

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1903

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. NEWPORT

UNPLEASANT GAME AT KINGSHOLM

TWO PLAYERS ORDERED OFF

NEWPORT WIN HANDSOMELY

Gloucester were engaged in their first big match of the season to-day, and despite the moderate form shown by the City team in previous fixtures, the visit of the crack Newport combination aroused all the old-time interest and enthusiasm.

During the past seven years Newport have had little the better of the contests with Gloucester at Kingsholm, and for each of the three narrow victories obtained they have had to fight their hardest. This season Newport, like Gloucester, have not flattered their supporters, the retirement of Ll. Lloyd proving a serious loss to the Club.

Against the Old Merchant Taylors at home last week the Usksiders were only able to record a six points' win, and on the play hardly deserved this success. In the match with the London Welsh the previous Saturday, too, the form was disappointing, so it was not in any too sanguine a mood they turned out at Kingsholm – a ground noted for the downfall of Welsh teams – this afternoon.

Gloucester's form in what may be termed the preliminary games this season has left a good deal to be desired, and on paper, even allowing for the deterioration of their opponents from last season's high standard, they could hardly hope to come out on top.

However, the players themselves were confident of considerably improving on their previous efforts, and with G. Romans able to turn out and lead the side the team were greatly encouraged.

With this exception Gloucester were represented by the same fifteen which beat the Old Edwardians, whilst Newport only made one change from the previous week, G. Spillane taking the place of Pat Bland (forward).

Cliff Pritchard was selected to play centre, but this clever exponent found he had not sufficiently recovered from the accident he sustained a fortnight ago, and stood down in favour of E. Seer, of Pill Harriers, a club which has supplied Newport with some smart players.

Ideal weather conditions prevailed, but the attendance was below the average for a Newport match. The visitors arrived in good time, and punctually at 3.30 the teams entered the enclosure as follows : –

GLOUCESTER	Positions	NEWPORT
G. Romans	Backs	D. J. Boots
C. Smith	Three-quarter	C. E. Lewis
F. Rooke	Backs	E. W. Gould
A. Hudson	"	C. C. Pritchard
L. Vears	"	W. Llewellyn
J. Stephens	Half-Backs	J. Hillman
L. F. Morgan	"	T. H. Vile
B. Parham	Forwards	G. Boots (capt.)
F. Goulding	"	J. Hodges
F. Westbury	"	S. Adams
W. Johns	"	C. M. Pritchard
A. Hawker	"	H. G. Thomas
G. Vears	"	H. Wetter
H. Taylor	"	G. Spillane
A. Purton	"	H. Uzzell

Referee : Mr. H. SMITH (Bristol)

THE GAME

Gloucester won the toss, and G. Boots kicked off for the visitors from the Worcester-street goal. Purton received, but was pulled down before he could reply, and the first scrum was formed in the home half. The Newport pack heeling, Hillman secured and started a bout of passing. The ball was handled smartly, but Llewellyn failed to take from Gould, and the movement was checked.

Immediately after the visiting backs indulged in another series of smart exchanges, but Seer was pushed into touch by L. Vears. Then in a loose rush the ball was kicked over the Gloucester line, and Smith conceded a minor. Romans was early prominent on the drop-out with a magnificent punt to touch beyond the centre, and this was followed by a smart dash by Hudson, who, however, lost the ball as he was getting clear. A Newportonian punted down to Romans, who returned with a grand kick to the visitors' 25.

Working well together the Gloucester forwards pressed towards their opponents' line, and the Newport defence was seriously tested. A visitor cleared, but Stephens sent them back, finally sending the ball to touch-in-goal.

On the drop-out a mistake by Morgan let the visitors to the centre, but a clever movement by the home backs, and an effective tackle by L. Vears led to the game being contested in the Newport 25. Llewellyn, with a clever mark, saved a dangerous movement, but Romans put Gloucester in a splendid position with a fine kick.

Play was exceedingly fast, but the Gloucester forwards at length got set going, and Morgan fielding in the loose secured a nice opening. A series of sharp exchanges between the half-backs, Parham, and Westbury, led to the latter going close to the line, but the ball was apparently lost. Parham, however, got hold again, and with a determined burst rushed over with a grand try amidst tremendous cheering. L. Vears took a shot at goal from a difficult angle, and just failed to convert with a splendid kick.

Newport resumed, and play was hotly contested at the centre. A free to Newport enabled the visitors to reach the home end, and then a brilliant bout of passing between the whole of the Newport back division saw Llewellyn race for the line, but Romans pushed him to touch in the nick of time.

Newport, by this effort, obtained a good position for attack, and the Gloucester defence was sorely taxed. It proved effective, however, and the home team relieved by touching down. From a scrum near the Gloucester quarter Hillman burst through cleverly, and a fine opening presented itself to Gould, but he knocked on badly in front of goal.

Ensuing play was fought out in the Gloucester quarter, where some very close work was witnessed. The home team, however, offered a stubborn resistance. Newport, however, were not to be denied, and following a clever move by Gould, who tricked the opposition nicely, Lewis notched an easy try in the corner. The same player failed at goal.

