

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1911

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v OXFORD UNIVERSITY

FIRST MEETING FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS

CITIZENS WELL BEATEN

After an interval of eighteen years, Gloucester once more visited Oxford to engage the University representatives, and the fixture naturally aroused more than ordinary interest. The Dark Blues started the season with big victories over Old Merchant Taylors, Richmond, and Moseley, but met a check when opposed to the United Services at Portsmouth, and last Saturday they fell easy victims to the Harlequins, who scored 28 points to 17. Gloucester's record for the season is well-known, and the City entered the field this afternoon with only one defeat against them (Cinderford by 10 points to 8), as against eight victories and one drawn game.

Owing to C. Cook having again developed knee trouble, Gloucester were deprived of the valuable services of their custodian – bad business for both the player and his side. It was suggested at first to play L. Hamblin at full back and bring in Staunton at three-quarter, but the final arrangement introduced W. Egerton to the vacancy. Egerton had practically given up the game this season, but offered to play for the Seconds at any time. This offer has had to be taken advantage of pretty often so far, and Egerton has shown such consistent form as to warrant his inclusion in the senior ranks once again.

The only other absentee from the City team was F. Pegler forward, his place being filled by F. Yates, who is coming back to the form which gained him a regular place in the premier pack last season.

The Oxford captain, following the recent defeats, made changes in his back division; and an enforced absentee was F. H. Knott, the clever outside half, who was injured in the game with Guy's Hospital on Wednesday. The forwards included Lagden and Brown, the English Internationals, and H. Bullock, a hefty player from Australia.

The teams were : –

GLOUCESTER. – W. Egerton; A. Hudson (captain), J. Hamblin, L. Hamblin, and W. Washbourne; W. Dix and W. Hall; G. Vears, G. Holford, S. Smart, H. Berry, J. Meadows, G. Griffiths, A. Lodge, and F. Yates.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY. – H. F. Sampson (Trinity); W. P. Geen (University), R. W. Poulton (Balliol), A. J. Dingle (Keble), and A. Willmer (Brasenose); W. L. Cheesman (Wadham) and T. G. Morgan (Keble); R. O. Lagden (Oriol), L. G. Brown (Balliol), H. Bullock (New College), H. S. Sharp (University), G. Donald (University), A. Gilmore (Trinity), W. E. Thomas (Brasenose), and H. B. Moore (Brasenose).

Referee : Mr. A. O. Jones.

THE GAME

The weather was dull, but there was a good attendance. Vears kicked off, but early play was scrappy, knocks-on being frequent. Oxford heeled repeatedly, but the handling was very wild, and little ground was gained.

The University at length got a good opening, and Poulton and Geen passed prettily, but the tackling was good. A mistake by Egerton let Oxford get close, but the city custodian managed to punt to touch. Oxford continued to press, but the attack lacked finish, and Gloucester escaped.

Hall made headway with a pretty break away, but was collared from behind. A good rush by the Gloucester forwards was well stopped by Simpson, who picked up and punted to Egerton, the latter being collared by Willmer. A clever touch-finder by Hudson put the City well down, only to see Dingle reply similarly. Centre play followed, and then came a lovely round of passing by Gloucester, J. Hamblin going through, but falling to a tackle from behind. Oxford soon changed the venue, and after good work Poulton scored a beautiful try behind the posts. Lagden goaled.

Gloucester attacked on the restart, but lost a fine opening by getting off-side. Hall put the City well down again with a lovely kick, and nothing resulted. Gloucester did well in subsequent play, but Egerton, fumbling, allowed Oxford to get very dangerous, a gift try being lost owing to a player picking up off-side.

Following the drop-out Dix, Hall, and Washbourne showed up with neat combination, which took Gloucester to the centre. Off-side, however, lost the position. From some loose play Poulton got off with a swerving run, which demoralised the City players. The fine effort, however, just failed of a score. Gloucester gained relief with a good rush till Hamblin improved with a pretty run. His pass inside to Hudson, however, was knocked on.

Gloucester confined the play to their opponents' end, but they could not find an opening. Big kicking brought relief to the University, and ensuing play was even. Hard forward work followed, ending in Geen picking up and cross punting, but L. Hamblin marked cleverly.

