

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1908

## TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLoucester v. NEWPORT

Gloriously fine weather favoured the return match between these old rivals at Kingsholm, and in expectation of seeing a keen contest a large crowd attended at the City Club's enclosure.

Gloucester only made one change from the side which triumphed over Cheltenham – Hudson for C. Smith – whilst Newport brought their selected fifteen.

The teams lined out as follows : –

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

Newport. – F. W. Burt, back; S. Williams, W. Bennett, W. Priest, M. Baker, three-quarter backs; T. H. Vile, C. Francis, half-backs; G. Boots, J. J. Hodges, E. Thomas, E. Jenkins, P. Waller, W. Johnson, G. Staite, H. Pritchard, forwards.

Referee : Mr. P. –. Parkes (Midland Counties).

## THE GAME

The ground was in beautiful condition for a fast and open game. The toss went in favour of Newport, who deputed their opponents to face the powerful sun. Vears kicked off, and there being only a poor return, opening play was fought out near mid-field.

Newport were penalised at the first scrum, but Cook's kick was carried back by the wind, and a visitor sent to touch. Gloucester immediately after came under the ban of the referee, and Burt with his kick found touch in the home half. A cross-kick by Hall was fumbled by F. Smith, and Williams dribbled through to Welshman, who was floored on the 25-line. Newport, rushing a scrum, went very close, and Gent punting over his line, Cook touched down for safety. A scrum followed five yards outside, and Berry, coming through grandly, brought relief.

A round of passing by the visiting backs looked dangerous, but a forward transfer was given against Williams. Newport again attacked strongly, Boots being only held up in time. Gloucester worked out a few yards, but for off-side by Hall Gloucester were penalised. Vile had knocked the ball back in the scrum with his hand, but the referee apparently did not notice it. From the favourable position Burt kicked a goal, and put Newport three points up.

Gloucester resumed, and centre play followed. Boots tried to open out from a line-out, but Stephens intercepted and ran clear. There was no one backing up, however, and the City centre went straight into the arms of Burt. The ball getting loose Hudson gathered, but being collared he passed out to Cook, who was floored by Baker.

Gloucester gained a few yards with a rush, but Newport returned with a passing bout. Bennett, however, lost the ball, and Cook receiving punted out of play. A flying kick by a visitor just went out of reach of several Gloucester men, but Gent recovered.

Vile again resorted to his trick of knocking the ball back into the scrum, but this time he was caught by the referee and duly penalised. Welshman's kick for goal was charged down, and Williams came through finely. He kicked hard and looked to have a good opening, but Hudson got back and effected a good collar.

Ensuing play was contested in the Gloucester half, where some weak tackling was witnessed on the part of the home players. Fortunately nothing serious resulted.

Gloucester changed the venue by the aid of some good kicks by Cook, and then Newport were penalised. Welshman's shot for goal was a failure.

Resuming, some scrappy play was witnessed at the centre. Newport were again penalised for a palpable infringement by Vile, and Cook gained some 20 yards with the kick. Boots was prominent with a fine break-away from a throw-out, but he was well stopped.

The Gloucester forwards retaliated with a superb burst, and the ball was taken down to Burt at a big pace. Berry fielded on the bounce, but lost possession when there was every chance of a score. Newport cleared by the aid of a penalty, Welshman knocking on at mid-field.

The Newport forwards heeling, Vile passed out, but little ground was made. Gloucester replied with some neat exchanges, and Cook punted high, gaining touch in the visitors' half. Here the Gloucester forwards got off with a dashing burst, but Burt checked them finely.

A clever cross-kick by Hudson looked promising, but the International failed to put his men on-side, and Berry, who fielded, was given off-side.

Newport got well out by the aid of the free, but Gloucester returned with a brilliant dash. Berry gathered nicely on the run and raced almost to the line, when he passed. There was a scramble, out of which a minor was given – hard lines for Gloucester.

Restarting, there was some fast play, in which the home players held their own. Gloucester heeling, Gent sent out to Hall who, though partly collared, managed to transfer to Cook. The centre beat Bennett and then sent out a fine pass to F. Smith. The wing man put on full pace, and beating Burt in grand style ran over with a beautiful try amidst great enthusiasm. Cook failed at goal.