Gloucester dropped out, and Gould responded with a sharp dash which caused the home men some trouble. The situation, however, was saved, and then the home forwards, Goulding, Parham, and Hawker in the van, rushed away to midfield. D. Boots, however, cleared nicely.

A lucky kick by a Newport forward went near the Gloucester line, but L. Vears fielded neatly and got in a splendid touch finder. From here the City forwards combined in some effective work, but Hawker spoiled it by picking up and making a fruitless drop at goal, a touchdown resulting.

Resuming, Stephens was conspicuous with a tricky bit of work after apparently being tackled, and Gloucester for the next few minutes more than held their own. Goulding, by an off-side movement, lost a good slice of ground for the home team, but Gloucester quickly recovered. Llewellyn eventually kicked down to Romans, but the City captain marked cleverly, though he was severely thrown by Hodges to the disgust of the crowd.

After this play was contested at a terrific pace, the tackling on both sides being vigorous and deadly. Once or twice a Newportonian put too much vigour into tackling, and one forward was cautioned by the referee.

After this incident, Vile cut through prettily, and a try appeared imminent, but his pass was knocked on badly. Gloucester came away from a dangerous position through Morgan, and the forwards continuing the movement the centre was reached. Newport worked down, and a passing run looked promising, until Llewellyn failed to take from Gould.

Stephens subsequently made a mistake which let Newport close to the home line, but the situation was saved. Newport, however, returned to the attack, but they were beaten off, and with a big effort Gloucester changed the venue to midfield. Here the home halves gained ground with some useful work, and Hudson tried to dash through, but he was held. The City team, however, made further headway, but the Newport backs came away through the aid of a palpably forward pass, and the Gloucester lines narrowly escaped.

From some loose play the ball was sent out to Lewis, who slipped out of the arms of a Gloucesterian, and taking a deliberate aim dropped a neat goal. Gloucester re-started, but soon afterwards half-time was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Newport 1 goal (d), 1 try
Gloucester 1 try

Parham re-started, the reply going to touch at the centre. From the line-out Hodges secured and punted across the field, but Gould failed to gather. Stephens gained a few yards for his side with a useful kick, and then the home forwards got in a useful rush which further improved matters.

A kicking duel followed between Romans and Boots, ending in the Gloucesterian getting the best of it, to the delight of the spectators.

For a moment or two play hovered in the Newport half, but a visiting forward, securing in the open, put in a capital run and pass, but little came of it. Ensuing play was scrambling, but one dangerous rush of the City forwards was effectively checked by D. Boots.

Gloucester tried hard to gain the advantage, but they were beaten back, G. Boots doing splendid work in the open. One or two splendid chances favoured the visitors, and a score seemed certain, but the tackling was very deadly; Smith, Vears, and Stephens doing grand work.

Play was hotly waged in the home half for some few minutes until Stephens broke away from a scrum in pretty style, and fed Smith at the correct moment. The latter ran down touch, and tried hard to beat Boots, but the Newport custodian was safe. Having secured a good position Gloucester worked desperately for a score, Johns being prominent with some dashing play. For off-side by Hillman Gloucester had a free, but Vears' shot for goal went wide, and a touchdown only resulted.

Following the drop-out there was a spell of even play, but at length the City forwards went off with a glorious rush, which took a lot of stopping. Then Romans, with a lovely kick, put Gloucester quite close to the visitors' line. Here Gloucester heeled, and Stephens attempted to feed Smith, but Seer intercepted and ran down and punted. Rooke, however, got back and saved, though the effort by Seer completely changed the venue of play.

There was some close scrummaging work in front of the Gloucester goal, out of which Lewis received, and in the coolest manner possible the old Cheltenham three-quarter dropped another goal.

Gloucester re-started the game, and there was some vigorous and exciting play. Goulding was distinguished for some good individual work, and he was ably backed up by his colleagues. In some heavy tackling Goulding and Smith both got laid out, and the latter retired for a few minutes whilst his head was bandaged, Gordon Vears playing at three-quarter.

With a man short in the scrum the Gloucester forwards held their own, and put in some effective play. Then "Whacker" Smith returned to the field, and immediately Hawker made his mark.

The City forward put in a fine drop for goal from a long range, but it fell short. Gold, however, failed to field and a scrum was formed under the visitors' goal. Newport relieved, and centre play followed. The play, however, was devoid of finished movements, the tackling being exceptionally close.

Then ensued a most regrettable incident, Westbury and Adams coming to blows, the pair having a fair set-to in midfield. The men were eventually separated, and both ordered off.

Resuming, Newport attacked through Lewis, and following a clever effort by Gould, the latter notched a fine try in the corner. The place-kick failed.

Gloucester dropped out, but Newport were having the best of it all round, and Uzzell ran behind the posts with an other try in simple fashion for Lewis to goal.

The game was now all over as far as Gloucester was concerned, but the City team played up pluckily. Rooke showed up with an exceptionally clever run and pass to Stephens, who fed Goulding, but the latter was upset. Then the Newport backs were set going, but Llewellyn was splendidly floored by Hudson amidst the shouts of the spectators.