Dix was prominent just after by kicking clear of the opposing halves, but Sampson was safe. Pretty work by Hall gave Gloucester a lovely opening, but the players over-ran the ball with Sampson beaten. Oxford got out of a dangerous position luckily, and midfield was the scene of operations. Hall was again prominent with clever work, punting and following up but just failing to recover.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Oxford University 1 goal
Gloucester Nil

Oxford resumed, Hudson marking from the kick-off. The Gloucester backs early got set going, and neat passing left the ball with L. Hamblin, who ran well and passed, but the University saved. Then Griffiths from a line out darted through, only to find Sampson impassable. Lodge next broke away nicely, only to mar the effort by an ill-judged pass.

Scrambling play followed on both sides, the transfers especially being very erratic. Poulton brought relief to Oxford, once very cleverly changing the venue with a fine individual effort. Gloucester were not doing well in heeling, but at length they got the ball out, and a round of passing ensued. The captain, however, failed to accept, and Poulton getting hold he tried hard to get through. Gloucester saved luckily in the next minute, Oxford getting off-side when looking dangerous.

In stopping a rush Hall was injured and had to be carried off. This necessitated a re-arrangement of the team, J. Hamblin going half, Hudson centre, and Berry on the wing. With a man short in the scrummage the City had a hard task, but the men worked desperately. Dix got away with useful footwork, but he was checked, and Oxford rushed back. Dix was again in the picture with a neat run and punt, and Gloucester obtained a good position.

Failure to field lost Gloucester ground, and Oxford put in a sharp attack. On the right Willmer had a dash for the corner, but he was headed off. Off-side by Dix gave the University a penalty close in, but Lagden missed. Gloucester cleared with clever back work, and immediately after came a splendid dash through by Hudson. The City captain ran to Hampson and passed to Washbourne, but the latter failed to take with a clear opening. Playing strongly, Gloucester went very close, and took the ball over the line, only to see Poulton race up and touch down.

Oxford had the better of exchanges after this, the forwards putting in some effective footwork. Then for an infringement Gloucester were penalised in front of the posts and Dingle dropped a neat goal.

Resuming the City were at once placed on the defensive, and after some exchange kicking Geen cross punted and, Dingle gathering, he slipped over the line with a try, which Lagden converted.

Oxford were now all over the visitors, and Poulton, receiving from Morgan went clean through the defence and scored a glorious try, which Lagden again converted.

In the last few minutes Gloucester had a good chance of scoring, but failed to accept, and the end came with Oxford well deserved winners.

RESULT :

Oxford 4 goals (1 p) (18 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS

Gloucester were beaten by a side that was stronger, faster, and cleverer, all round. It was a bit of bad luck for the City to lose Hall, and, it may be mentioned, the 'Varsity scored thirteen of their points after his enforced withdrawal. All the same, Gloucester could not compare favourably in any department with their opponents.

The forwards worked hard, and at times showed good footwork; but for the major portion they were beaten in the scrums. Dix and Hall made fair use of their opportunities, and now and again the third line passed prettily; but when openings occurred something went wrong. The tackling was weak, and Poulton each time he scored made a fair exhibition of the defence.

The Oxford captain played a capital game all through, and whenever he got the ball he was dangerous. Geen combined nicely with him, and the pair took some looking after.

Of the Gloucester forwards, Holford, Lodge, Vears, and Meadows were very prominent, but the pack as a whole was below par. Egerton was somewhat slow at back, but kicked a fair length when not too severely pressed.

GLOUCESTER A v NAUNTON PARK

CHELTONIANS DEFEATED POINTLESS

This match was played at Kingsholm before a small crowd. The weather was dull and cold, with the turf in excellent condition. The Seconds were without several of their regular players.

The teams lined out as follows : –

Gloucester A. – F. W. Hayward; F. Bloxsome, H. Cook, W. Staunton, and A. Cook; F. Allen and W. Cannock; J. Harris (capt.), C. Mumford, S. Millard, J. Westbury, W. Banner, J. Dovey, F. Russell, and P. Simmonds.

