbling, and brought off a fine run down the centre of the field but succumbed in the end to numbers. "Whacker" Smith was lamed in tackling his man, but did not retire.

A fine effort by Gent and Hall down touch promised well, but the latter's kick was well taken by Davy, who cleared well. Half time was soon afterwards called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester Nil
Cheltenham Nil

G. Unwin restarted, the ball going to touch. Gloucester accepted, and a line-out took place from which the City forwards burst away. Romans partly saved, but he was swept aside, and Gloucester made tracks for their opponents' line. Davy marked splendidly under great pressure, and a minute later he effected another fine mark in the face of opposition.

The Cheltenham line was hotly assailed, and the visitors were very lucky to save on one occasion. From a short throw-out F. Smith raced clear with only Davy to beat, but the Cheltonian proved equal to the occasion, and brought his man down finely. Gloucester kept up a persistent attack and the City forwards were nearly over in a [word unreadable].

For off-side Cheltenham were penalised, but Welshman could not cover the cross-bar, and only a minor resulted. Welshman replied splendidly to Wood's drop-out, and Romans fumbling Gloucester gained a position in the Town 25. The visitors cleared through Welshman failing to gather from a kick, and the centre was the scene of operations.

Gent and Hall tried passing, and the former once made a nice run through and kick to touch. These efforts led to continual attacks on the Cheltenham line, but the City could not penetrate the defence. Cheltenham eased the pressure through Wood marking from Gent and kicking to touch at midfield. Following this there was some exciting loose play, in which little skill was shown.

Cheltenham eventually gained the upper hand, and Gloucester being penalised Wood had a place for goal. Craddock, however, charged down the kick, though he got a nasty blow in the face as a result. He was, however, soon able to resume. By strong forward rushing Cheltenham forced their way to the home 25, where some stirring work was waged. Gloucester got away in a loose rush, and kicking into the open, Cook fielded and raced clear. Frank Smith came up on the centre's right, and receiving the ball out-distanced Davy and scored a fine try amidst tremendous enthusiasm. Welshman failed at goal.

Hollands replied to the drop-out with a lovely punt, and Gloucester were again in a strong position. Wood, with a plucky effort, changed the venue, and Cheltenham were awarded a penalty for a foul. Gloucester returned well to the centre, where Gent, beating the opposing halves, dribbled away, and picked up on the run. Gent ran down to Davy and then passed to Hollands, who, showing surprising speed, finished up a splendid effort by scoring a try. Cook's kick for goal just failed.

Cheltenham dropped out, but they were at once beaten back. Hall and F. Smith were nearly over in quick succession, and Parham was only held up on the line. Cheltenham worked out a few yards, but Gloucester returned, and Johns dribbling from a scrum crossed the ball to Cook. The centre fielded the ball on the run, and jumping cleverly past Romans, ran clean over under the posts with a beautiful try. Welshman converted, and thus put the result beyond all doubt.

Unwin re-started from the centre, Craddock marking and sending to touch in the Cheltenham half. The visitors made headway with a good loose rush, and Goddard, getting away from a scrum, sent to Wood. The International, however, missed the ball altogether, and a possible chance went astray.

There was a temporary delay in the game owing to the Cheltenham captain getting a jersey torn off him, and on continuing there was a spell of even play near the centre.

The Gloucester backs were set going by Gent and Hall, and Cook got in a fine punt to Davy, who only poorly returned. Johns and Berry were conspicuous with some fine footwork, which took a lot of stopping.

Wood was again instrumental in gaining Cheltenham ground, but Gent returned with some pretty work down touch, and operations were again waged in the Town 25. Wood tried to break away from a pass by Goddard, but he was forced to kick to Welshman, who replied with a lovely touch-finder.

After a spirited attack by Gloucester, Cheltenham relieved and took up the running. A miss by Welshman near his goal was taken advantage of by Bennett, who was only held up outside. There was a scramble on the home goal-line, but only a touchdown resulted. The end soon afterwards was reached.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal 2 tries (11 points)
Cheltenham Nil

REMARKS

Up City; down Cheltenham. The great fight is over, with honours thick upon the Gloucester team, who are to be congratulated on their fine victory. Cheltenham brought all their big guns to-day in order to achieve their ambition, but to no purpose, and Gloucester added yet another triumph to their record at the expense of their keen rivals from the neighbouring town. There was no question of the City's superiority. As a combination Cheltenham were a well-beaten side, and lucky indeed were the Red and Black brigade in getting off with an eleven points' beating.

The struggle throughout was a strenuous one, and considering the keenness shown the game was a good one to watch. There was not much in the way of brilliant back play, but what took place was all on the side of Gloucester. In the first half the City thoroughly deserved some reward for their repeated and sustained attacks. Fortune, however, did not smile on the home players when they got within measurable distance of the coveted line, and one or two scores were lost through over-eagerness.

