

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1911

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v DEVONPORT ALBION

ALBION AT KINGSHOLM

CITY'S WELL-MERITED WIN

After a lapse of several years fixtures were renewed this season between Gloucester and Devon Albion, the first meeting taking place at Kingsholm this afternoon.

The Albion started the season at the first available opportunity, and had already recorded three victories – against Weston, Camborne, and Redruth – so that they came to Kingsholm very fit.

Gloucester, on the other hand, had only played once together, Penygraig being easily beaten last week.

The City were not at full strength, Holford, Pegler, and Stanley Cook being absentees, but W. Johns made a welcome appearance.

J. Hamblin and S. Smart filled the vacancies at three-quarter and forward respectively.

The Albion turned out as selected, the teams fielding before a fairly large crowd as follows : –

Gloucester. – C. Cook, back; A. Hudson (capt.), J. Hamblin, W. Staunton, W. Washbourne, three-quarter backs; W. Dix, W. Hall, half-backs; G. Vears, W. Johns, H. Berry, A. Lodge, S. Smart, N. Hayes, F. Yates, G. Griffiths, forwards.

Devonport Albion. – F. J. Lillicrap, back; S. Harvey, J. Jenkins, E. Thomas, A. Hoar, three-quarter backs; R. Jago (capt.), A. Monk, half-backs; C. Marshall, D. Hollands, H. Pope, T. Hayman, E. J. Lee, C. Waye, E. R. Gardner, H. Hocking, forwards.

Referee : Mr. J. H. Miles.

W. Spiers, the old City forward, took the touch flag for the visitors, who also included in their side Dave Hollands, another ex-Gloucester forward. Owing to the colours of the clubs being similar, the home team appeared in white jerseys.

Devon Albion started from the Worcester-street goal, and following a series of exchange kicks the ball went to touch near the line-out, Hollands leading, but they were called back. From a scrum Gloucester heeled, and Dix fed Hall, who found touch beautifully on the Albion 25. Good forward work took the City close, and Johns picking up the International tried to break through, but being pressed he passed, and the ball went astray.

A minute later Hall, from a pass by Dix, made a big effort to go through, but he was collared in the nick of time. Jago was instrumental in changing the venue, and the centre was the scene of operations.

Twice Dix baulked Jago after the Albion forwards had heeled, but later the visiting captain got away and fed Monk, who sent to Hoar. The latter repassed, but a forward transfer was given.

Hamblin, with a useful kick, sent back to the centre, where the forwards trying the "loose head," which the referee would not allow, wasted some time. When a proper scrum was formed, Dix secured and fed Hall, who in trying a break through had the ball knocked out of his hands. There was a slight delay whilst Hudson left the field, and on resuming the Gloucester forwards got in a fine burst, which Lillicrap had some difficulty in repelling. Then a visitor got away from a line-out, and kicking hard the ball was taken past Cook. Hamblin, however, got back and effected a good clearance.

The Gloucester forwards were twice prominent for good rushes, but off-side by Berry caused the home team to be penalised. Lillicrap had a shot for goal, but was a long way out, and Cook punted back to touch. Jago, opening out from a scrum, the Albion started an attack, but nothing resulted.

For not putting the ball in straight Jago caused his side to be penalised, and Cook gained some 20 yards with the kick, there being no response. Albion regained the ground by the aid of a penalty given against Dix, but Hudson and Cook put Gloucester well down with beautifully well-judged kicks. Dix opened out nicely twice, but the defence was too keen.

From a scrum close in Monk mis-fielded, but Hollands was handy and got in a sharp kick to touch. A capital bit of footwork by Smart gave Gloucester an advantage, and the City rushed right under the posts. Here Albion relieved from a dangerous position by the aid of a penalty, but a subsequent attempt to open out failed.

Albion got the better of the next scrums, but Monk was finely tackled by Hall, who also got the ball from him and punted to touch.

Jago next worked the blind side, and a pass was sent to Hoar, who dashed off, but was met by Hudson, and both fell heavily to the ground. Hoar was slightly stunned, but was soon able to resume.

Near the centre Jago again got possession, but his pass was snapped up by Dix, who ran down to Lillicrap, and then transferred to Hall. The latter put his best pace on, and though closely pressed got home safely in the corner amidst loud cheering. Jago claimed that Hall had gone to touch, but he was overruled, and rightly so. Cook took a shot for goal, but failed to convert.

