

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1908

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. OLD MERCHANT TAYLORS

A FINE GAME

TAYLORS UNLUCKY TO LOSE

At Kingsholm, on Boxing afternoon, before a large holiday crowd. Gent was absent from the City team, but otherwise the Club was at full strength, whilst the Taylors fielded a good lot. Among the spectators was Arthur Hudson, the City captain, who was warmly congratulated on his progress.

The teams fielded at 2.40 as follows : —

Gloucester. — F. Welshman; F. Smith, J. Hamblin, W. Hall, and L. Vears; J. Stephens and W. Dix; G. Vears (capt.), W. Johns, H. Berry, B. Parham, G. Griffiths, J. Wyburn, D. Hollands, and G. Holford.

Old Merchant Taylors. — J. E. Raphael; C. L. Parker, E. N. Fuller, R. A. Lepingwell, and M. J. Lepingwell; W. I. Cheesman and S. Hodgson; S. S. Nevill, C. Bourne, J. R. Pound, A. B. Wallis, W. Haines, A. F. Cottram, H. J. Pullin-Thompson, and C. A. Covernton.

Referee : Mr. G. C. Rodway (Midland Counties).

THE GAME

The Taylors won the toss, and Vears kicked off from the Dean's Walk goal. The City forwards following up took the ball and kicked through to a visiting back, who was collared by Johns. The Londoners changed the venue with a nice kick to the centre, where Welshman brought off a pretty pick up and punt to touch.

The Gloucester forwards heeling, the backs indulged in a lovely round of passing, but Smith was well tackled on the 25 line. The ball getting loose the visitors cleared, only to see Gloucester return with some more handling. Again Smith failed to clear the defence although he made a plucky effort.

In the Taylors' half a home forward passed wildly from a line out, and Hodgson coming up kicked over Welshman's head. The City custodian got back, but slipped in trying to clear, and matters looked dangerous for the home side. There was a slight relief, but the Taylors, profiting by weakness on the part of the home men, had an easy chance of scoring. A knock-on, however, spoiled it. Gloucester worked out a few yards, but the Taylors, opening out, a nice round of passing saw Parker race round and over the line with a fine try, and R. Lepingwell converted, and the Taylors thus secured an early lead.

Vears resumed, and play was fast at midfield. The Taylors, with neat footwork, were dangerous again, and Welshman had to be pretty smart to clear. Hamblin stopped a promising loose movement by dropping on the ball, and Stephens, a little later, effected a neat clearance under difficulties, and Gloucester tried to open out once or twice, but the keen marking of the Londoners prevented an opening being secured.

Following some fast loose play at midfield, Hodgson gathered from a scrum and passed out. The subsequent transfer, however, went astray, and F. Smith snapping up the ball, raced away, and beating Raphael finished up a great effort by scoring a try amidst great enthusiasm. Welshman converted with a nice kick and put the teams level.

Stephens replied to the re-start, and there was a spell of even play at the centre. Then the Gloucester backs came away with some brilliant bouts of passing. F. Smith again ran well, and though brought down, was up again and made a few more yards before being pushed to touch. Gloucester made further headway from a line-out, and the City secured a good position. R. Lepingwell, however, cleared with a fine run up the field, reaching Welshman before being finely collared.

Subsequent play favoured the Taylors, but Gloucester replied grandly, and got very close to the line. Here Berry secured from a throw-out, but was unable to get the ball down. A good individual effort by a visiting forward changed the venue, the Taylors being very smart in seizing upon the slightest opening.

Gloucester confined play to their opponents' half for some little time, but the City were very wild and frequently allowed their opponents to take advantage.

Raphael, who was playing close up for a full-back, joined in several movements, and R. Lepingwell, with strong runs, took a lot of looking after. Just now the Taylors were having all the better of the exchanges, but the interval arrived with no addition to the score.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 1 goal
Taylors 1 goal

The Taylors resumed, Griffiths replying with a high punt. Some of the Gloucester forwards got off-side, and a scrum was ordered on the City 25 line. The Londoners heeled, but the ball went astray behind, and the City gained some 20 yards. From a line out Wyburn secured and passed out, but Hamblin missed. L. Vears, however, was handy, and got in a capital punt to Parker.

Later there was some loose forward play, ending in the ball being kicked over the Taylors' line. Parham was well up, and just beating Raphael touched down for a try in the far corner. No goal resulted.

On the restart Hall was prominent with a tricky bit of play which troubled Raphael, but the International passed to a colleague who kicked to touch. The game rapidly went across to the other wing, where a scrum was formed just inside the Taylors' quarter. Breaking up quickly the ball got loose, and Berry picking up ran over with a good try. Welshman failed to add the goal points.

