

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1932

GLOUCESTERSHIRE 6 Pts.; DEVON 11 Pts.

DEVON'S WELL-DESERVED WIN

GLOUCESTERSHIRE FORWARDS WELL BEATEN

SOME BRILLIANT TRIES

GLOUCESTERSHIRE, six times winners of the County Championship since the War – the last three in succession – opened their fixtures in the South-West Group this afternoon against Devon.

Three players – Saxby, Tanner, and McCanlis – who helped Gloucestershire to gain the title last season, were missing from the Champions' side to-day, but, despite the loss of the services of the Internationals, the home county had great hopes of coming through successfully.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE CHANGES

The defection of Tanner necessitated a reorganisation of the three-quarter line, Roy James, originally chosen for the centre position, being removed to the wing, where he has previously operated with success, to make room for George Davies (Cheltenham).

Davies was in the Championship side of 1929-30, figuring at three-quarter and outside half, but had not appeared for the County again until this afternoon. At half-back, Cecil Carter had a new partner in Don Meadows, who has been showing consistent form for the City Club.

In the forwards, Gloucestershire had three changes from the eight which opposed Durham in the final last season – Allen, Parsons, and P. T. James displacing Saxby (retired), Hemming and Fry.

Allen was delegated to lead the pack, and the captaincy of the team was given to Don Burland. C. Thompson (Cross Keys) and J. B. Bowers were original choices forward, but the former was injured in a club match last week, and the Oxford University captain would not release Bowers, who is expected to be awarded his Blue.

FORWARD TEST

Devon included several new players in their ranks, but there was a good leaven of experienced players, including the veteran Delahay, who was capped for Wales ten years ago, and altogether took part in 18 International games. The great test was expected forward, and a stirring struggle for supremacy was looked forward to.

Gloucestershire's luck was in as regards the weather. Rain had fallen almost incessantly for about 30 hours up to noon to-day; then a welcome change, and the afternoon was bright and fine.

The attendance was hardly up to the average of a county championship match, but there were 5,000 present when the teams took the field. The ground, though naturally soft on top after the drenching it had received, was in splendid condition. Two members of the Rugby Selection Committee (Messrs. E. W. Roberts and T. F. Coverdale) were present at the match.

Teams : —

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BACK : T. W. Brown (Bristol).

THREE-QUARTERS : K. Dowling (Bristol), G. Davies (Cheltenham), D. W. Burland (Bristol), and Roy James (Gloucester).

HALF-BACKS : D. Meadows (Gloucester) and C. B. Carter (Bristol).

FORWARDS : F. Wadley (Gloucester), A. Carpenter (Gloucester), R. Comley (Gloucester), K. Salmon (Cross Keys), A. D. Allen (Bristol), P. G. Lambert (Bristol), P. T. James (Clifton), and B. Parsons (Bristol).

DEVON

BACK : T. Scourfield (Torquay).

THREE-QUARTERS : G. W. F. Bell (Barnstaple), W. Webber (Teignmouth and Blackheath), W. Jarvis (Salcombe), and J. P. Kirkby (R.N.E. College).

HALF-BACKS : E. E. Richards (Plymouth Albion) and W. J. Delahay (Torquay).

FORWARDS : R. H. Sparks, A. Brigstocke, M. Wilson (Plymouth Albion), W. Paddon (Devonport Services), W. H. Northcott (Newton Abbott), W. Nixon (R.N.E. College), H. Rew (Exeter), and C. Lewis (R.A.F.).

THE GAME

Gloucestershire lost the toss, and Burland started with a stout kick. The ball was punched into the arms of Carter, who found touch nicely inside the Devon half. The home forwards were the first to heel, and Carter fed Meadows cleverly. The latter made headway, but Davies missed his pass, and the ball rolled out of play.

Devon quickly replied, and Jarvis kicked to touch at the centre. Fast play followed, with the Gloucester backs shining in a passing bout. Dowling tried hard to clear Kirkby, but was tackled from behind. He let the ball go to Davies, who kicked ahead and into touch.

DOWLING PROMINENT

Devon worked out with loose rushes, and later the backs handled well, a reverse pass from Richards to Delahay sending the latter away. Jarvis progressed by the aid of a "dummy," but Bell, the next to receive was finely collared by Burland.

Play followed in the home half, until Carter served Meadows, and in turn Burland and Davies handled. A neat pass to Dowling saw the Bristolian bring off a brilliant run, dodging cleverly and passing inside. Davies, Meadows and Comley handled, but the forward was brought down in attempting a dash through.

