

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1908

## FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. COVENTRY

SCRAPPY GAME AT KINGSHOLM

MIDLANDERS EASILY BEATEN

Gloucester had something to wipe off the slate against Coventry, as in the only match played between the teams last season, at Kingsholm, the Midlanders won by 10 points to nil. Coventry came with a big reputation and a splendid record, only one defeat having been sustained in thirteen engagements. The team, however, was below full strength, the absentees including Dyke, Davey, W. Oldham, and Laxon.

Elliott again disappointed the home club, a post card awaiting the Gloucester captain on the ground stating his knee had given way again. To fill the vacancy L. Vears stepped into the breach, though he had not played for some considerable time.

The weather was fine, but the attendance, owing probably to the early kick-off, was only moderate.

The teams took the field as follows : –

Gloucester. – F. Welshman, back; F. Smith, W. Hall, J. Hamblin, L. Vears, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent, J. Stephens, half-backs; G. Vears (capt.), W. Johns, B. Parham, H. Berry, G. Holford, J. Wyburn, G. Griffiths, F. Pegler, forwards.

Coventry. – C. Alexander, back; F. Hughes, H. L. Gilbert, R. Dakin, E. Goodman, three-quarter backs; W. Burgess, A. Elton, half-backs; J. P. Oldham, W. Hall, A. P. Moseley, J. Tomes, F. H. Dalton, L. F. S. Beaver, H. Robinson, W. Hutt, forwards.

Referee : Mr. J. Feltham (Bristol).

## THE GAME

G. Vears started for Gloucester against a strong wind, and Stephens replied to the return with a high punt to Dakin. The latter fumbled, but recovered, and running round pluckily kicked to touch. In some loose play Gent picked up and fed Hall who feinted and cut through, but he was collared from behind and brought down. In the next minute Hamblin missed a possible opening by knocking on.

Coventry worked out, but Gloucester returned to the attack, profiting by a mistake by Goodman. From a scrum the ball came out from Gent to Stephens who handed to Hall. The latter broke through nicely, and neat passing between Hamblin and L. Vears ended in the latter crossing with a nice try, which Welshman converted with a lovely kick.

Berry replied to the re-start with a huge punt, and the City forwards following up prevented a return. Centre play followed until Gent opened out beautifully. Stephens threw out a wide pass to Hall who took the ball nicely, but Hamblin missed the next transfer with Vears well placed on the wing. Clever play on the blind side of the scrum by Gent and Stephens gained some 20 yards, but Coventry recovered by the aid of a penalty.

Good work by the visitors in the loose took the ball to Welshman, who sent them back with a capital touch-finder. Coventry heeling, Elton twice broke away prettily, and the Midlanders gained a footing in the home 25 for the first time. Gloucester worked out, and from a lineout Holford secured and got the ball down. Johns dribbled away, and gathering the ball on the bounce passed to Parham, who ran down touch. Being pressed from behind he transferred inside to Berry, who went over the line, but the pass was ruled forward. Coventry, by kicking, reached the centre, where Johns, taking advantage of a miss by Goodman, ran clear. With a certain try, however, the vice-captain passed forward.

Loose play by the City lost ground, but Coventry were at fault and failed to profit. Gent and Stephens beating the opposing halves, the latter looked to have a possible chance, but a visitor took a flying kick and sent the ball over the line. A scrum followed five yards out, but Gloucester were again at fault, and the visitors cleared to favourable quarters.

Gent was prominent with several bits of neat play, and then brilliant footwork by Johns looked likely for a score. An opponent, however, robbed the City man and came through with a strong burst to beyond the 25 flag. Goodman was conspicuous with a fine run for Coventry, the home tackling being very weak, but Berry eventually effected his downfall.

Passing by the City backs started promisingly, but Hamblin, and next L. Vears failed. Following some loose play Johns gathered, and was off in a trice. He cut inside the full-back cleverly, but being pressed from behind he gave up possession to Hamblin, who scored easily. Welshman failed at goal.