Re-starting, Gloucester showed up with clever work, Dix shining. The Taylors, however, opened out, and Parker getting a nice pass he at once made off at top speed. Rounding Welshman he easily outdistanced all opposition, and finished a great effort by scoring a try. R. Lepingwell failed to add the goal points.

Gloucester dropped out, and play continued to be exceptionally fast. The Taylors' backs, a very dashing lot, displayed excellent football, and they took a lot of stopping. A good effort by R. Lepingwell looked likely to end in a try, but he was upset in time. Then Johns punted well down to Raphael, who, in trying to beat F. Smith, was upset by the little 'un, amidst the cheers of the crowd.

A splendid loose rush, headed by Johns, promised well, but a visitor effected a daring save. The Taylors came out to the centre, where some desperate tackling was witnessed. The Londoners, with smart footwork, came away with a dangerous movement, which F. Smith stopped by kicking to touch.

By forward work Gloucester shifted operations to the Londoners' end, where the City tried hard to increase their lead. The defence, however, was exceptionally keen, and men were brought down in deadly fashion. R. Lepingwell, forced to run over his line, tried to punt out, but only sent the ball out of play behind his own goal.

A scrum followed five yards out, and Stephens getting possession, missed Hamblin and sent out a well judged pass to L. Vears, who took the ball nicely and scored in the corner. The goal kick failed.

Re-starting, the Taylors played up strongly, and won their way close to the home goal line. Gloucester relieved temporarily but were beaten back, and a visitor was only held outside. An anxious time followed for the City, but Dix saved by touching down. Ensuing play was fairly even, though the game was mostly inside the Taylor's half. The visitors were always dangerous when they got the ball.

Inside the home half the Londoners got the ball out. Neat exchanges left the ball with Parker. Using his fine turn of speed, the Oxford player again left his opponents easily and scored another grand try, which R. Lepingwell converted.

Gloucester were only a point to the good now, but they succeeded in holding their lead to the finish.

RESULT :

Gloucester1 goal, 3 tries (14 pts)

Taylors 2 goals, 1 try (13 pts)

REMARKS

The Taylors did not deserve to lose, for on the day they played the better football. It was a magnificently contested game, and very exciting at times. All round the Londoners were a splendid combination – the best they have ever sent to Gloucester.

The forwards were a fine set, dashing in the loose, and exceptionally clever with their feet. Outside, too, the players were speedy and resourceful, and against a less sterling defence they would have put on a lot of points.

Two outstanding figures in the side were R. Lepingwell (centre) and Parker (left wing). They played football of the highest class, and the latter's pace was altogether too [word/words unreadable] the home backs. The Oxonian, who failed to get his blue, scored all three tries for the Taylors, the two in the second half being very fine efforts, and reminiscent of Walter Taylor, the old City captain, at the height of his career.

Fuller and M. Lepingwell, the other three-quarters, often distinguished themselves, and the half-backs took a lot of looking after. Raphael, at back, also did excellent work in the kicking department.

Gloucester have not met a better team this season, and a good deal of credit is due to the City players on their victory, though a somewhat lucky win. The forwards entered the contest full of fire, but at times there was a lack of judgment and finesse in the open. The whole eight had to play all out, the most distinguished being Vears, Johns, Parham, and Berry.

Dix did a lot of useful work at half, but there was not that ideal understanding between him and Stephens as with Gent and Stephens. Frank Smith performed well at right wing three-quarter, and Hall was superior to Hamblin in the centre. Vears, on the left, performed with great credit, and scored his try very smartly. Welshman was at fault in failing to find touch with his kicks, but he cleared smartly on several occasions. He was easily beaten by Parker when the latter scored, but better men than Welshman would have stood little chance against such a speed merchant.

GLOUCESTER A v. OLD BOYS

OLD BOYS WELL BEATEN

At Kingsholm, on Boxing morning, before a goodly number of spectators. The game was considerably delayed, owing to the Seconds failing to turn out. Both teams were representative, the only absentees being Dix (Gloucester) and W. J. Pearce (Old Boys).

Gloucester A. – C. Cook; A. Pegler, H. Barnes, R. Minahan and J. Beard; Hubert Smith and L. Rudge; A. Hawker (capt.), R. Craddock, J. Nelmes, H. Bird, W. Blackford, H. Daniells, J. Hall, and H. Aston.

Old Boys. – E. Langford; W. J. Vance, A. Lewis, H. P. Ellis, and K. H. Soutar; T. Burns and S. Stephens; S. D. Lane (capt.), L. Peckover, L. Norman, N. Hayes, H. Lewis, S. Millard, A. D. Pearce, and W. D. Henderson.