Newport restarted, and a great struggle was seen. Gloucester gained the upper hand, and Cook, with a neat effort, only just failed to get the ball out to Smith.

Operations were confined to the Newport quarters, the City forwards doing dashing work in the loose. A sharp attack was warded off, and then a Newport forward, with a long kick, transferred play to just beyond mid-field, where the game was being contested at the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester .....	1 try
Newport .....	1 goal (p)

Boots restarted for Newport, there being no reply owing to the ball being knocked on. The visitors made headway from the first scrummage, but Hudson secured and sent back with a wonderful screw-kick to touch. The International a little later, from a pass by Gent, kicked finely to touch at the centre flag.

The Usksiders immediately rushed back, and Welshman stumbling in going for the ball the visitors got very close. An anxious time ensued for the City, but a timely punt brought the necessary relief.

Twice the Newport backs tried to open out, but failed lamentably. Still, the visitors confined play to the home half until off-side by Vile gave a penalty kick to Gloucester, and with the aid of this the City reached more favourable quarters.

The struggle was desperately keen forward, but nothing of incident occurred. Newport were getting possession in the scrum, but the backs could do little and the game was very uninteresting.

Vile and Francis worked the blind side of the scrum cleverly, and the latter punting high, the ball went to the Gloucester line. Cook, however, got back and cleared nicely.

Newport tried more passing, but it broke down, and Stephens dribbled through. The ball was cross-kicked, and Burt had some difficulty in clearing from several Gloucester men. The City rushed a few yards, and then for an infringement Newport were penalised. No charge was allowed, and Welshman, with a fine kick, landed a goal, giving Gloucester a three-point lead.

Newport resumed, and Hudson was conspicuous with some fine kicking, which enabled Gloucester to hold their own. Each side in turn made attempts at passing, but the ball was not handled with any degree of efficiency, and the movements soon broke down.

By good all-round work Gloucester came well away, and the Newport end was visited. The struggle was very exciting, and in front of the pavilion Vile and Craddock exchanged a few blows on the ground. A minute later the referee called the players together and administered a general caution.

Resuming, play continued to be hotly contested, but neither side could gain an opening. Twice Cook forced [words unreadable] from kicks, the ball once bouncing into touch-in-goal. Ensuing play was a trifle scrambling, the tackling being terrific on both sides.

The next five minutes was fought out evenly[*sic*] at mid-field, but was principally of a fierce forward nature. At length Vile started his backs in motion, but a long pass out was snapped up by Hudson, who went off at a great pace. He only had Burt to beat, and this he did in fine style, grounding the ball over the line to the accompaniment of loud cheering. Welshman failed with the place-kick, but this put the game safe for Gloucester. There remained only a few more minutes for play, and Gloucester fully maintaining their own, the end came with the City deservedly winners.

RESULT :

Gloucester .... 1 goal (p), 2 tries (9 points)  
Newport .....1 goal (p) (3 points)

## REMARKS

Gloucester's victory to-day was a great achievement, for there was no question of the City being the better team. Leaving out the penalty scores, Gloucester were twice over the Newport line without any response – and what glorious tries both were !

To Frank Smith and Hudson belong the chief honours of the game, for it was their great single-handed efforts that led to the Newport defence being beaten. Gloucester's home record against the premier Welsh teams this season is a good one, and worthy of reproduction : –

Beat Swansea, 8 points to 3.  
Lost to Cardiff, 11 points to 9.  
Beat Newport, 9 points to 3.

No other English club can point to such performances, and Captain Vears and his gallant colleagues may well feel proud of the achievements . – “Up City !”

Desperate and exciting as to-day's contest was, there was lacking for the most part that scientific back play and good combined passing one always expects when one of the class Welsh teams visit Kingsholm. In a large measure the keenness imparted into the struggle accounted for the breakdown of the backs, for the tackling was so deadly and close that the players found it a difficulty to get an opening.

