

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1909

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v. BRISTOL

COUNTY LEAGUE FIXTURE AT BRISTOL

CITIZENS ON TOP IN A KEEN STRUGGLE

Gloucester and Bristol met for the first time this season at the County Ground, the match being in connection with the County League.

Both clubs have suffered severely owing to men getting injured, and the constant changes rendered necessary have had its effect on the play of the teams.

Gloucester were short of Johns, Hollands, and Wyburn in the forwards to-day, and Elliott, who had been chosen for wing three-quarter, cried off owing to an attack of influenza.

A. Pegler filled the vacancy, F. Welshman (who was reserve) stating he was not fit and had decided to stand down for a month.

Bristol had Kingston away, and S. Carey and A. Stradling appeared in the forwards in place of Mathias (who had announced his retirement) and Percy.

In connection with the match the M.R. ran a cheap excursion to Bristol, but the fixture did not apparently arouse any very great interest.

Gloucester. – C. Cook, back; F. Smith, W. Hall, H. Smith, A. Pegler, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent, J. Stephens, half-backs; G. Vears (capt.), B. Parham, H. Berry, G. Griffiths, R. Craddock, S. Hayward, J. Hall, G. Holford, forwards.

Bristol. – W. R. Johnstone, back; W. Boddie, F. Holbrook, H. E. Shewring, E. North, three-quarter backs; J. Spoor, G. Spoor, half-backs; P. J. Down (capt.), S. Carey, F. Feltham, W. Fry, W. Cooper, N. Moore, A. Nott, A. Stradling, forwards.

Referee : Mr. W. Smith, Bridgwater.

THE GAME

The weather, though bright and fine, was very cold, and there was not more than 1,000 spectators. The ground was very greasy on the surface. Vears started for Gloucester, but some of the forwards getting in front of the ball a scrum was ordered at the centre. Bristol early heeled, and smart passing saw North race down touch until tackled by F. Smith.

Play followed in the Gloucester half, when Gent and Stephens opened out nicely. The ball came along to Pegler, but the wing man knocked on badly. Clever play by Gent on the blind side of the scrum allowed him to reach Johnstone before being tackled.

From a line-out Griffiths secured, and neat exchanges and a re-pass to Hall let the centre over the line, but the last transfer was ruled forward.

Bristol cleared from the dangerous position, but Cook dodged a couple of men cleverly and sent to touch. Bristol responded with a good rush, and J. Spoor robbing H. Smith of the ball punted high. The ball was muddled by two Gloucester players, and went over the line, but Hall touched down.

Resuming, the City backs showed up with neat passing, and F. Smith kicked to the Bristol 25. Bristol, who were playing a man short, warded off a sharp attack by Gloucester, who were shaping splendidly.

A clever kick by Hall put the visitors well down, and in a scramble near the line Holford was credited with a try. Hayward failed.

On the drop-out the Gloucester forwards were prominent with a grand burst, Berry leading, and the home team had another narrow escape.

A forward pass by H. Smith robbed Pegler of a possible chance, and then Hall, with a lovely run, just failed to beat the defence. Bristol worked out through Johnstone, and the backs getting possession Holbrook raced over with a good try. Moor missed goal.

Ensuing play favoured Bristol, who forced another minor. The Bristol team was now completed with Nott. Kibbey was the absentee. Play was exceptionally fast and keen, but twice Gloucester lost ground through faulty back play. Bristol, with a strong loose rush, looked dangerous, but the City managed to save, eventually changing the venue by good all-round work.

Bristol quickly replied, and Cook fumbled near the line and holding on to the ball was penalised. The attempt at goal failed, and Gloucester cleared. Erratic play on both sides followed, and twice Holbrook had unsuccessful drops at goal.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 try
Bristol 1 try

Bristol re-started, and from the first scrum the Brothers Spoons opened out. Holbrook, however, missed his pass, and Pegler coming through kicked to Johnstone.

The latter mis-kicked, and Holford fielding the City forward was nearly through. More fumbling by Bristol saw their lines have a narrow escape, a flying kick saving them in the nick of time. From a line-out a Bristol forward broke clear away, and was not checked till the Gloucester end was visited.

Off-side by Bristol lost them a good slice of ground. Gloucester, working hard, attacked strongly, and the homesters were hard pressed. Smart work between Berry, Parham, and Holford gave the latter a try, but the last pass was forward. This was hard lines, as the movement deserved a score.

Scrambling play followed, Bristol having a slight advantage. Gloucester worked back, Gent doing some good work, but generally the play lacked finish. Thanks mainly to Down, Bristol changed the venue, and Craddock being penalised for off-side, Shewring tried a drop for goal, but failed.

Gloucester relieved with capital footwork, but they were stopped at mid-field. Just now Bristol were getting the better of the scrums, but the backs were often at fault, and Gloucester easily kept their lines intact.

Parham, Berry, and Hayward led to the visitors gaining a position in the Bristol half, and a combined rush took the ball past Johnstone, but Holbrook got back and cleared cleverly.

Aided by forward passes the home team made further headway, but Gloucester managed to keep their opponents in hand. Interception of Bristol passing by H. Smith gave Pegler an opening. Hall came outside the wing and took a nice transfer, but he was not fast enough to get clear.

The effort, however, led to Gloucester getting on the attack. From a line-out Griffiths gathered, and sending out wide to Hall the latter dodged through and passed to F. Smith, who ran over with a nice try. Cook converted with a lovely kick. There was only a few minutes left for play, and Gloucester keeping up the pressure nearly scored again just on time.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal, 1 try (8 points)
Bristol 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

Gloucester's win was received with enthusiasm by their supporters, and taking play throughout they just about deserved their success.