Gloucester made no mistake about their intentions after the players crossed over, and sweeping rushes, and clever combined and individual efforts were repeatedly witnessed. All three tries were splendidly obtained, and one hardly knew which to admire most. Cook had a large share in the first point notched by Frank Smith, and the centre's try later was a perfect gem. Seeing an opening he seized upon it at once, and his clever swerve took him past the defence in a manner that simply bewildered the opposition.

Holland's try was engineered by Gent, and both players are deserving of great praise for the successful manner in which the movement was carried out. Gent gathered the ball off the ground right under Romans' nose, and he was away like a flash. Hollands came up with a fine dash, and took the pass beautifully, but he had some yards to travel. Beck was hot on his heels, but the City and County forward could not be overtaken, and he put the finishing touches to one of the best efforts of the afternoon.

Without their best and scoring three-quarter, Gloucester's performance was a fine one. The foundation of the victory was laid by the forwards who accomplished some really grand work in all departments. Every man was out for a stiff ordeal, and each individual lasted well to the end.

Individually, Johns was a distinguished performer, his dashing work in the open and general ability being frequently in evidence. Holford and Quixley were smart in out of touch play, Craddock and Vears hard workers in the tight, and Hollands and Parham conspicuous in the loose. Berry fully sustained the good impression formed of him with the Seconds, and he should retain his place. The Cheltenham forwards were not consistent, and one or two men were too fond of winging tactics. Williams was a tireless worker all through, and Barnett and Bennett and the Unwins were conspicuous at times.

At half-back Gent was in his element, and the ex-International's display was one of the features of the match. The little Gloucesterian was always too smart for Goddard, and he made every possible use of the chances that came his way. Albert Hall was inclined to hang on to the ball too much, but otherwise he did well, and his services were very helpful. Wood was the outstanding figure on the Cheltenham side, and by his magnificent kicking he helped Cheltenham out of many tight corners. The International, however, was of little use in attack, and the few occasions he tried to get off on his own were quickly nipped in the bud.

The Gloucester third line were in all respects superior to the Town's quartette. Cook and Stephens in the centre, both played clever football, the veteran doing capitally in his old position. "Whacker Smith, who, by the bye, announces his retirement after the Newport match next week, put in one or two strong dashes, whilst Frank Smith was very smart in all he did. Beck was the pick of the Town line. Both Romans and Ridge-Jones shaped feebly at times, and Hayward has played much better.

Both full backs were in capital form. Davy had most work to do, but he was seldom at fault, and brought off some fine clearances in the face of determined opposition. Welshman made a miss or two in fielding, but he gave precious little away, and always kicked a nice length. Gloucester's success was hailed with enthusiasm at the close, and the players came in for a demonstration.

GLOUCESTER A v. CHELTENHAM A

CITY SECONDS' EASY WIN

These teams met on the Athletic Ground, Cheltenham, the teams being as under : —

Gloucester A. — E. J. Butler, back; J. Beard, W. Hall, C. Cook, and J. M. Baldwin, three-quarter backs; F. Arthur and S. B. Arthur, half-backs; A. Hawker, F. Pegler, J. Lane, G. Griffiths, W. Blackford, H. Wixey, E. Hayward, and W. Bailey, forwards.

Cheltenham A. — Gibbons, Back; F. Hopkins, W. Hopkins, Grinham, and Gwilliam, three-quarter backs; Coulston and Hughes, half-backs; F. C. Knight, Gallop, Hailing, Marshfield, F. Knight, Ricketts, Gardner, and Parker, forwards.

Gloucester started late before a small attendance, and the Citizens, after an exchange of kicks, attacked. Cheltenham got in the centre as a result of good work by Gibbons. Re-attacking the Cherry and Whites should have scored, and an instant later F. Arthur slipped over with a try, Hayward converting.

The Cheltenham pack ran to the Gloucester line with a pretty bout of passing, but the City backs relieved and later put the visitors again in the ascendant. Hall essayed an ineffectual drop, when a pass might well have enabled Baldwin to cross. The visitors missed further opportunities. Eventually Beard ran in on the wing with an unconverted try. Baldwin added another try, Butler converting.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 2 goals, 1 try
Cheltenham A Nil

Superior combination and pace enabled Gloucester to press hotly in the opening stages of the second half. A clever run by F. Arthur saw the little half-back pulled down on the Cheltenham line, being followed with an unsuccessful attempt to drop a goal. Butler kicked a fine penalty, and a moment later dropped a beautiful goal. Strenuous scrambling forward play went in favour of the Garden Towners, for whom Grinham dropped an excellent goal.

The Citizens resumed the offensive, S. Arthur missing scoring in the corner by inches only. In the last moments Blackford and Beard added tries, both of which Butler majorised.

RESULT :
Glo'ster A 6 goals (1p, 1d), 1 try (30)
Cheltenham A 1 goal (d) (4 points)