The Albion dropped out, Hayes replying with a good touch-finder. Albion twice tried hard to get going, but without success, and the City forwards maintained the position with strong bursts.

Hall further improved matters with a splendid over-head kick, but Albion worked out of danger. Centre play followed, Hamblin saving cleverly under pressure, and then ensued some fast and exciting play, the ball going from end to end at a terrific pace. Twice Gloucester had chances but there was no one backing up, and with lucky kicks the Albion saved. From a round of passing Hamblin cleared Hoar and rushed to Lillicrap, when he was forced to touch.

Albion replied, and there was a dangerous movement on the right, but Hoar was pushed out of play. The visitors kept on the 25 line for a few minutes, but a lovely touch-finder by Hall took play to the centre.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 try
Devon Albion Nil

Vears restarted, and there was a spell of play at the centre. Albion were the first to open out, but Hoar missed his pass, and Hudson coming up ran and punted. The Gloucester forwards were put on-side, and there was a fine chance, but Albion saved at the critical moment.

Loose play ensued in front of the Albion's posts, and the City looked likely to score any moment. At length the Albion worked out of danger, but they were pulled up for an infringement. From the ensuing penalty Gloucester forwards were just robbed with almost an open goal with the exception of Lillicrap.

Some lobbing passes lost Gloucester ground, but the City front recovered finely. The Devon lines were again placed in jeopardy, but they changed the venue with big kicks, and the Gloucester half was visited for the first time.

Staunton allowing the ball to go between his legs the Albion got dangerous, but Hamblin brought relief. The visitors, however, tried hard for a score, but could not penetrate the defence, Staunton upsetting Thomas in grand style on one occasion.

The same player was to the fore with a pretty touch-kick, which took the game to mid-field. Lillicrap recovered by the aid of a penalty, Dix being off-side.

Another penalty was given the visitors a minute later, and "no charge" being given Lillicrap had an uninterrupted shot at goal, but his attempt went wide, and Hamblin sent back almost to the same place.

A splendid dribble by Johns took the game well down, and then followed some fast forward play, in which both sides were seen to advantage.

Gloucester well maintained their own, and from a line out Berry burst away. When confronted by Lillicrap he passed to Staunton, who raced over under the posts, but to the disappointment of the crowd the whistle went for a forward pass.

The struggle forward was hot and strong, with Gloucester superior in most phases. Play, however, was kept pretty close, and there were few incidents of any note.

The Albion just now changed their tactics, and went in for wheeling, but they were checked before making much ground. Occasionally there was an attempt at passing, but the handling was weak and broke down continually.

At length the City halves broke away, and Hall fed Hudson, only to see the captain smothered by Hoar and Thomas. Hoar was knocked out in falling to the ground, and had to be carried to the touch-line, where he received attention from the ambulance men.

Resuming, Gloucester at once rushed away and found a footing in their opponents' 25. Pressing hard the City got close, and [in] some loose play Griffiths gathered and took a drop for goal, a fine effort just failing.

Hoar, with his head bandaged, was taken into the pavilion, Hollands figuring in his place at three-quarter.

Play to the end was vigorously contested, Gloucester doing all the work. From a passing movement the ball got across to Hudson, who brought off a splendid run, but could not quite get through. Soon afterwards the end arrived.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 try (3 points)
Albion Nil

REMARKS

Bravo Gloucester! A narrow win truly, but a victory well merited on the day's play. Albion came with a big reputation – have they not been hailed as England's champion club team for some years – but like many other notable sides they found Gloucester at home a bit too good for them.

Kingsholm is still the burial ground for reputations in matters of football !

Concerning the game, one could not go into ecstasies over the display. It was keen enough in all conscience, and it was just that extra keenness that prevented the players showing their true form in the finer points of the game.

The first half was productive of some really clever movements, but in the second half the ball was kept too close, and for long periods play was decidedly flat.

As a side I was disappointed with the Albion, and on to-day's form the team cannot be compared with some previous combinations that have represented the Club. The forwards were useful, but nothing brilliant, and though Jago worked hard at the scrum he only met with moderate support.

The passing of the backs on the whole was very poor, and there was scarcely a concerted movement witnessed.