The winners did more actual pressing than their rivals, and lost two or three tries by just passing a shade forward when the defence was clean beaten.

Forward it was a strenuous game, both packs working with great energy. Gloucester did brilliantly at times, Berry, Holford, Griffiths, and Parham doing splendid work.

Bristol held the advantage in the scrums, especially in the second half, when they got the ball back repeatedly. The Brothers Spoons opened out fairly well, but generally the passing went astray.

For the most part Gloucester's tackling was good – a great improvement on recent displays – but there were occasional lapses. Gent and Stephens were clever in combination, and did not miss much.

Of the Gloucester three-quarters Hall was the pick, the centre doing a lot of clever work. Frank Smith did not get many openings, but he scored his try very smartly.

Hubert Smith was faulty in taking his passes, but Pegler did creditably.

Cook and Johnstone, at full-back, were both in excellent form, the latter's kicking being very fine.

Holbrook was easily the best of the Bristol rear division, and twice he saved what looked almost certain tries against his side. Shewring was only fair, whilst neither Boddie nor North did anything very special.

The game was fought out with great keenness all through, but was played in capital spirit. Gloucester are still undefeated in the County League.

GLOUCESTER A v. BRISTOL NOMADS

CITY SECONDS WIN A POOR GAME

The teams met at Kingsholm in fine weather. The visitors arrived late and two men short, but substitutes were found for them.

The teams were : –

Gloucester A. – H. Hancock; B. Day, J. Hamblin, H. Barnes, and Harry Smith; W. Egerton and W. Dix; A. Hawker (capt.), H. Aston, F. Pegler, W. Nelmes, H. Daniells, A. Hatton, F. Welshman, and H. Kirby.

Bristol Nomads. – A. Hartell; B. Shute, S. Shipp, D. Llewellyn, and W. Saunders; T. Lempriere and F. Harris; H. Mayell, W. Allen, A. Kingscote, F. Parsons, G. North, W. Nurse, C. Westbury, and C. Lister.

Bristol kicked off with the sun in their eyes. Early on Day broke through prettily, but Hawker held too long. A good kick by Hancock gave Gloucester a footing in the visitors' 25, where Dix showed up with a tricky bit of play, but he was pushed into touch. Then Hamblin got going, but could not pass or cut through.

Gloucester kept up the pressure, however, and Egerton kicked over the line, and with Hawker raced for possession. The two Gloucester men, however, collided, and Lempriere saved somewhat luckily.

Dix intercepted a pass cleverly, but there was no one to back him up. Bristol were penalised, and Egerton took the kick, but it fell short. Dix got the ball away from the scrum nicely and passed to Day, but the latter was forced into touch in the corner.

The Gloucester forwards rushed a scrum over the line, but only "five yards out" was given. Again Dix and Egerton opened out the game, but Barnes this time was at fault in holding too long.

Gloucester still kept up the pressure, and from a scrum near the line Dix literally forced his way over. Egerton majorised with a good kick.

Hancock and Hartell respectively were responsible for good kicks, and then Hamblin was set going, but his wing man was in front, and no ground was gained. Llewellyn cut through nicely for Bristol, but Hancock brought him down well, and his wide pass was accepted by a man who was too well marked to get away.

Gloucester gradually worked up from the centre, and Barnes put in a useful run, but he was unsupported. Hartell gained a nice slice of ground with a kick, which Day muddled. He made amends later with a good kick, but the game had deteriorated somewhat. Harris made a brilliant opening for Bristol, but after making a good run he passed very wildly, and the movement was checked.

The Gloucester forwards then made ground, and Hawker gained further with a free, Gloucester once more getting a footing in Bristol territory. Hawker had a shot at goal from a mark, but it was a poor kick, and Bristol worked out. The Gloucester forwards put in a determined rush and carried the ball over the line, but they were robbed of possession and lost a golden opportunity. Half-time came shortly after with Gloucester still pressing.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A	1 goal
Bristol Nomads	Nil

Gloucester at once got down to the Bristol line on resuming, and Egerton and Day both had narrow shaves in not getting over. Gloucester kept up the pressure, and Dix dodging away from a scrum cleverly, put Day over with a corner try, which went unconverted.

The Bristol three-quarters put in one good piece of work, but the last recipient was robbed of the ball, and Barnes returned the game to the same venue, and Gloucester were again in the Bristol 25.

The game was very scrappy, however, and although they had plenty of opportunities, the Gloucestersians neglected them.

A stoppage ensued owing to an injury to Barnes, but he was able to resume. When in a favourable position the ball came right across the line beautifully to Hamblin, but he held too long, and a good chance was thrown away.

Bristol by good forward work reached the centre, but they were speedily beaten back and called upon to defend again. Dix caused his side to be penalised for off-side, but the Bristolians gained very little ground. Gloucester in turn were awarded a free, but the kick went wide. The Gloucester forwards then put in a determined rush, and in the scramble the ball was carried over and Bird credited with a try, which Egerton failed to convert.

Gloucester still kept up a hot pressure, and Dix managed to struggle over again with one of his favourites from the base of the scrum. Barnes failed at goal.

Up to the end Gloucester maintained a hot attack, but they were unable to get through again.

RESULT :

Gloucester A	1 goal 3 tries (14 points)
Bristol Nomads	Nil

REMARKS

It was a very poor, scrappy game to watch, and much more one-sided than the score of 14 points to nil would suggest.

Gloucester were pressing practically throughout, and should certainly have materially increased their score, but each man appeared to be trying to do too much on his own, and the football suffered in consequence.

Dix was the shining light on the home side, but there was very little individual brilliance to call for mention.

Hancock, the new full-back, had very little to do, but when he was called upon he did his work cleanly and well, and created a most favourable impression for a first appearance.

JC