Naunton Park. – F. Hopkins; G. H. Pratley, J. Bendall, H. Sheen, and T. Poulson; A. Green and W. Viles; R. Smith, R. Norman, G. Clarke, F. Dodwell, Dimmer, W. Price, B. Prust, and W. Townsend.

Referee : Mr. Davis.

Gloucester started, and immediately rushed to the visitors' 25, and a minute later a score looked probable. Naunton Park, however, kicked to the centre, but Hayward replied with a nice touch-finder. The visitors were awarded a free, and by judicious following up by their forwards they forced the Seconds to concede a minor. Hayward shortly afterwards saved smartly under pressure.

From a free kick the Park made headway, but Cook got in a nice punt to touch. The Seconds came away with a passing bout, but the ball was finally punted just too hard, and the visiting backs touched down. Play was of a fairly even character, both sides attacking in turn. The referee's whistle at this juncture would only blow faintly, and so a policeman's was pressed into service, amidst cheers.

After this incident the Seconds pressed strongly, and A. Cook was only held up just outside. The homesters continued to control the game, and Bloxsome with a fine run beat several opponents, but succumbed in trying to swerve past the full back, and a grand effort just failed.

Three minors were forced in quick succession, but the Seconds could not quite manage to put on the final touch. Allen was getting the ball from the scrum well, but the outside half either fumbled or passed wide. From a scrum the ball travelled along to Bloxsome, and he beating a couple of opponents scored in the corner. Hayward failed with the goal-kick.

A passing movement by Gloucester looked promising, but a knock-on spoilt it. From a cross-kick Bloxsome gathered and passed to H. Cook, who had a walk-in, but the transfer was adjudged forward.

The homesters continued the pressure, and several times a score looked imminent. From a line-out right on the visitors' line Westbury dropped over with a try. Hayward kicked a fine goal.

After the drop-out H. Cook gathered and made a lovely run, beating opponent after opponent, but finally succumbed to numbers. Staunton shortly afterwards went over with a beauty. The kick failed.

No further score was registered before the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A	1 goal, 2 tries
Naunton Park	Nil

Upon resumption, the Park pressed by the aid of a splendid touch-finder right past the homesters' 25. The visitors were now doing better, but the Seconds' pack was decidedly the superior. From a scrum A. Cook made a dashing run before being pushed to touch.

The play here was of rather scrambling character, the Park, however, working into their opponents' territory. By good footwork they kept their position for some time, but could not pierce the defence.

A pretty bout of passing by the home three-quarters here took place, Bloxsome shining. By dashing footwork the Seconds worked to the visitors' lines, but the Park came away again, only for Hayward to send them back with a well judged kick.

The city were awarded a free for off-side at the scrum, but Hayward did not make much headway with the kick. A temporary stoppage took place here owing to the disablement of one of the visitors.

A sparkling bit of passing was seen upon resumption between A. Cook and Staunton, and this gained a good slice of ground. The 'Cestrians were now pressing strongly, and H. Cook receiving a wide pass gave an opponent the "dummy" perfectly and scored. Hayward added the extra points.

After the re-start the Park paid a visit to the Seconds' quarters, but Hayward was safe, and although they struggled gamely, their efforts were not fruitful.

A series of scrums took place just outside the Gloucester line, and the City had to concede a minor to bring relief. Naunton Park came back again, however, but nothing tangible resulted and the final whistle came.

RESULT :

Gloucester A ... 2 goals, 2 tries (16 points)
Naunton Park Nil

REMARKS

The game was keenly contested throughout, both sides trying hard, with the Seconds superior in practically every department.

In the closing stages, however, Naunton Park played much better, and several times looked like scoring. Hayward, at full back, did many good things, while Bloxsome and A. Cook were the pick of the three-quarters, although the whole four were quite good.

Allen was smart at the base of the scrum, but his partner was inclined to bungle.

In the front all worked with a will, no one showing any marked individuality.

Naunton Park had not suffered defeat for the past two or three seasons, and it was very creditable on the part of the Seconds to lower their colours in such a whole-hearted fashion.

JC