

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1911

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v WATSONIANS

BEST MATCH OF THE SEASON

EXCITING AND STRENUOUS GAME ENDS IN A DRAW

SOME BRILLIANT FOOTBALL

Gloucester opened their holiday programme at Kingsholm to-day, when they met the Watsonians for the first time. The Scots have a big reputation over the border, and for some years have held the club championship of Scotland.

The City were still without the services of W. Dix and W. Hall at half-back, but there were compensating circumstances in the re-appearance of D. R. Gent and W. Johns – players who have rendered brilliant service to Gloucester in the past. Gent, who is spending Christmas at Bristol, on hearing that Dix was crocked, very heartily accepted the invitation to assist his old club, and Johns' return to the field for the holidays was in keeping with his promise when he retired.

J. Hamblin again deputised for W. Hall at outside half, and at three-quarter a place was found for Stanley Cook, the clever young centre who has done so well for the County this season. The Watsonians turned out as announced, and the combination was a powerful one, including as it did six Internationals.

The weather, fortunately, tuned out bright and fine, and the ground, considering the continual rain of the past week, was in fair condition. Owing to the colours of the two clubs being similar, the Gloucester team appeared in white jerseys. There was a capital gate when the teams took the field, and the players met with a hearty reception, Gent and Johns being singled out for special recognition.

The teams took the field ten minutes late as follows : –

Gloucester. – C. Cook, back; A. Hudson (capt.),\* S. C. Cook, L. Hamblin, W. Washbourne, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent,\* J. Hamblin, half-backs; G. Vears, W. Johns,\* H. Berry,\* S. Millard, S. Smart, G. Holford, F. Pegler, J. Meadows, forwards.

Watsonians. – L. Pyott, back; J. T. Simson,\* J. Pearson,\* A. W. Angus,\* N. B. Lothian, three-quarter backs; E. Milroy,\* T. Bowie, half-backs; J. C. McCullum (capt.),\* L. H. Spiers,\* R. J. McMillan, J. Martin, A. Morrison, E. F. Rankin, O. Marksman, R. McKenzie, forwards.

\* Internationals

Referee : Rev. D. T. Jones.

Vears kicked off from the Worcester-street goal, and there being no return the City forwards dribbled through, but a visitor picked up and punted well to touch. From the first scrum the Watsonians heeled, and Lothian being the last to receive punted to Cook, who made his mark. The punt out was well returned by Pyott, who followed up and prevented a return, play settling in the home 25.

Here Milroy opened out cleverly, and Angus kicking across, the ball went over the line, where Simson dashed up and scored far out in about three minutes from the start. McCullum converted with a fine kick.

Gloucester restarted, and centre play followed. The two Cooks were prominent with some good kicks, but the Scotsmen continued to heel from the scrums, and Lothian ran hard until pushed to touch.

A pass from Gent to J. Hamblin went astray, and the Watsonians got dangerous again. Milroy getting the ball away, the visiting backs handled perfectly, and a reverse pass from Simson to Pearson saw the latter race over with a lovely try, which went unconverted.

These early reverses fairly staggered the home crowd, and there were loud shouts of "Play up, Gloucester." Soon after the drop-out the Gloucester backs indulged in some sharp exchanges, but Washbourne was finely collared. The visitors quickly retaliated with big kicking, but Washbourne fielded cleverly, and though collared passed back to L. Hamblin, who got in a good kick to touch.

Cook marked immediately after, and then Gent, with clever footwork, gave Gloucester a chance. Hudson picked up, but tried a short punt which was charged down, and the ball rolled to touch. Fine play by Holford put Gloucester down, but Washbourne could not get away. The Scotsmen, with a loose burst, made headway, but finally over-ran the ball, and Gloucester checked.

A clever cross-kick by S. Cook made an opening for Washbourne, but the wing man over-ran the ball and nothing resulted. At the centre several scrums were contested, and Gloucester got the ball back, but Gent was pounced upon before he could get away.

The Watsonians were very powerful forward, and they used their feet to great effect, being always dangerous when on the move. The City pack retaliated with a good burst, Meadows being to the fore, but a visitor checked in dexterous fashion.

Gloucester were working better together now, and at length Gent got the ball away nicely to J. Hamblin, who fed S. Cook. The latter beat his man and then sent out to Hudson, who dashed down touch and, beating Pyott, ran over with a good try. L. Hamblin converted, the success of the home team being loudly cheered.

The Watsonians resumed, and play was fast at mid-field. Gent opening out again, the ball travelled across to Hudson, but the captain could not do anything this time. Wheeling well, the City broke away, but off-side spoiled the movement, and the visitors gained some 20 yards with the resultant kick.

Soon afterwards Milroy sent his three-quarters going, and some brilliant exchanges resulted. Pearson, feinting to pass, cut through on his own and passed inside to Angus, but the latter was held up on the line.

Attacking strongly, the Scotsmen were almost in a moment later, and but for a slow pass to the left wing Lothian would have had a good chance.

The Gloucester defence was severely tested again from the next scrum, but it held out, and then a good kick by C. Cook took Gloucester past the centre line. Here the City backs handled, but S. Cook could only punt over the line for a minor.

Receiving the drop-out L. Hamblin brought off a very clever run and pass, but the ball went astray, and Pyott picking up sent to touch. From a long line-out Pearson snapped up the ball and had a clear opening with the exception of Cook, but he was hampered from behind, and passing, Gloucester saved.

The City worked back by the aid of Gent, and Holford, from a line-out, was almost over under the posts. An anxious time followed for the Watsonians, Gloucester attacking well. A passing bout initiated by Gent saw Washbourne dash for the line, but he was smothered a dozen yards outside.