Gloucester had the better of the exchanges on the resumption, but the three-quarters did not make the best use of their chances. In the open a visiting forward picked up, and ran straight down to Welshman, but the City custodian brought off a good tackle. Stephens was instrumental in changing the venue, and a spell of even play resulted at mid-field.

Coventry heeling, Elton passed out, but Dakin missed Goodman's pass. Hamblin, seeing an opening, dribbled away and past Alexander. F. Smith was well up and gathering a cross-kick on the run crossed with the third try. Welshman missed the goal points.

Coventry restarted and played up pluckily. Elton initiated a nice movement from the scrum, and neat passing saw the Gloucester line completely at their mercy. Goodman's final transfer, however, was forward, and the visitors were not rewarded. Soon afterwards the interval was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Gloucester ..... 1 goal 2 tries  
Coventry ..... Nil

Coventry restarted, and opening play was contested at the centre. Here Stephens early opened out, and the ball was handled brilliantly by the City three-quarters. L. Vears ran to Gilbert and then passed inside to Hamblin, but the latter was collared from behind. From the ensuing line-out Gloucester ought to have crossed after passing, but F. Smith was stopped outside and, losing the ball, Coventry kicked out to near mid-field. Stephens ran back cleverly and started passing, but it failed to materialise.

Welshman checked a rush of the Coventry men and found touch with a lovely kick, a performance he repeated a little later, going nearly half the length of the ground. With a strong forward burst Gloucester pressed, but play was very scrappy. Parham, who was doing a lot of useful work in the open, nearly got over, but Burgess saved and ran out pluckily.

Loose rushing by the Coventry forwards carried them to the centre, where play developed into a wretched scramble. Gloucester, by the aid of a penalty, got into their opponents' quarters. Here Stephens took a pass from Gent in wonderful style, and after Hall and Hamblin had handled, L. Vears raced over with a try – a deserved reward for a capital movement well carried out. No goal resulted.

Gloucester returned to the attack on the drop-out, but Coventry's marking was close and sure. Johns once made a good opening, but the ball went astray and the Coventry lines escaped. Ensuing play was confined to the Coventry half, but the home attacks were not strong enough.

At length, from an opening by Stephens, L. Vears made a rare dash for the line, but was tackled a yard outside. Subsequent play continued scrambling and was uninteresting.

Coventry laid themselves out solely for smothering tactics, and at times played two or three wing forwards. The result was very scrappy play and a nasty feeling amongst some of the players. Something took place on the sixpenny side which called forth loud shouts from the crowd, and there were cries of "Send him off!" There was a temporary stoppage, and the Coventry touch-judge over-stepped his duties by going on the field. The referee had the players together, and after a talk the game was resumed.

Gloucester confined the game entirely to their opponents' half, but all attempts on the part of the City to increase their score were nipped in the bud. Just before the end Hughes snapped up a pass intended for L. Vears and ran to Welshman, whom he tried to jump. The ex-Lydneyite, however, failed to clear his man, and was brought low.

#### RESULT :

Gloucester ..... 1 goal, 3 tries (14 points)  
Coventry ..... Nil

#### REMARKS

A disappointing game, especially in the second half. Gloucester exhibited an overwhelming superiority throughout, and 14 points to nil in no way indicated the run of the game.

There were a few bright movements in the opening stages, but with the change of ends Coventry concentrated themselves solely on smothering tactics, and the result was long periods of scrappy play of absolutely no interest to the spectators. The Midlanders only crossed the half-way about twice in the second portion, but despite the repeated attacks of the City only one try was recorded.

At times a very nasty feeling was displayed by some of the visitors, and this fact, coupled with the poor football displayed, made the game anything but a pleasant one to watch.

The Coventry forwards were seen to advantage in loose footwork, but there was an absence of cleverness and judgment. Elton was very sharp at the scrum, but the backs generally shaped poorly in combination. Goodman was the pick of the line, both in attack and defence. Alexander was fairly safe at full-back, but was outshone by Welshman, who gave a splendid exhibition.