In the last five minutes Gloucester played up in spirited fashion, and the backs got the ball more than in any period of the game. The attacks, however, were never brought to a successful issue, and there was no more scoring.

RESULT :

Newport 3 goals (2 d), 2 tries (19 points)
Gloucester 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

A defeat by 16 clear points looks bad for Gloucester on paper, but this was hardly in accordance with the run of the game, for Gloucester put up a really good fight for quite three-parts of the play. The City team, however, were clearly out-manœuvred in the finer points, for though Newport's display was not up to standard, they showed a lot of clever football.

The pleasure of the game was entirely marred by the regrettable incidents which occurred, and in some measure the referee was to blame in not dealing firmly at the outset with those players guilty of roughness. It started with Hodges throwing Romans unnecessarily after the City captain had made a fair mark, and from this point ill-feeling began to manifest itself. In many tackles too much vigour was used, and when on the ground the players often wrestled with one another without any interference.

The referee did eventually caution a Newport man, but this ought to have been done long before, for there were numerous instances in which intervention might have had a good effect. Both teams were equally to blame for the unseemly display, and had one or two other players received marching orders they would have got no more than their deserts.

Reverting to the game, Gloucester started in fine style, and the try scored by Parham was the outcome of an extremely good movement. On other occasions the City forwards did splendid work, and their display as a whole was far in advance of anything they have done previously this season.

Newport were the cleverer pack in the scrums and open, but they had to work tremendously hard to gain the ascendancy. In loose footwork the City eight were quite the equals of their opponents, but the latter had a big pull when it came to handling, the men running and passing like three-quarters.

On the home side all worked with a will, but individually Goulding, Parham, Purton, and Johns came particularly under notice for special efforts. George Boots showed all his old skill and judgment for the visitors, and he initiated several passing movements from the line-out.

As may be already gathered, the tackling was deadly in the extreme, and absolutely no quarter was given. It was greatly to be regretted, however, that the players so often offended against what may be called legitimate collaring.

With their extra cleverness in the scrums the Newport forwards were able to heel more often than the home set, and consequently Hillman and Vile were better placed than the Gloucester half-backs. Still, Morgan and Stephens got through a trying afternoon's work creditably, and the few mistakes they made were over-balanced by a lot of sound and useful play.

Towards the finish of the game the Gloucester halves repeatedly got the ball away, and the City, with a little luck, might easily have earned another try. For Newport, Hillman was smart at the scrums, and displayed originality in breaking away. Vile, too, shaped well, though he is far removed from a Lloyd.

At three-quarter Newport were not in their happiest mood, and the passing continually went wrong. Of the four, Lewis was easily the smartest performer, and the ex-Cheltenham three-quarter had every reason to be satisfied with his display. Besides dropping two goals Lewis scored a try, and had a hand in the point notched by Gould. Lewis was clean and finished in everything he did, and his two dropped goals were masterpieces in the art of coolness and resource.

Gould gave an uneven display, and the wing men (Llewellyn and Seer) were not conspicuous, the Gloucester defenders – L. Vears and Smith – marking them very effectively. On the Gloucester side there was nothing really showy, if we except a clever run by Rooke in the last ten minutes. All, however, were splendid in defence, which was often severely tried.

At full-back George Romans was in brilliant form, and treated the spectators to one of his best displays. His kicking was one of the features of the game, and in fielding and general play he scarcely made a mistake. Dai Boots, for Newport, too, gave a finished exhibition, and was never at fault.

GLOUCESTER A v. NEWPORT A

DEFEAT OF THE CITIZENS

At Newport. The City Seconds were not at full strength, though the forwards formed a pretty strong pack. Last year Gloucester A were beaten at Kingsholm by 1 goal to nil, but won the return by 1 try to nil.

The following did duty for Gloucester : —

F. Pugh, back; H. Cook, Rigby, C. Coldrick, and Curtis, three-quarter backs; J. Romans and A. Goddard, half-backs; H. Harris, E. Essex, T. Spiers, C. H. Harris, J. Webb, R. Sly, H. Aston, and G. Nott, forwards.

The visitors pressed immediately after opening. From a scrummage near the line Pugh kicked over, but Newport saved. Give and take play followed, and then the Newport forwards dribbled to the Gloucester line, but were stopped in time. The visitors relieved, and after Newport had failed to kick a penalty goal, Gloucester worked back to the Usksiders' 25, and kept their opponents penned for some time. C. Williams eventually relieved with a fine dribble.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Newport A	Nil
Gloucester A	Nil

Gloucester obtained a penalty just after the re-start, and put in a fine shot for goal. The visitors continued to hold the advantage, and just afterwards, being given a penalty in a more favourable position, Pugh kicked a goal.

Newport then played with more spirit, and brought off some passing, Thomas being forced to touch near the line.

Just afterwards Jones scored. L. G. Thomas added a second try, Williams converting.

RESULT :

Newport 1 goal, 1 try (8 points)
Gloucester A 1 penalty goal (3 points)

JC