Scrum followed close in, until Angus gained relief with a kick to touch. Bowie made further ground, only to see Cook mark under considerable pressure.

The City custodian punted high for his kick, and Pyott fumbling Gloucester gained a footing in their opponents' end. The venue, however, was quickly changed, and the interval arrived with play at the centre.

#### HALF-TIME SCORE :

Watsonians .....	1 goal 1 try
Gloucester .....	1 goal

McCullum re-started, and a visiting forward dashing up took the ball splendidly, but in trying to kick he missed the ball. L. Hamblin came down, and picked up, but being upset he let the ball go. Johns secured and put in a good run and pass to Hudson, who tried to burst through, but was held. The Watsonians, with a strong forward burst, got beyond the centre, but C. Cook sent them back with good touch-kicking.

A passing move by the visitors was checked by Stanley Cook, but fast following-up by the Watsonian forwards saw C. Cook tackled in possession. J. Hamblin brought temporary relief, but Bowie, picking up in the loose, deceived the home men with the "dummy" and scored a clever try. McCullum failed at goal.

Gloucester showed up with some dashing footwork on the restart, but they were beaten back. Then Washbourne, fielding a cross-kick by Bowie, eluded Simson cleverly and raced away, but punted feebly on reaching Pyott, the ball rolling to touch. Still, the effort gave Gloucester a good position, and the City worked desperately. From a line-out Berry made a great effort to score, but failing. Johns, however, gathered . . . [2, 3 lines unreadable] . . . back nicely with a series of exchanges, but Washbourne just failed to gather Hudson's punt down the field. Play was hotly contested to the finish, but there was no further scoring.

#### RESULT :

Gloucester ..... 2 goals (1p), 1 try (11 pts.)  
Watsonian ..... 1 goal, 2 tries (11 points)

#### REMARKS

A great game – easily the finest and most exciting match witnessed at Kingsholm this season – with the result a very fair indication of the merits of the rival teams. In every respect the Watsonians worthily sustained their big reputation, and it is to be hoped the famous Scotsmen will find it convenient to pay the City many more visits. A few more games of this description and Rugby would boom largely in the West.

Gloucester had a rare fright in the early stages. The City men were absolutely left in the first ten minutes; and the defence was beaten so cheaply as to suggest heavy scoring. But encouragement came with Hudson's try, and thenceforward Gloucester kept on something like even terms with their powerful opponents.

It was a game of thrills, with the pace terrific right to the end. Every time the visiting backs got the ball there was danger, for the men had speed and cleverness, and handled the ball for the most part with accuracy and finish.

And the forwards, too, were a splendid lot – fast in breaking up and exceedingly clever in the traditional Scottish game of loose footwork. That Gloucester were able to do so well against such a strong combination was distinctly creditable to the City team.

Gloucester came to their own in the second half, and were full value for all the points they secured. With the pace behind possessed by the Watsonians, there would have been no doubt as to the issue.

Hudson had terribly hard lines on three occasions, just failing to score when within easy distance of the line. It was Pearson who twice stopped the Gloucester captain from scoring, his first effort being really great. Hudson looked as if he would just get there, but Pearson made a final dash and successfully brought his man down.

The game was brimful of incidents, and the large crowd enjoyed a fine, sporting contest. Forward, it was a grand tussle once Gloucester settled down. The men had to work to-day, but they all gave of their best, and took hard knocks with the best grace possible.

I thought the visiting pack heeled much cleaner than the City, and in the loose, too, the men were faster on the ball and backed up better. In the lines-out there was very little disparity. To see Johns one would not have thought he had been out of the game long. The old International always enjoys a stiff game, and to-day he fairly revelled in the hurly-burly.

Holford and Berry were brilliant in the open, and Vears, Millard, Pegler, Meadows and Smart put in sterling work. The tackling was faulty at times, the men persisting in going too high for their opponents.

At half-back, Gent displayed a lot of his old form, but he found in Milroy a worthy opponent, whilst he was closely watched by one or two forwards. The slow heeling of the City pack was rather a handicap, but despite this Gent opened out very cleverly at times. In defence and saving he was as good as ever. J. Hamblin missed a few passes, but performed well on the whole.

At three-quarter, Gloucester had not the pace of their opponents, but a lot of good work was accomplished. Stanley Cook did some clever things in attack, and both he and L. Hamblin were good in defence. The latter also kicked with judgment. Hudson has already been referred to. Washbourne worked hard, but did not get much luck.

The Watsonians were a finely balanced team, and after seeing them to-day one can understand their successes in Scotland. The forwards played clever and effective football, and kept the game moving all the time. They packed well in the scrums, and broke up very smartly when the ball was out. Milroy, the International scrum worker, played a classy game, and he combined nicely with Bowie at outside half.

The three-quarter line contained three Internationals, and Lothian, on the left wing, was quite up to the standard of his colleagues. Pearson was ever distinguished, and he and Simson worked perfectly together on the right. Angus, too, showed real ability.

As a line the Watsonians are better than anything seen against Gloucester previously this season, and the City have met Cardiff, Newport, Swansea, and Oxford University. I cannot pay a higher compliment to the visitors than this.

Pyott and C. Cook, the respective fullbacks, gave highly creditable displays, but the City custodian has done better in his touch-finding. He seemed unable to judge his kicks accurately this afternoon.

Scorers for Gloucester : Hudson and Johns. L. Hamblin converted one, and kicked a penalty.

Boxing Day : Old Merchant Taylors, at Kingsholm, when another fine game should result.

#### GLOUCESTER A v TREDWORTH

This match was cancelled at 12.30 on Saturday by the Seconds, the reason being that they were unable to raise a team.

JC