

## **FIRST COUNTY MATCH IN GLOUCESTER**

The first Gloucestershire County rugby match in Gloucester was played on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December at Kingsholm, which had only been opened two months previously. The match report in *The Citizen* the following day read:

### **FOOTBALL**

#### **GLOUCESTERSHIRE V DEVONSHIRE**

*This important county Rugby fixture, which for some considerable time past has been looked forward to with a deal of interest in Gloucester, took place at the Kingsholm ground in cold, foggy weather, and in the presence of a small number of spectators. It will be remembered that the match was originally fixed to be played on November 25<sup>th</sup>, but in consequence of the death of the secretary of the Devonshire club the match was postponed. The visitors' team differed very considerably to the one originally selected, there being no less than seven alterations, but the home team remained the same as advertised.*

*Gloucestershire won the toss and Devon kicked off, but the leather was immediately brought back for off-side. Hooper getting possession dodged through a number of the Devon men, but was tackled when approaching dangerously near the line. Wilcocks transferred the game to the home half, where it remained but a very few seconds, for George getting the leather passed to Jackson, who threw to Bagwell, but the latter was collared. Devon then pressed; F Toller dribbled and Cox following up well, Hughes kicked dead. After the kick-out, The game was still confined to the Gloucester half, the visitors making several fruitless attempts to break away. F Toller, by a run, took the game to the 25 flag, but Hooper relieved, and a tight scrum followed. A free kick was awarded Gloucester, the ball having been picked from the scrum, and Hughes kicked into touch just past the half-way line. Upon the kick-out the visitors again showed to advantage. M Toller having the ball thrown to him, threaded his way in and out his opponents, and by some smart passing took play again to the home 25 before he was collared. Jackson relieved, and the home forwards pressed, but the defence of the Devon men was strong. Penny here met with an unfortunate accident, receiving a nasty kick on the head, and was led off the field. Upon the game being resumed Toller dribbled into the home territory, but Page prevented anything happening. Bagwell getting possession, distinguished himself by some smart dodging, but was unable to get through, and shortly afterwards the same player, having the leather passed to him, ran right up to the Devon line before being brought down. The Devon men relieved, and one of their three-quarters punted into touch, where the ball was when half-time was called, with a minor to the visitors' favour.*

*Upon changing ends the ball was kicked into touch at half-way. From the line-out George threw to Jackson, who in turn passed to Fenner, the latter succeeding in planting the ball in a good position behind the line, but Jackson's kick at goal fell short of the mark. From the kick-out Cox travelled nearly half the length of the field before being collared, and for a few minutes play remained in the home quarters. Relief being obtained, a free kick was awarded Gloucester, the ultimate result being that Bagwell obtained the oval and passed to Hooper, who crossed the line, but being brought to grass by an adversary, only a minor was awarded the home team. For*

*some little time the play which followed was confined to the visitors' half, but Davies eventually broke away and ran some distance down the field before he was stopped. Cox then dribbled up, and Bagwell saved in excellent fashion by kicking into touch. Upon the throw out Cox was again conspicuous with his dribbling. Gloucester then pressed, and Jackson picking up the ball threw to Bagwell, who, seeing he was thickly panned, passed to Hooper, who easily registered a try, but the kick at goal was a somewhat difficult one, and Jackson's kick again failed. Upon re-starting Gloucester continued to press, confining the play to the visitors' territory. After some bouts of dribbling and passing the ball was thrown to Fenner, when that player was very dangerously near his opponents' line, but he missed it and consequently the opportunity was lost. Some loose play followed near the line, and from a scrum Page scored in an easy position, which Thomson converted. Immediately after the kick-out Bagwell picked up and dodged through a number of the Devon men, it being only when in the visitors' 25 that he was stopped. The game was in this part of the field when the whistle blew, leaving Gloucestershire winners by 1 goal, 2 tries, 1 minor (9 points) to 1 minor. The referee was Mr H J Boughton.*

*The following were the teams:*

*Gloucestershire – A F Hughes (Gloucester), back; C A Hooper, T Bagwell, W Jackson (Gloucester) and E Fenner (Bristol), three-quarter backs; W George and J Watts (Gloucester), half-backs; H V Page (captain), A E Healing, A Cromwell, C Williams, R Jenkins (Gloucester), A Whitley (RAC), W Thomson (Bristol) and E P Press (Clifton), forwards.*

*Devonshire – J Causey (Aller Vale), back; J M Wilcocks (Exeter), G H Harding (Torquay Juniors), M H Toller (Barnstaple), and Lieut Bigge (Albion), three-quarter backs; Penny (Barnstaple), and J Davies (Torquay), half-backs; F H Toller (captain, Barnstaple), R J Lawson (Paignton), H May (Albion), R Biddell, H Osmond (Exeter), S H W Brooking (Torquay), G Cox (Tiverton), and G H Vallance (Sidmouth), forwards.*

[Transcribed by Malc King]