

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1903

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. BLACKHEATH

METROPOLITANS AT KINGSHOLM

ANOTHER DEFEAT FOR THE CITY

Gloucester v. Blackheath meet once annually, and the fixture this season was set down for decision at Kingsholm.

The visit of the famous 'Heathens attracted a good deal of interest, and the fact that several Internationals figured in their ranks added to the importance of the occasion.

Gloucester fielded a strong fifteen, the only changes made from the side which did duty at Bristol being Goulding and L. Vears for G. Vears and Hudson respectively.

The latter was badly injured last week, and is likely to be kept out of the field for a week or two.

The weather was favourable, but the attendance was below expectations at the start, though crowds of spectators were filing on the ground when the players entered the enclosure at 2.50 as follows : –

GLOUCESTER	Positions	BLACKHEATH
G. Romans	Backs	H. T. Gamlin
C. Smith	Three-quarter	S. F. Cooper
J. Harrison	Backs	C. A. Priday
J. Stephens	"	R. O'H. Livesay
L. Vears	"	R. W. M. Lloyd
G. Williams	Half-Backs	P. D. Kendall
D. Gent	"	A. Brown
B. Parham	Forwards	B. C. Hartley
F. Goulding	"	W. L. Rogers
G. H. Smith	"	J. W. Rowe
A. Hawker	"	F. Stirling
A. Purton	"	R. H. Porter
W. Johns	"	A. D. Morris
F. Pegler	"	C. E. Turle
J. Gough	"	H. W. Stirling

Referee : Mr. J. Milburn (Bristol).

THE GAME

Gloucester won the toss, and Hartley started from the Dean's Walk end, Romans replying to touch beyond the centre flag. From the first scrum Blackheath heeled, and a series of exchanges and a smart dash by Livesay took play into the home half.

The visitors further improved matters with some loose footwork, but Stephens checked them. Then Williams, receiving nicely from Gent, cut through smartly, but C. Smith failed to take his pass, and the ball rolled to touch. Immediately after Gent whipped out another smart pass to Williams, who handed to Stephens. The latter punted, and the ball went to touch inside the 'Heathens' 25.

The Londoners rushed out, but a clever bit of work by Parham from a line-out sent the ball to Livesay, who was at once floored. In the loose Pegler picked up and threw out a wide pass to "Whacker" Smith, who cross-kicked, and Blackheath had to defend.

The visitors came back with a loose dribble, but Parham and C. Smith dribbled down, and Cooper was forced to send to touch. Blackheath wheeled a couple of scrums, but Gent robbed them of the ball in plucky fashion. Loose forward work followed, but play was evenly contested at the centre.

Breaking away from a line-out, G. Smith ran and kicked to Gamlin, who, though pressed, got in a good kick to Harrison. The latter, however, replied nicely to touch.

Heeling by the visitors saw Livesay make a mis-kick. "Whacker" Smith raced up and fielded the ball, but Cooper tackled him. Williams, however, dribbled on, and Parham gained possession and went over, but was adjudged off-side.

Some loose play by Gloucester let Lloyd away, and the latter dribbled splendidly to the home 25. Off-side, however, spoiled a good opening.

Immediately after the visitors took part in a smart bout of passing, and Cooper kicked to under the home goal. Harrison, however, was in attendance, and kicked out to Gamlin. The latter's drop for goal was charged down, and Gloucester reached midfield. Here Williams fed Harrison nicely, and the ex-Lydney player cut through beautifully.

After clearing several opponents, however, his pass was taken by an opponent. From the scrum which followed, Stephens, receiving from Williams, came away cleverly, but "Whacker" Smith was bored to touch.

Gloucester went on smartly, and for off-side Blackheath were penalised. Romans took a shot for goal, but a fine attempt went wide. Blackheath resumed, and a clever bit of passing by their backs took them to the Gloucester end. Cooper again cross-kicked, but a visitor got off-side.

Gloucester were hard pressed just now, and Kendall, with a good effort, was nearly clear. Heeling well, the Gloucester halves passed out smartly, and Stephens punted to Gamlin. Following up, Vears and Harrison upset the International in fine style, amidst the cheers of the crowd.

Working well together, the City team attacked strongly, but an infringement stopped a splendid opening for a score. By a lucky flying kick Blackheath relieved, but Harrison sent them back with a clever punt to touch.

Gloucester tried hard to open out the game, but their efforts were not successful, and the visiting halves dribbled nearly half the length of the ground before being stopped. Another kick took the ball past Romans but the City captain picked up on his goal-line and sent to touch at the 25.

Blackheath now assumed the aggressive, and following a strong run by Kendall the latter scored a good try. Rogers converted with a splendid kick.

Gloucester re-started, and the home team had the better of subsequent exchanges. Gent, picking up from the loose, tricked a couple of opponents and then took a drop at goal, but it was a poor attempt.

Resuming, play was fairly even until Williams brought off a strong run. His pass inside, however, was knocked on.

Following this Gent fed Williams cleverly, but the passing went astray. Both sides were working with great energy, but there was a lot of scrambling play.

Gent, with a clever kick under difficulties, sent to Gamlin, who again had his kick charged down. There was a grand opening, but the International managed to save.

From this point Gloucester went off with a good rush, and Harrison picking up passed to Vears, but the latter could not clear Priday. He, however, managed to kick to the centre of the field where the ball fell amongst several players, and a scrum followed. Gloucester were doing well now, and having all the game, but the defence was sound.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Blackheath 1 goal
Gloucester Nil

Parham resumed, and Rogers being floored before he could reply, play opened in the visitors' half. Gloucester heeled, but Gent's pass out was a wild one, and Blackheath made some dozen yards with a loose rush. Harrison fielded, but was tackled, and the visitors went still nearer the City's line.

