

GLOUCESTERSHIRE CHRONICLE

NOVEMBER 29, 1902

FOOTBALL AND SPORT

The inclemency of the weather, and the fact that a County match was down for the same date, undoubtedly influenced the attendance at the Kingsholm Ground on Saturday afternoon, when Gloucester met Bath. The day was certainly not inviting, but those who braved the boisterous wind, heavily charged with moisture, were rewarded by being enabled to witness a fast and interesting game, if not scientifically perfect.

It often happens, as everybody who follows the game knows, that fixtures regarded as of secondary importance and merit provide better sport than tip-top matches. Saturday's game was a case on point. Comparatively few turned up to witness it, but play was interesting throughout. Gloucester, having lost the toss, started against a strong wind, and the visitors at once showed that they meant business.

For some time it seemed very doubtful as to which side would come out trumps. But after warming to their work the home team proved their superiority, and notched the first try. This proved to be only a kind of preliminary, as they scored quickly afterwards, putting on two goals and three tries before the referee's whistle sounded "half-time."

A good many players had distinguished themselves, chief among them being C. F. Collett, who on one occasion broke away with the ball at midfield, and beating all opponents, scored behind the posts. This was truly a grand performance, and it seems extraordinary that the kick failed from the very easy place; but it did. The same player showed up conspicuously afterwards – in fact he never played a more dashing game.

The home forwards were in good fettle, and so were their opponents. The tussle was consequently determined, and the game interesting. On both sides frequent mistakes were made in passing, and at times play resolved itself into a simple rough and tumble; but while their opponents, with excellent dash and pluck, once or twice got dangerously near the home line, their praiseworthy efforts at retaliation were always frustrated, and the sides changed ends with Gloucester nineteen points to nothing – 2 goals 3 tries.

With the wind – no mean factor – in their favour, it was only natural to expect that the Gloucester players would add considerably to their score; but they did not. They pressed frequently, and some smart bits of passing were seen, "Whacker" Smith and Vears – who played throughout a really clinking game – if I may be allowed the expression – being prominent; but their opponents were wound up to the highest point of resistance, and sternly contested every inch of ground gamely and effectively, only one try being registered by Gloucester in the second half, giving them the victory by 22 points to nil. It was a well fought game, and the best team undoubtedly won, but it is questionable whether the score adequately represents their respective merits. The Bath players showed plenty of grit, and I shall be greatly surprised if they do not develop into a really first-class team.

In the International trial game at Richmond on Wednesday between London and the "Rest of South" the Cockneys were victorious by 14 points – a goal and three tries – to one goal. Included in the South team were G. Romans, captain of the Gloucester team, and F. Goulding, also of Gloucester.