In the second half especially, after Gloucester took the lead, matters were very hot indeed, and one or two players got out of hand. Vile, on the top of Craddock on the ground, exchanged “smacks” with the Gloucester forward, and there appeared a possibility of an ugly incident. Fortunately the players were parted before anything serious happened.

It is a great pity these scenes occur in a first-class match, and they cannot be too strongly condemned. We are not going to say which side started the unpleasantness – it is difficult for an outsider to see all that happens – but it was apparent the Newport team did not take their beating with that sportsmanship usually associated with them.

The Gloucester forwards were opposed to a formidable eight to-day. Led by the International stalwarts (Boots and Hodges), with Thomas and other well-known players, the Uskside pack took some holding; but the Gloucester men never flinched, and to the end they held out splendidly. It was a grim struggle throughout, and no quarter was given on either side.

The visiting pack, aided by the tricks of Vile on putting the ball in the scrum, got possession more often, but this was the only department in which Newport really held an advantage. In the loose and lines-out the City eight got through a tremendous amount of work, and from one or two [2 or 3 words unreadable] bursts something tangible in the way of scoring should have been their reward.

Individually Berry stood out as a great worker in all phases of play, and in the ex-soldier the City have found a really good forward. From one strong dash Berry looked all over a scorer, but he lost the ball or passed forward – right on the line. This was not the only occasion the Newport lines escaped in the first half. Johns, Vears, Parham, and Holford were noticeable for special efforts, and Quixley, Craddock, and Hollands bore their part well. For Newport, Boots was very prominent in out of touch play, and Thomas, Pritchard, and Hodges played up to their reputations.

At half-back, Vile spoiled his display by continual infringements, and he was several times penalised for knocking the ball into the scrum. In a player of his standing one would expect to find him above these kind of tricks. Gent, who was opposed to Vile, worked hard and effectively, and he did a lot of sound work, especially in tackling. Neither outside half was a great success, their chief failure being inability to let the ball go on at the proper moment.

The best three-quarter work was chiefly individual, and in this respect the Gloucester men outshone their opponents. The Newport quartet had the ball repeatedly, but showed poor judgment in handling, and their attempts to break through were not attended with any great success.

Cook and Stephens, in the centre, had the whip hand of Bennett and Priest, the first-named kicking beautifully and always doing the correct thing. Hudson did not get many passes, but he followed the game keenly and put in some capital defensive work. His try just before the finish showed the International's aptitude to make the best use of the slightest opening. Hudson was clear before the Newport backs appreciated the situation, and Burt, who tried hard to cut him off in the corner, had to admit defeat.

Frank Smith's try was one of the prettiest imaginable. He had a long way to go for the line, and beat Burt in a confined space near the touch-line, but the little Gloucesterian accomplished both, and completed a very fine score. Baker and Williams, the Newport wings, were not up to the mark.

At full back, Welshman made a slip or two, but on the whole he was better than Burt. The City custodian put in some capital kicks, the length and direction of which were excellent.

#### GLOUCESTER A v. NEWPORT A

The match at Newport between the rival Second teams of these clubs was regarded with great interest, having regard to the City's wonderful run of success this season. Gloucester took down a strong side, and though fully expecting a keen game were fairly confident of holding their own.

There was a good crowd of spectators. Newport started but Gloucester attacked, and brought off several rounds of passing through smart work by Dix and Arthur, but could not score.

Newport then attacked, Rowlands doing good work at outside half. Plummer had hard lines on one occasion, getting clear of everybody, but he had previously knocked on. Gloucester kept up a hot attack again until the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Gloucester A ..... Nil  
Newport A ..... Nil

In the second half, Newport, with the aid of the wind, attacked hotly, and after Fisher had failed on the right the ball went out to the left, and Winfield scored an unconverted try. Later Percy Jones scored an unconverted try after an excellent passing bout.

Gloucester attacked again, but the Newport forwards started a rush which ended in Rowlands scoring another unconverted try. Gloucester made another effort but without avail.

RESULT :

Newport A ..... 3 tries (9 points)

Gloucester A ..... Nil

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