

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23, 1904

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v. COVENTRY

WEAK MIDLAND TEAM BADLY BEATEN

ROMANS' SUCCESSFUL GOAL-KICKING

Gloucester were visited by another Midland combination to-day, the representatives of Coventry making their annual appearance at Kingsholm. Coventry have only twice been successful at Gloucester, and on both occasions they were very lucky wins, and by the narrowest margins.

In 1892-3, when a penalty goal beat a try, the Midlanders won by a point, and in 1894-5, a successful kick at goal from a corner try scored just before the finish, gave them a two points' victory.

The first meeting between the teams this season went in favour of Gloucester by 18 points to 6, and with the City team in greatly improved form it was hoped an even more substantial triumph would be recorded this afternoon.

A rapid thaw succeeded the overnight's frost, and the ground was consequently very greasy on top.

Coventry arrived two men short, and started with thirteen men before a fair attendance.

The teams were : —

GLOUCESTER	Positions	COVENTRY
G. Romans	Backs	W. H. Holloway
C. Smith	Three-quarter	F. J. Ormsby
J. Harrison	Backs	T. Pollard
J. Stephens	"	R. Orton
A. Hudson	"	H. Hutchins
G. Williams	Half-Backs	A. Shilton
D. Gent	"	F. Laxon
B. Parham	Forwards	H. Allum
G. H. Smith	"	W. H. Cleaver
W. Johns	"	—
G. Vears	"	A. Allum
A. Purton	"	B. Patrick
A. Hawker	"	E. S. Poole
F. Pegler	"	—
J. Gough	"	W. Wetton

Referee : Mr. C. Craddock (Cheltenham)

THE GAME

Coventry won the toss, and Parham kicked off from the Dean's Walk goal. After an exchange of kicks a scrum followed in the visitors' half. Coventry got the ball, and Orton kicked to C. Smith, who fielded nicely and ran in with a good try within two minutes of the start. Roman's kick for goal hit the posts.

Following the drop-out Romans cross-kicked to Hudson, who only just failed to gather with a clear opening. Smart play by Gent gave the Gloucester backs a chance, and a series of neat exchanges looked promising, but a knock-on spoiled the movement. Gloucester, however, still attacked, and Holloway fumbling on his line, Harrison scored easily. Romans landed a goal, and the City team had an eight points' lead in less than five minutes.

Coventry re-started, and some good kicks took play in the home half. Hudson put in a cross-kick into the arms of Shilton, who tried a drop at goal, but failed to raise the ball. There was some misfielding on the part of the home backs and the ball was taken over the line for Gent to touch down for a minor.

Coventry played up pluckily against odds, but Romans came away with a run and pass to Harrison, who slipped in trying to cut past Orton, and the movement was stopped.

Charging down a kick by Shilton, Purton and Hudson dribbled finely, but after clearing the full-back the latter knocked on in trying to field. Immediately after there was some clever passing by the home backs, and "Whacker" Smith easily beat the opposition and scored in a good position. Romans kicked a goal.

Re-starting, George Smith got off with a strong run and pass, but it was not taken. However, Williams and Gent successfully combined in a movement, and the former feeding "Whacker" Smith, the latter ran over with his third try. The place-kick failed.

Coventry dropped out, and Romans failing to field – the ball went between his legs – he had to run back to clear. This he did effectually, punting to touch outside the 25 line. From this point, Hudson, Romans, and Hawker came away prettily, and the Coventry half was the scene of operations.

Heeling by the City forwards saw Gent get the ball away cleverly to Williams, who sent to Harrison. The latter cut through the opposition beautifully, and cleverly eluding the full-back ran over behind the posts. Romans added the extra points.

Resuming, there was a spell of even play, but Stephens set Gloucester going again, Holloway clearing well under difficulties. From the subsequent scrum Gent initiated a nice bout of passing, but Harrison held a bit too long.