From a kick by Hawker, Gamlin marked and dropped for goal, the ball hitting one of the posts and rebounding into play. The Blackheath forwards resumed, and then a passing bout saw Cooper race round and behind the posts. He, however, went over the dead-ball line, and the try was disallowed.

Gloucester dropped out, and the City at once went off with a good rush. Harrison was prominent with a good effort, which caused Blackheath to defend. A kick sent the ball to Gamlin, who was forced over his line to clear. Gloucester were now in a good attacking position, but a pass went wrong, and Blackheath relieved to the centre.

Here Johns and Gough broke away from a line-out, but they lost the ball at the critical moment. In a scramble Hawker was knocked out, but he was able to resume after a brief period. Continuing there was a spell of exciting play, especially when Williams, taking advantage of some loose passing by the visitors, broke clear away. On reaching Gamlin he passed to a colleague, who was collared from behind. Blackheath worked to more favourable quarters with a strong burst, but Gough effected a deadly tackle.

Ensuing play was fast and fairly even, both teams in turn showing to advantage. The Gloucester passing was not altogether satisfactory, but at length Gent, Williams, Smith, Harrison, and Vears took part in a series of exchanges, which took the city team to the visitors' 25. A bad pass by Gent to Williams enabled Blackheath to remove the scene of operations to mid-field, where Gamlin and Romans indulged in a series of exchange kicks.

Then passing by the City backs gave Vears a chance on the left. The wing man ran well, but his pass inside went to an opponent, who kicked to touch, and thus stopped a dangerous movement. A good effort by Goulding was well followed up by the City forwards, but the visitors saved. Two Gloucester forwards were going lame now, and the City pack were having the worst of the scrums.

A very fine kick by Gamlin put Gloucester on the defensive, and the City team had hard work to keep their lines intact. Useful kicks by Gent and Williams brought relief, but another mighty punt by Gamlin sent the game back. Gloucester, by dint of hard work, reached the centre, but they could not get an opening. A forward rush looked promising, but Johns over-ran the ball, and the visitors easily checked the movement.

Blackheath soon got dangerous again, and Kendall, after a strong dash, was nearly over, Romans being knocked out in tackling his man. After a temporary stoppage play was resumed, and from the subsequent scrum Kendall got hold and put Priday over in the corner with a neat try. Rogers' shot for goal only just missed its mark.

On the drop-out Harrison was conspicuous with a smart bit of work, and Gamlin hesitating he was floored by Vears on his 25. The ball getting loose Gloucester had a chance, but they mulled it. To the end the game was keenly contested, but nothing further was done in the way of scoring.

RESULT :

Blackheath 1 goal, 1 try (8 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS

Gloucester gave their powerful rivals a good game, and the City team were not disgraced in going under by eight points.

The Metropolitans were a heavy set forward, with pace and cleverness, and here it was their superiority that was most pronounced.

The Gloucester pack played up pluckily all through, and at times fairly held their opponents. but they were lacking in judgment and resource in the open. Several times the City forwards indulged in a fine burst, which took them down to Gamlin, but the players could not seem to push their advantage home.

In the scrums the Gloucester pack were over-weighted, and they were consequently beaten in getting possession. Individually, Goulding, Parham, Pegler, and Gough were repeatedly in evidence, and the other players all did good work.

A weakness more than once apparent, however, was a tendency to pick up the ball in a rush when it was certainly policy to use their feet. This defect must be remedied.

The Blackheath forwards played a resolute and determined game, and kept up the pace to the finish. They were splendidly led by Hartley and Rogers, and their close following-up and marking did not allow the home backs many chances.

In the lines-out and in the loose the 'Heathens were particularly smart, and the tackling was always very deadly.

At half-back, the rival pairs were well matched, though there was more individuality in the play of Kendall and Brown. The former, who has several times represented England, ran very strongly, and his try in the first half was the result of a capital effort.

Gent worked the scrums for Gloucester, and he proved a wonderfully smart operator. He played a very clever game indeed, and stood up to the big, heavy Blackheath forwards in plucky fashion; but in getting the ball away he was apt to bowl it along the ground too often.

This handicapped Williams, who was unable to make the best use of his opportunities. Williams, however, did many smart things, and once or twice he had the better of the opposition.

At three-quarter, Blackheath had the faster line, but their passing was not particularly effective. In the centre Livesay did sound work, and Cooper and Priday on the wings played smart football.

The old Devon player experienced hard lines in losing a try, but there appeared to be no doubt that he crossed the dead-ball line in attempting to get behind the posts.

On the Gloucester side, there was some pretty work at times, Harrison often being conspicuous. Stephens did not give much away, whilst Vears and "Whacker" Smith performed with credit. Vears had a couple of good runs, but Priday was a bit too fast for him.

Gamlin's display at full back for the visitors was watched with interest in view of the International matches. It must be said that the Somerset man was very disappointing in the first half, and far below International standard. He was dreadfully slow at times, and kicked very moderately. After the change of ends he redeemed his reputation somewhat, and put in some mighty punts to touch half the length of the ground.

Romans, on the day's play, compared favourably with the International custodian; the performance of the City captain was as good as anything he has done this season.

GLOUCESTER A v. BERKELEY AND SHARPNESS

At Berkeley. Berkeley kicked off, and had the best of the opening stages. Hall intercepted and put Gloucester in a good position. Even play followed, confined largely to the forwards.

Berkeley were conspicuous in loose play, and pressed. Alf Bick charged down a kick by the visitors' full back, and scored a fine try, and Thomas placed a splendid goal.

Berkeley played grandly in the second half, and attacked strongly, but no further scoring took place.

RESULT :

Berkeley and Sharpness ... 1 goal (5 points)
Gloucester A Nil