Gloucester were good and bad by turns. The forwards heeled repeatedly, and were dashing in the open and lines-out. Johns was frequently to the fore, and Parham, Berry, and Pegler accomplished a lot of good work. At half Gent and Stephens worked together like clockwork, and had the third line been up to form a big score would have been put on.

Hall was not so conspicuous as against Newport, for the simple reason that he did not get so much work. The ball more often went to the right, where Hamblin failed to make the best use of his chances. He missed several passes, and was very slow at times in getting rid of the ball.

Considering L. Vears has been so long out of the game, he did wonderfully well. What a pity he cannot assist regularly! Vears scored both his tries in dashing style, and his form all round was excellent.

Frank Smith was not given a lot to do, and perhaps it was as well, for a bad ankle troubled him. The tackling of the Gloucester three-quarters was very weak at times, and in this respect the players need smartening up.

## GLOUCESTER A v. GLOUCESTER OLD BOYS

### OLD BOYS LOSE THEIR GROUND RECORD

There is always keen rivalry between these teams, and the first meeting of the season at Denmark-road aroused a good deal of interest. The Old Boys were without Sid Lane (capt.) and Hubert Lane, both on the injured list, and T. Millard. The Seconds were well represented.

Old Boys. – R. Langford; W. J. Vance, A. Lewis, W. J. Pearce, and C. Barnes; H. V. Ellis and T. Burns; W. D. Henderson, L. Norman, N. Hayes, H. Lewis, T. Catesby, F. Blackwell, D. Pearce, and H. A'Bear.

Gloucester A. – C. Cook; A. Pegler, H. Barnes, C. Lister, and J. M. Baldwin; H. Smith and W. Dix; A. Hawker (captain), S. Hayward, H. Aston, W. Nelmes, H. Daniells, R. Craddock, W. Blackford, and R. Bird.

The Old Boys kicked off and benefitted by the exchange, Alec Lewis gaining ground by kicking into touch. Vance started a promising bout of passing, but W. Pearce knocked on. Practically all the play was in the visitors' half and Gloucester had to concede a scrum within a couple of yards of their line. Some work by Craddock and Nelmes removed the danger, and the City carried the leather to the other end, but were pulled up by a clever mark to the credit of W. Vance.

The City came back, however, but the Old Boys were saved by a smart effort by A. Lewis, that took play into the Seconds' 25. A grand run by J. M. Baldwin relieved matters, and he took the ball three-parts of the way up the field ere Langford brought him down. The Gloucester men forced a minor and the interval came with play in the Old Boys' 25.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Old Boys ..... Nil

Gloucester A ..... Nil

On the restart, Alec Lewis led the home backs in a splendid movement, and getting a re-pass scored an apparent try, but the point was disallowed for some infringement in mid-field.

After this disappointment the Old Boys worked desperately, and for some time had the best of matters. They initiated a good rush which was only stopped by a magnificent mark by Cook. Daniells and Craddock led the visitors right away, and some terribly exciting play was witnessed on the Old Boys line.

At length A'Bear and Pearce managed to temporarily remove the danger, but shortly after a rush resulted in Hubert Smith scoring from a melée in the corner. Hayward failed with the kick – a very difficult one.

Again the visitors hovered on the line, and another try was added, the extra points being easily added from a good position. The final arrived soon after.

RESULT :

Gloucester A ... 1 goal 1 try (8 points)  
Old Boys ..... Nil

REMARKS

The Old Boys ground record has gone, wrested from them after a desperate encounter. Fast and exciting all through, the Old Boys more than held their own for three-quarters of the game, but went badly to pieces in the last fifteen minutes.

In the back division the victors were not so good as the homesters. Baldwin and Barnes were their best men. W. J. Pearce played grandly for the O.B.'s, and although he received innumerable minor injuries he stuck to it like a Trojan, hard at it till the very end. Hubert Smith and Dix were very good, while on the other side, Burns was both clever and game, and Ellis good throughout.

Hawker, Craddock, and Daniells were perhaps the most prominent of the forwards; whilst A'Bear, H. Lewis, and Henderson were the pick of a universally hard-working pack. With their full strength the Old Boys might have won. As it was they got little the worst of a very interesting encounter.