STRONG DEVON ATTACKS

By the aid of big kicking, Devon got into dangerous quarters, and twice Brown had to concede minors from punts over the line. Working well together, Devon attacked strongly, and Webber, with a grand burst, was nearly through the defence.

FINE EFFORT BY JAMES

The Devon front were heeling smartly and Richards and Delahay (who was acting as pivot) were combining well. The home defence however, held out splendidly. From inside their 25 Gloucestershire opened out, and the ball was got across quickly to James.

The Gloucester wing ran with great resolution for 60 yards, and then cross-kicked. The ball was partially checked. Jarvis thinking he was over the goal line touched down, but he was yards inside the field of play, and was promptly upset.

There was a scramble, and Gloucestershire rushed the ball over the mark. There was a shout as Burland apparently gained the touch, but only a minor, however, was given.

EASY PENALTY MISSED

Subsequent play was exceptionally fast, both sets of forwards working tremendously hard. Gloucestershire got down by the aid of judicious kicks, and desperate efforts were made to score. Scourfield, however, was very safe.

Keeping up the pressure, the home team kept their opponents on the defence, and when Rew was penalised for off-side in front of goal it looked an easy three points. Burland, however, sent outside the right.

DEVON RETALIATE

Gloucestershire continued to have the better of the exchanges until Devon broke away with a passing bout. Webber travelled well up the field, but his pass was intercepted by Dowling, who ran back and punted. Scourfield however, gathered well and returned to touch.

MEADOWS' GREAT EFFORT

Devon were displaying an ascendancy in the scrums and heeling well, but the backs could not gain the desired opening. The visitors gained a footing in the home end, where Meadows, receiving from Carter, brought off a marvellous run. Dodging beautifully, he ran up to Scourfield, and then handed to Davies. But the latter was hampered, and let the ball come back to Meadows, who threw wide to Dowling, but the ball bounced awkwardly and was missed.

DEVON OPEN THE SCORING

Gloucestershire had two possible openings after this, but nothing beyond minors accrued. Devon were again on the defence, but with the wind helping them, they cleared, and centre play followed.

Heeling by the visitors gave Richards chances to open out, and Delahay fed his backs well. The defence, however, was too good.

Devon, however, were not to be put off, and a dashing run by Lewis put the visitors close. Two timely passes gave possession to NORTHCOTT, who went over with a try with an opponent on his back. Sparkes took the shot at goal, but sent wide from a fairly easy place.

FAST AND KEEN FOOTBALL

Hard, fast and keen football followed the resumption. The Gloucestershire forwards rushed well, gaining 30 yards, but cleverness of Delahay, and the kicking of Scourfield quickly recovered.

Gloucestershire were still being beaten for possession in the scrums, and the visiting backs displayed considerable smartness. Play was for a time in midfield, neither side being able to break clear.

Salmon opened up from a line-out, and the Gloucester[sic] three-quarters handled, but James could not clear Bell. Play for the next few minutes was contested inside the Gloucester[sic] half, with Devon doing the major part of the attacking. Delahay especially was conspicuous, and just on the interval he nearly put Webber in.

HALF-TIME :
DEVON 1 TRY
GLOUCESTERSHIRE ... NIL

After an encouraging start, Gloucestershire had rather disappointed, the failure of the forwards in the scrums being a great surprise. Devon had played with more dash and the backs, especially Delahay and Webber, were always dangerous on the run. On the play the visitors clearly deserve their lead.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE EQUALIZE

Devon resumed in spirited style, and the forwards opening out from the line-outs, the backs were soon on the move. Burland shone with a strong dash through for Gloucester[*sic*], recovering after slipping to the ground, but Carter knocked on his pass.

Brown, with a good pick-up and left foot punt, found touch well beyond the centre, where the forwards were hotly engaged.

In some loose play Meadows gathered, but Davies missed his transfer altogether.

The ball rolled to the right wing, where Burland picked up, and giving the "dummy" to Scourfield, cut through and over with a fine try. The same player missed the goal points, and the scores were level.

CARTER'S CLEVER WORK

It was hot going on the restart, the Gloucester forwards being better together. The Devon players had the sun in their eyes, and this was proving a handicap in judging the flight of the ball. Carter was prominent in checking a forward rush by the visitors, and later came into the limelight with a clever run and pass to Burland. The latter handed to James, who ran and cross-punted, but the ball fell into the arms of Scourfield, who returned to touch.

