

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 1912

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S HOLIDAY MATCHES

NEATH MATCH SCRATCHED

On Tuesday morning Mr. Hubert G. Brown, Secretary of the Gloucester Football Club, received a telegram from Mr. David, Secretary of the Neath Football Club, saying that he regretted Neath would not be able to fulfil their fixture with Gloucester on Saturday. A letter followed in due course, in which the Neath Secretary said that his team could not come because of the disorganised train service, which meant that some of the men who lived in the Vale could not get back until Sunday.

A meeting of the Gloucester Committee was at once held, and a strongly worded telegram was sent to Mr. David, pointing out the trains available, and saying that unless the match was played Gloucester would have no alternative but to appeal to the Welsh Union and press the matter to the extreme of football law.

Later in the day the Gloucester officials apprised the Neath Secretary that by the great courtesy of the Great Western Railway officials the 9.0 train ex-Gloucester would be stopped at Neath on Saturday night, arriving at 11.20. This left no possible excuse on the score of trains for the Neath club to scratch the fixture, and the Gloucester officials were told on the telephone at 7.30 p.m. that a meeting of the Neath Committee would be held at once.

On Thursday morning a letter (postmarked 8 p.m.) was received by Mr. Brown expressing surprise at the tone of the telegram and saying that Neath could not play on Saturday, but offering a later date. The letter went on to say that Gloucester had failed to play their return game at Neath last year, and had refused to make another fixture.

That is untrue. The facts are that the railway was washed away in places between Gloucester and Neath on the day fixed for the match, and the railway company refused to book the team through. Gloucester were quite willing to play on another date, but all their Saturdays were full and the Rugby Union declined to allow them to play in the close season.

The Gloucester club have made every effort to secure Neath's attendance on Saturday, and have even offered to pay some of the increased railway charges, but the Welshmen evidently refuse to make any response. The Gloucester club has communicated with the Secretary of the Welsh Union, and no doubt more will be heard of the matter.

F. E. Chapman, the English International three-quarter, who is on a visit to his brother-in-law (Mr. S. H. Smith) at Stroud during the Easter, has accepted the invitation of the City club to assist Gloucester during the holidays, and it is announced he will appear in all the matches at Kingsholm.

JC