Of the two centres, Thomas was perhaps the superior, and Hoar appeared the most dangerous of the wings, but Hudson did not give the latter much chance. Lillicrap at full-back had an off-day. His kicking was very weak, and on more than one occasion he was very lucky in saving his lines.

Hollands was one of the most prominent of the visiting forwards, but he was not given much rope.

The Gloucester front were fairly on their mettle, and they gave a fine show. In the matter of heeling, perhaps, they were slightly inferior to their opponents, but in all other phases Gordon Vears and his colleagues were top-dogs. The men kept well on the ball, and tackled so effectively that the Albion backs were often at their wits' end to escape attention. The work in the lines-out was excellent, and there was some clever dribbling at times, Johns frequently shining in this respect. The International, as he always does, simply revelled in the desperate struggle, and it was pleasing to see that he retained all his old form.

Vears and Lodge were always to be found in the thickest part of the contest, and the City do not possess two better scrummagers. Yates, Berry, Hayes, and Griffiths bore their part well, and Smart confirmed the good impressions formed of him last week. In a word the Gloucester forwards are "all right."

There was a ding-dong battle at half-back between Dix and Jago, with honours pretty even. Jago is an old campaigner, but Dix has little to learn, and the Devon captain had his hands full to-day.

I must say, however, Dix was not at his best in sending out passes, though I give him full credit for the opening he made which led to the one and only try being scored.

Hall, at outside half, did a lot of fine work, his kicking under great pressure being a feature of the game. His try was smartly obtained, his dash down the line being one of the few really big efforts seen during the afternoon.

Like their opponents, the Gloucester three-quarters were not able to do much in combination, but the individual work was very creditable. Hamblin played one of his best games for the Premiers, doing well in defence, and contributing one or two smart things in attack.

Staunton, apart from one mistake in fielding, played soundly, and that one tackle of Thomas showed he is not afraid to go for his man. The youngster also kicked with judgment.

Hudson had some sharp dashes, and his smothering tackles were very effective; whilst Washbourne displayed keenness in following up and looking for work. Cook, who, as already stated, fielded under difficulties, nursed his injured knee as much as possible, and in this respect he was wise. Fortunately he had no real tackling to do. His kicking, considering the handicap he was under, was good, and all round he was superior to Lillicrap.

By-the-bye, I noticed Hancock was announced to play for Northampton to-day, it being stated that R. Harrison had gone to Yorkshire on holiday. So the rumours were correct after all. Seeing that Hancock had been selected for Gloucester, it was anything but a sportsmanlike action on the part of Northampton to "get at" him without any reference to the City Club. But for Cook's plucky offer Gloucester would have been in a difficult position this afternoon. On the face of it, the City are certainly entitled to some explanation from the East Midlanders. Several members of the Committee expressed themselves pretty strongly on their action.

Trygetter for Gloucester : W. Hall; C. Cook failed.

Next week : Gloucester v. London Welsh, at London.

GLOUCESTER A v BREAM
CITY SECONDS START WELL

At Bream. The homesters opened their season in threatening weather, when they entertained the 'Cestrians Second string. The home side made several alterations forward.

Gloucester commenced, and at once pressed. Jenkins, however, relieved with a good kick. A strong dribble by the Bream forwards further improved matters, but in ensuing play the Foresters were penalised, Gloucester finding touch inside the half-way line. A good effort by Price was spoilt by that player over-running the ball. Fred Kent got away on the left and a score resulted, Ward securing an unconverted try. Gloucester luckily averted a second reverse a minute later by kicking dead. The visitors later became very aggressive, and scored an unconverted try through Meadows.

Bream restarted the second half with fourteen men and invaded the visitors' territory, but the Gloucester forwards dribbled well, and from passing Bloxsome ran in with a well-deserved try, which went unconverted.

Subsequently the play was dull and uninteresting, being chiefly confined to the forwards. Jenkins eventually livened up matters with a smart run, but was not allowed to go far. Bream pressed hard, but Hamblin, from a line-out on his own line broke through the defence, Bloxsome finishing up a fine effort by scoring an unconverted try.

Bream struggled hard to get on equal terms, but the visitors put the issue beyond doubt by scoring another unconverted try, Millard being the scorer.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 4 tries (12 points)
Bream 1 try (3 points)