

## **THE BARBARIANS AT KINGSHOLM IN 1900**

You can read elsewhere on this website about the England v Wales international match which was staged at Kingsholm on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1900. The Gloucester club were proud to be awarded this fixture – the first international staged at Kingsholm – and invested heavily in facilities for the game.

However, the attendance was disappointing (both poor weather and the absence of any Gloucester players seem to have kept spectators away), and expenditure far exceeded income, resulting in a loss to the club of £665-19s-5d.

This represented a huge burden on club finances at the time, and the RFU was asked to help. They declined to waive the £300 which was guaranteed as a payment to the RFU from the match, but they did award an additional fixture to Gloucester as a way of raising more income – this was a match against the Barbarians at the start of their Easter tour. And so the Barbarians came to play Gloucester at Kingsholm on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1900.

The Citizen report on the match was as follows:

### **“GLOUCESTER V BARBARIANS**

#### **SPLENDID VICTORY FOR THE CITY TEAM**

The Barbarians opened their annual Easter tour at Gloucester on Thursday, when they opposed the full strength of the City Club. The visitors brought a strong team, including several International players, and the home side fully anticipated a stiff game. The match was in aid of the International Deficit Fund. The teams were:

GLOUCESTER – G. Romans, back; W. H. Taylor (captain), G. F. Clutterbuck, J. Stephens, and C. Smith, three-quarter backs; R. Goddard and G. Hall, half-backs; C. Hall, A. H. Click, J. Lewis, H. Manley, F. Oswell, G. H. Smith, A. Hawker, and J Gough, forwards.

BARBARIANS – F. W. H. Weaver (Birkenhead Park), back; R. Forest (Blackheath and English International), R. F. Cumberlege (London Harlequins), J. Kynaston Jones (Birkenhead Park), and H. G. Alexander (Newport), three-quarter backs; J. C. Marquis (Birkenhead Park and English International), and P. D. Kendall (Birkenhead Park), half-backs; T. Drysdale (London Scottish), R. I. C. Thompson and R. C. Galloway (Marlborough Nomads), C. Witt (Rosslyn Park), W. P. Scott (West of Scotland and Scottish International), J. G. Franks ( Trinity, Dublin, and Irish International), G. R. Gibson (Northumberland), and C. S. Edgar (Birkenhead Park), forwards.

Referee: Mr Gil Evans (Swansea)

## THE GAME

A drizzling rain fell, and the attendance was moderate considering the importance of the match. The kick-off did not take place until 5:25, when Gloucester started from the Worcester-street goal against the wind. Forest got in a good return, and play opened at the centre. The Barbarians, carrying a scrum, worked to the home 25, but Taylor, with a dashing run down the touch-line, regained the ground. In some loose play Taylor was again prominent with a smart bit of play, but the Gloucester backs failing to field a little later, the visitors dribbled over the line, Romans kicking dead. The drop-out saw the ball quickly taken back to the Gloucester quarter, the Barbarians taking advantage of the wind. Goddard and then "Whacker" Smith enabled the home side to clear for a time. A well-judged punt by Alexander put Gloucester on the defence, and Romans failing to stop a rush of the visiting forwards, matters looked dangerous. "Whacker" Smith, however, saved in daring style a few yards outside. After this Clutterbuck showed up with a punt, which Taylor tried hard to get up to, but he just failed. From the ensuing scrum Goddard got away beautifully, but his pass was spoiled by Alexander. The Barbarians, by the aid of some strong forward play, rushed down to the home 25, where C. Hall effected a grand save. Gloucester relieved slightly, but the visitors continued to have the better of matters. The home team, however, defended grandly. A splendid touch-kick by Romans enabled Gloucester to reach the centre, where, from some loose play, the ball got to "Whacker" Smith, who put in a sharp punt. The ball in its transit touched a visitor, and the City forwards being put on side, Lewis picked up and ran and passed to Click, who romped over with a good try. Romans converted with a splendid kick. On the re-start play was fast and interesting. The visitors once had a good opening, but Taylor came across and stopped Cumberlege finely. After this Stephens, Taylor, and Clutterbuck combined in a movement which took play to the Barbarians end. The ball was punted to Weaver, who essayed a flying kick. "Whacker" Smith ran and fielded the ball nicely, and running round scored in the corner. Romans made a grand effort to convert, the ball hitting the cross-bar and rebounding into the field of play. The visitors resumed, but Gloucester at once pressed. Taylor brought off a magnificent run, beating all except the full-back, who only brought him down ten yards from the line. Play to the interval was decidedly interesting, but there was no further score.

### HALF-TIME SCORE:

Gloucester ..... 1 goal, 1 try  
Barbarians ..... Nil

The Barbarians restarted, and the first five minutes was occupied mainly in line-outs and scrums. Opening out the game a bit Marquis executed a fine run up the field, and a series of transfers which ensued apparently left the line at their mercy, but Gloucester got round and saved in a wonderful manner. The Barbarians still attacked, but they could not score. Hawker brought relief to the home team with a big punt, and then some even play followed at mid-field. Operations, however, were principally confined to the forwards, and lacked interest. Gloucester more than held their own, and gradually they found a

footing in their opponents' end. Once or twice the home men looked dangerous, but the situation was saved. At length G. Hall fairly caught the opposition napping, and running clean to the full-back he passed to Lewis, who went over under the posts. Romans easily converted. On the resumption the visitors made one brief incursion into the Gloucester end, but they were quickly sent back. The Barbarians several times rushed the scrums in fine style, but they were always held in check. To the end play was fairly even, and nothing further was scored.

**RESULT:**

Gloucester ..... 2 goals, 1 try (13 points)  
Barbarians ..... Nil

The gate receipts, with tickets sold, amounted to about £35.”

Unfortunately wet weather again conspired to dampen enthusiasm, and the timing of the match, kicking off at 5:25 on a Thursday afternoon, and the presence of only 4 internationals in the Barbarians side, may have been additional factors in keeping the attendance down. So, the income derived did little to offset the big loss which the club had made on the international match, the effects of which continued to cast a shadow over club finances for some years later. However, the prestige of Gloucester as a club and Kingsholm as a venue was significantly raised by these two matches.