After this Devon made two determined attacks, but Meadows defended splendidly. Gloucester cleared through Burland, and later Brown helped appreciably with a beautiful touch-finder. Making further progress Gloucestershire looked to have a chance on the left, but Davies was pounced upon in the nick of time. Devon were penalised for an infringement, but Burland missed the goal.

JAMES GIVES GLOUCESTER/*SHIRE*/ THE LEAD

Play was very exciting in the next few minutes, Gloucester/*sic*/ showing splendid dash. From a breakdown in the Devon passing, Burland gathered and sent to James, who took an awkward pass nicely. He only had to beat Scourfield, but with a characteristic side-step he had the Devon custodian well beaten, and completed a nice effort by scoring a try. Davies' kick for goal hit the upright, but Gloucester/*sic*/had gained the lead.

DEVON AGAIN LEVEL

Gloucestershire played up splendidly on the restart, and Devon were hotly pressed. A bit of bad luck spoiled a chance, and a little later, from a well-judged punt by Meadows, Scourfield was in difficulties, and a wonderful clearance was made by Kirkby, and Devon started an attack at mid-field.

Webber received from Delahay, and with a powerful run, in the course of which he handed off Burland, he went on to beat Brown and score a fine try. Scourfield failed at goal.

VISITORS SECURE THE LEAD

This score encouraged Devon, who played up with tremendous vigour. Gloucestershire were well held at mid-field, and then Jarvis punted across to the right. Brown was too late to take the ball, and BELL securing, raced round to score in a good position. Sparkes converted, and Devon secured the lead again – a valuable five points.

GLORIOUS CHANCE MISSED

Gloucestershire played up strongly on the restart, Wadley dashing through from the loose, only to see Davies drop his pass. Next the ball came to the right to James, who put in a well-judged cross-kick. Scourfield was out of position, and P. James had a fine chance in front of goal, but he slipped and missed a glorious opening.

Devon took up the running again, and exciting play was witnessed at mid-field. The visitors had a bit the best of matters, and were more dangerous behind. James and Meadows showed a pretty bit of combination in the centre of the field, but with the latter through "forward" was given.

MEADOWS AGAIN !

The closing stages were well contested, with Devon on top. Gloucester were forced close to their line, where Carter fed Meadows. The latter cut through with a superb run, covering more than half the length of the field, but there was no one in immediate support, and in trying to beat Scourfield he was tackled.

Immediately the same player and Carter brought off a capital move, but the latter's transfer was captured by Kirkby, who cleared. Devon returned to the attack, but there was no further scoring.

RESULT :

DEVON 1 goal 2 tries (11 points)

Gloucestershire 2 tries (6 points)

REMARKS

The Champions failed badly forward, and Devon's win was thoroughly deserved.

It was a game full of incidents, with some brilliant work outside the scrum, individually and combined, but Gloucester's/*sic*/ failure in the tight scrums proved their undoing.

Gloucestershire had one good period in the second half, when they took the lead, and the County's hopes rose appreciably. But Webber's fine try, which equalised the scores, put new life into Devon, and though the Champions had their chances before the end, the visitors always looked the more dangerous side.

The winning score showed the opportunism of Bell. He was a bit lucky in having the bounce of the ball in his favour, but he made no mistake, and with Sparkes converting the try, Devon's fine work had just reward.

DEVON'S SUPERIORITY

Devon's great superiority forward came as a surprise, but there was no question about it. They were a solid pack in the scrums, heeled well, and were splendidly together in the loose and open.

Lewis, the R.A.F. player was one of the best of the eight, with Rew another sterling worker. But all did well.

Gloucestershire were best represented by Salmon, who was very prominent in the lines out, Wadley, Carpenter and Allen, but they lacked the dash and keenness of the opposing forwards.

BEHIND THE SCRUM

Behind, Devon had a wonderful schemer in Delahay, who was always attempting the unexpected, and Richards was too smart at times for Carter. The latter, however, was operating behind a beaten pack, and this handicap was felt all-round in the home back division. Meadows made some of the best runs in the match, and with proper support, Gloucestershire might have saved the game in the last five minutes.

At three-quarter the winners had the best of it as a line, with Webber a very determined and thrustful runner. His try was a notable effort, but he ought to have been stopped.

Burland was closely marked, and was not as distinguished as usual, though his try was a good one. Dowling and James gave nothing away on the respective wings, but Davies was only a moderate substitute for McCanlis.

Scourfield had a splendid match at full back for Devon, and compared more than favourably with Brown. His kicking was longer, and he cleared brilliantly at times under great pressure.

JC