

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1902

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. CLIFTON

SEASON OPENED AT KINGSHOLM

Delightful weather favoured the opening fixture of the City club, but there was only a moderate attendance of spectators at Kingsholm to witness the game with Clifton. Since last season several notable changes have had to be made in the personnel of the Gloucester team, and two or three players were on trial to-day. Chief interest centred in the appearance of Stephens and Keys at half-back, whilst the return of Fred Goulding to the forward ranks was a matter for congratulation. Clifton were fairly well represented, members of the Baker family figuring largely in the team. The visitors arrived quarter of an hour late, and it was 3.50 before a start was made.

The teams were as follows :—

GLOUCESTER	Positions	CLIFTON
G. Romans	Backs.	F. O. Wills
C. Smith	Three-quarter	F. J. Hannam
F. Rooke	backs.	J. H. Inskip
G. F. Collett	"	E. F. Eberle
L. Smith	"	Claude W. Baker
J. Stephens	Half-Backs	L. W. Baker
F. Keys	"	A. N. Other
A. H. Click	Forwards	A. S. Mills
F. Goulding	"	Stanley B. Smith
F. Westbury	"	H. J. Major
F. Oswell	"	C. Bingham
G. H. Smith	"	H. Clissold
Bert Parham	"	A. J. Gardner
E. Essex	"	J. Carter
W. Johns	"	T. Webb

Referee : Mr. Such (Cheltenham).

THE GAME

Gloucester lost the toss, and Click kicked off against a strong sun. Play opened in the Clifton half, where the home halves initiated a round of passing. Collett received and sent on to Lewis Smith, but the latter was pulled down before going far.

Some flukey play followed, and Clifton taking advantage of a loose kick dribbled beyond the centre. L. Smith, however, saved, and with a run and kick sent the game to the other end. For off-side play Clifton were penalised, and Romans punted high towards the visitors' goal. G. Smith raced up and took the ball cleverly, but he was stopped outside. There was a series of sharp transfers among the home players, and Rooke nearly put "Whacker" Smith in the corner. From the line-out the ball was secured by the Gloucester men, and Keys went over the line with a good try. Romans failed at goal.

Resuming, play continued in favour of the home men, but the Clifton forwards were very effective with loose footwork, and made headway repeatedly. Neat work by Stephens set the Gloucester third line in motion, but L. Smith was too well marked to get far. Clever play in the lines-out by the Gloucester forwards gave the home men an advantage, but the movements were spoiled in trying to pick up.

Stephens, getting the ball from Keys, cut out a pretty opening for C. Smith, but the latter failed to take the pass. Goulding was prominent with some good work, and a big punt sent the ball to Wills, who made his mark nicely. His kick was taken by L. Smith, who, putting on full pace, rounded the opposition and scored a fine try. Romans landed a neat goal.

Clifton re-started, and play hovered near the centre. The Gloucester forwards heeled nicely, but the visiting backs tackled well, and did not allow of many openings. Working well in the scrums, the Clifton forwards came down the field, and Romans being collared in possession, the home lines were placed in danger.

Collett, however, got back and saved, and a little later, Rooke, with a clever kick, found touch well outside the 25 flag. A grand burst by the City front rank, in which Parham took a leading part, conveyed operations to the other end, and Gloucester had a good chance of scoring, but the opportunity was not taken.

Heeling by the Gloucester forwards saw Stephens feed Collett, but the centre held too long before passing to L. Smith. With the aid of useful dribbles Clifton relieved, the Gloucester men making futile attempts to check the rushes. A strong burst by Johns looked promising for the home team, but he was stopped by Wills, and though he handed to Westbury and Oswell eventually crossed the line, the first pass was adjudged forward.

Gloucester attacked strongly after this, but there was a lack of finesse, and several chances went astray. The visitors, by strong forward play, kept Gloucester on the move, and Romans was several times called upon.

The City backs were now and again given possession, but the passing was too slow to be effective, and no attempt was made to break through. Following a run by Parham the ball became loose, and G. Smith picking up finished up a good effort by scoring in a favourable position. Romans added the extra points.

Clifton resumed, but Gloucester soon got set going again, but there was a lot of scrappy play, especially behind the scrum. Rooke once looked like getting in, but he passed very wide, and Clifton were able to clear easily. The home team, however, continued on the aggressive, and after being pulled down a few yards outside, Lewis Smith dashed over in the corner with the fourth try. The place kick failed.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 2 goals, 2 tries
Clifton Nil

Clifton re-started, and an exchange of kicks left the visitors with an advantage. Gloucester, however, thanks to some pretty combination between Rooke, L. Smith, and Stephens, took play to the visitors' 25.

Here the home halves worked the short side of the scrum *a la* Hall and Goddard, but Lewis Smith missed the pass with a walk in. Several scrums ensued in close proximity to the Clifton line, but Gloucester could not score.

Then a combined movement by the visiting forwards brought the game to midfield, where Rooke got a kick charged down. The ball rebounded past Romans, and towards the Gloucester line, but Collett saved the situation by kicking dead. On the drop-out Gloucester went away with a good rush, Westbury doing well. When near the line, however, something went wrong.

After this there were numerous instances of faulty handling on the part of the home backs, and ground was lost in consequence. Collett showed up with a very fine run at this stage, but his pass was missed, and a capital opening went astray. Then mistakes by Stephens and Collett enabled Clifton to reach the centre, where there was some hard scrummaging.

At length Stephens secured in the open and burst through cleverly, finally handing to "Whacker" Smith. The latter dodged several men nicely, and passing at the right moment to Goulding, the popular forward scored amidst hearty cheering. Romans failed at goal.

Clifton resumed, but Gloucester were going strongly now, and a splendid effort by Johns led to the recruit notching the sixth try. No goal resulted.

On the resumption there was some useful tackling by the Clifton forwards, Rooke once being pulled up when looking all over a scorer. Immediately after Stephens received from the scrum, and doubling his immediate opponent, passed beautifully to Collett, who went over nicely. The place kick proved a failure.

Clifton were now all over a beaten team, and Gloucester had all the play. A fine individual effort by Johns, who was playing a splendid game, placed Gloucester in a favourable position, and the ball being kicked over the line Lewis Smith was able to register his third try. Romans this time converted.

The visitors re-started from the centre, but they failed to stay the pace. The Gloucester forwards were all over the opposing eight now, and at times beat them at their own game – footwork. From a passing bout, the ball was given to Rooke, who dodged cleverly, and beating the full-back, scored a very nice try. Romans goaled, and Gloucester held a lead of 35 points.

Ensuing play was a trifle scrambling, but there were some smart efforts occasionally. From a scrum well inside the Clifton half, Keys secured, and running round was over the line before the Clifton men realised the situation. Romans landed another goal.

Clifton showed up a little better in subsequent play, but just before the finish the home team got on the attack again, and a timely pass by Westbury to Lewis Smith enabled the latter to score behind the posts. Romans goaled, and the end was immediately afterwards whistled.

RESULT :

Gloucester 6 goals, 5 tries (45 points)
Clifton Nil