Hawker started for Gloucester, and opening play was contested at mid-field. Smart work by Cook put the homesters well inside the Old Boys' 25, where Pegler cross-kicked, and Langford fumbling Gloucester nearly scored. Smith and Pegler combining nicely on the blind side of the scrum only just failed to penetrate the defence on the left.

Attacking strongly, the Seconds worked hard for a score, and after several narrow escapes, Hubert Smith dribbled over the line and touched down a smart try. Cook failed at goal.

Cook replied well to the drop out, and the Old Boys were at once placed on the defensive. From a pass by Smith Pegler cut through and secured a fine opening, but passed wildly. Barnes, however, scored, and took a drop at goal which failed, a minor resulting.

On the drop out Cook was prominent with fine play, and the game continued to be all in favour of the Seconds. A well-judged kick sent the ball to touch, five yards from the Old Boys' line, where a home player marked. Cook made a splendid shot for goal from a difficult position, the ball falling just short.

A visitor pluckily kicked out to Cook, who returned with interest, and operations were contested close to the O.B.'s line. Here the Seconds' half-backs opened out, but the passing went astray, Beard recovering smartly. A rush by the Old Boys took them beyond the centre to Cook, who, however, fielded nicely and started a bout of passing, but little ground was made.

Hubert Smith, with a clever run, beat several opponents trickily, but his pass was spoiled. The Old Boys hereabouts tried some handling, but it broke down before many yards were made. An interception by Burns gave the latter an opening, but he was brought down by Cook, and the Seconds quickly rushed back to the centre. Here Soutar, fielding a long kick, ran across the ground, eluding several would-be tacklers, but his pass was knocked on.

Hot forward play followed, the teams being very keen. Heeling by the Old Boys saw Alec Lewis given possession, and the centre man slipping the defence cut out a fine opening. But with two men on his right he failed to pass, and a grand opportunity was lost.

Subsequently play was evenly contested, but both sets of backs were at fault in handling. Craddock had to retire with a cut over the eye, and on resuming the Seconds, with a capital forward rush had a splendid chance, but the mistake was made of trying to pick up – a knock on ensued.

A clever run by Hubert Smith looked promising, but after securing a nice opening his transfer hit a colleague's shoulder. Craddock now returned, and the Seconds attacked with vigour, thanks to some fine kicking by [unreadable]. Just before the interval Rudge, Smith Pegler passed close in[sic], and the latter struggled [word/words unreadable] corner, but was held to have stepped into touch.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 1 try
Old Boys Nil

The second half opened in favour of the Seconds, and in very quick time they were busy near the Old Boys' line. The visitors cleared with a strong forward rush, but Beard ran back down touch and passed inside, but the transfer was forward.

A free to the Old Boys enabled them to get out of danger. Near midfield the visitors started handling, and Vance receiving, he brought off a magnificent run, clearing Cook and finishing up by scoring in a good position. The place-kick failed, and the teams were on a level.

This infused more keenness into the game, which was vigorously contested. The Seconds had the better of the exchanges, and forced a couple of minors. Then Hubert Smith worked out a fine opening, but his transfer was not taken, with an open goal line.

After this the Seconds maintained a hot pressure, but over anxiety lost them a score or two. However, the attack was maintained. Pegler, getting a pass, ran through the defence in grand style and planted the ball behind the posts amidst great cheering. Cook kicked a goal, and the home side deservedly took the lead again.

On the resumption Gloucester again were attacking strongly, and one desperate rush nearly resulted in another try. After this narrow escape the Old Boys put in some dashing work which took them to the centre. Here the visitors had a possible opening, but a bad pass was sent to Soutar.

With a big rush the Seconds got away again, and the ball being taken over the line, Hubert Smith dropped on it for another try, which went unconverted.

Subsequent play was all in favour of the Seconds, and Pegler crossed with a try in the corner after a sharp dash. No goal resulted.

The Old Boys failed to improve on the restart, and following some clever footwork by Beard down the touch line, the ball was kicked over, and Hubert Smith notched the fourth try, which Barnes converted with a good kick.

Just before the end the Old Boys made a final spurt, and Vance looked all over a scorer, but Cook effected a superb tackle.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 2 goals 3 tries (19 points)
Old Boys 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

The Old Boys were a thoroughly beaten side, and the score in no way exaggerated the superiority of the Seconds. In all departments the winners held the advantage, and they played well to a man.

Forward the A pack played with great dash, and Hubert Smith and Rudge did capital work at half-back. Stephens was the best of the Old Boys' pair, doing a lot of sterling work. The three-quarter back play on both sides was faulty, and mistakes were pretty frequent. Vance's try easily stood out as the best effort for the Old Boys, though in general play Alec Lewis was the pick of their backs. Cook, except for the one mistake when he failed to tackle Vance, played a glorious game, his splendid kicking and fielding being a feature of the match.

JC