A praiseworthy effort by Coventry relieved the pressure somewhat but the City team were soon on the attack, and chiefly through the agency of Gent and Williams nearly scored again. The Midlanders worked out to the 25 line, where a combined passing movement resulted in "Whacker" Smith running in with his fourth try. Romans kicked a goal and Gloucester's aggregate now stood at 26 points to nil.

Coventry resumed, still with only thirteen men, but it was palpable they had no chance. Gloucester were able to do just what they pleased, and Harrison taking a pass from Hawker very cleverly, put over Hudson with the eighth try of the match. Romans landed a grand goal from near the touch-line amidst applause.

Resuming, play continued to go all in favour of the home team, and "Whacker" Smith scored again after a fine run. The place-kick this time was not successful. Gloucester, after the re-start, took part in some clever running and passing, Gent, Williams, Stephens, and Smith being prominent, but at the interval nothing further had been scored.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 5 goals, 3 tries
Coventry Nil

Coventry re-started, and the home team immediately tested the visitors' defence. An interception by Ormsby, however, checked a likely score, and play was transferred to the City half. Good forward work by the Midlanders took the ball close to the line, where Romans carried over. A scrum followed five yards out, and Harrison securing, he ran finely, and passed to Stephens, who finished the remaining distance and scored behind the post. Romans easily goaled.

Play being resumed, the home halves fed Harrison, who cut out a fine opening for Hudson. The latter made a good effort to cross, but was stopped outside. A scramble followed, ending in Coventry clearing to the 25 line. Here the Gloucester rear division passed prettily, but Stephens failed to take Harrison's transfer when there was every possibility of a score.

Coventry, despite the adverse score against them, played up gallantly, and the home team getting a bit slack they kept operations to outside the quarter line. Gent at length tricked his opponents smartly, but was hauled down under the posts. Gloucester, however, kept up the attack, and it was not long ere Williams burst through and over with the tenth try. Romans kicked another goal.

Following the re-start, "Whacker" Smith distinguished himself with some clever footwork, which took play under the Coventry posts. Harrison was up, and gathering the ball neatly, sent to Hudson, who scored. A goal resulted.

Ensuing play continued all in favour of Gloucester, though the Coventry forwards heeled a fair number of times, and the backs made ground with kicks. The home backs were not playing so well now, and a number of promising movements went astray owing to faulty passing.

At length Gent cleverly put Hudson in possession, and the latter, with a dash down touch, reached the full back, by whom he was upset. Hudson, however, managed to transfer to Harrison, who raced home easily. Romans kicked his ninth goal.

Before the end Stephens put in a remarkably tricky run, and sending at the right moment to Williams, the latter notched another try, which Romans converted.

RESULT :

Gloucester 10 goals, 3 tries (59 points)
Coventry Nil

REMARKS

To comment at any length on such a one-sided game would be a waste of space. The Coventry thirteen made a plucky show, but from the start they were hopelessly outclassed, and the City team were able to pile up points at leisure.

In the first half, Gloucester displayed good football, but with such a pronounced lead at the interval they slackened down afterwards, and the players took matters very easily.

Most of the chances went to "Whacker" Smith's wing in the first half, and taking full advantage of his opportunities he crossed no fewer than five times. The Coventry defenders appeared helpless, and the futile efforts to check the popular Gloucesterian caused no little amusement.

After the change of ends "Whacker" had an easy time, and few passes came his way. All the other Gloucester backs did excellent work, and the forwards, when they took it in their heads, had matters pretty much their own way.

A feature of the game was Romans' goal-kicking, the captain landing ten goals out of thirteen attempts. Romans' record for the last four matches is 23 goals out of 34 attempts.

Coventry must be in a very bad way not to be able to muster fifteen players, and to bring such a team to Gloucester is not much of a compliment to the City club. After to-day's fiasco, one may well ask, are the fixtures worth continuing ?

GLOUCESTER A v. BREAM

At Bream.

Bream	1 try (3 points)
Gloucester A	1 try (3 points)

Kent and Foulkes were the respective scorers.