

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE CHRONICLE

JANUARY 23, 1904

## FOOTBALL NOTES

Gloucester surprised Leicester on Saturday, and in fact I might add even the most ardent of their supporters. It is some time since we saw the team play a better game. Leicester came with a big reputation, and expected to see a close game, though at Gloucester, of course, we thought our team would just get home.

Leicester have been very successful against the 'Cestrians in recent years and out of six games, if memory serves me right, they can claim five wins, the remaining one being drawn. They have a fine pack of forwards, and this was where Gloucester thought they would be outplayed. But it was nothing of the kind. Both teams were pretty well at full strength, Lindsay Vears was not fit, and Hudson got "crooked" at Clifton, so that Curtis of the second string was called upon. Leicester were without their full-back, A. O. Jones, Foreman (half), and a forward. The ground was very slippery on the surface, due to a thaw following upon a sharp frost.

Gloucester, playing with the wind in the first half, gave the Tigers a warm time of it. I believe Leicester only once crossed the centre line, and they had a hard job to keep the homesters in check. The Leicester forwards in the tight scrums were seen to great advantage, and though they frequently got the ball out their backs could not move.

The Gloucester forwards are a fast lot, and in the loose they were all over Leicester, getting on top of their backs before they could get into motion. I never saw a team so hopelessly out-manœuvred as were Leicester, especially the backs; they were absolutely at sea, and it was more bad luck than anything else that only eleven points were put up against them in the initial half, and even this was a new thing to Leicester.

"Whacker" Smith, who was in grand form, was responsible for the opening score, which was effected by Williams. Johns got the second try, and "Whacker" notched the third, which Romans converted.

Leicester re-commenced in much better style, and Miles nearly got in. Gradually, however, the 'Cestrians gained ground. Hind, the Leicester flier, absolutely threw away a grand chance, evidently through funk, as he had only Romans to meet when he hesitated, and before he could make up his mind to have a dash for it he was collared.

The forwards on both sides stuck to their work right up to the finish, while the display of the Gloucester halves and backs was streets in front of that of the visiting backs. But the game was nearing the close ere further tries fell to Gloucester, mainly the outcome of the fine forward work. Parham and Hawker were the scorers, and Romans kicking a couple of goals, Gloucester ran out easy winners by 21 points to nil.

They were quite 21 points better than Leicester on the day's play, and the win should do the team a lot of good. Every man on the Gloucester side did well, and "Whacker" Smith played his best game of the year. He showed all his old dash, and if he only had Hind's pace he would have increased Gloucester's score. Miles was the pick of Leicester's backs.

On Saturday evening Mr. A. H. Smith, of the Prince of Wales Inn, entertained the Gloucester Team to supper.