

GLOUCESTERSHIRE CHRONICLE

FEBRUARY 18, 1888.

FOOTBALL.

COUNTY MATCH. — *Gloucestershire v. Devonshire.*

This inter-county match was played at the Spa on Saturday, and was witnessed by about 4000 persons. The ground was in wretched condition, and during the first portion of the match rain fell incessantly, which rendered good back play almost impossible, the players being unable to get a footing.

Owing to the distance some of the visitors had to travel, and their consequent late arrival, it appeared at one time that the match would not take place, but shortly after half-past three they put in an appearance.

The visiting captain kicked off from the railway end, and H. Taylor sent the ball into touch near the quarter-flag. From the throw out a strong rush by the home forwards propelled the ball beyond mid-field, where Leonard and Troup made a splendid dribble, the latter taking the leather at his feet into his opponents' quarters, but Dryden saved by turning the ball into touch.

The game was transferred to the other end of the field by means of a flying kick by Dryden, and some loose scrums followed, from out of which Bagwell got possession and handed to Troup, who made a good run to the half-way flag, where he gave up possession to H. Taylor, but the latter pass was intercepted, and the visitors made an incursion into the home team's territory. Witcomb and Brown dribbled back, and Troup sent the ball still further by landing it beyond the twenty-five flag.

Even scrimmaging took place in front of the Devonshire goal, but by dint of hard work the visitors averted danger, and Brown was conspicuous by stopping an ugly rush.

Troup again displayed fine dribbling powers, and Leonard continued the onward movement with a kick inside the visiting team's quarter flag, where Dryden again saved by sending the ball into touch. Troup took a pass from Phelps, and in turn handed to H. Taylor, who, when looking dangerous, slipped down, but he passed to Bagwell, who gained more ground. Troup was again to the front by stopping a forward rush, and Hughes transferred the ball into touch beyond the Devon quarter flag. Brown accepted a pass from Phelps, and by a strong run dodged through his opponents and scored a try amidst much cheering.

Hughes was entrusted with the kick, but the leather struck the posts. Dryden kicked out, and play for a time took place in neutral territory, but at length the home forwards, aided by Smith, T. Taylor, and Baker, worked into Devon's quarters, where Bagwell picked up and passed to Brown, who again made a magnificent run over the line, but losing the ball Bagwell rushed up and scored a try. Hughes made another splendid shot at goal, but failed to register the major point.

After half-time Baker re-started, and Witcomb and Troup, exhibiting grand dribbling powers, took the ball in close proximity to their opponents' line. Devonshire, playing a good defensive game, removed play to safer quarters, but out of a loose scrum Leonard secured the leather, and making good use of his weight carried it over the line and got another try, which, like its predecessors, remained unconverted.

Dryden re-started, and a short visit was paid by the visitors to the quarters of the home team; but by gradual stages the ball was worked back to the centre of the field, where Phelps was awarded a free kick owing to his opponents infringing the five-yards' rule. Troup afterwards made a magnificent cork-screw run, but was called back, and H. Taylor and Bagwell put in some good play, their onward career only being checked by the full back, Dryden.

Pring accepted a neat pass, and handing off the embraces of his opponents, made a brilliant run, after which he passed to Paige, who was, however, laid low in the mud.

Up to this point the game looked a certainty for Gloucestershire, they having had matters much their own way and scored three tries to their opponents' nothing, but after these reverses Devonshire appeared to gain heart and compelled the home team to act on the defensive.

Continuing to assume the aggressive their forwards, finding themselves in close proximity to the goal-line, dribbled splendidly, and eventually took the ball over, but it was kicked into touch in goal. Baker kicked out, and Devon returned to the attack. Newton, getting a clear opening, made an unsuccessful drop at goal, but Paige being on the *quí vive*, rushed up and touched the leather down. Dryden was entrusted with the kick, but his effort failed.

Elated with this success the visitors redoubled their efforts, and when near the centre of the field Newton got possession and transferred to Paige, who made the most brilliant run of the day, and by getting right round his opponents carried the ball behind the posts, a feat for which he was deservedly applauded.

Dryden having negotiated the major point, "No side" was immediately called, and Devonshire retired the unexpected victors by a goal and a try to three tries, or four points to three, a result with which they were highly delighted after having up to a certain stage the worst of the encounter.

The players present a grotesque appearance, being literally covered with mud.

The teams were composed as follows : –

Gloucestershire : A. F. Hughes (Gloucester), back; H. E. Taylor, T. Bagwell, and C. E. Brown (Gloucester), three-quarter backs; E. L. Phelps (R.A.C.), and W. Troup (Clifton), half-backs; H. C. Baker, E. Leonard, F. M. May (Clifton), R. Edwards (Bristol Medicals), T. G. Smith, H. L. Broughton, T. Taylor, G. Witcomb, and H. S. Simpson (Gloucester), forwards.

Devonshire : D. D. Dryden (Tiverton), back; W. C. Paige (Newton), – Newton, (Newton Abbott), and W. G. Pring (Exeter), three-quarter backs; F. J. Herring (Tiverton), and J. Challacombe (Newton), half-backs: – Elliott (Tiverton), T. Wills (Newton), D. Inch (Newton), F. H. Toller (Barnstaple), W. S. S. Wilson (Dartmouth), C. Mudge (Exeter), C. G. Stearn (Crediton), C. Hawking (Torquay), and H. Rice (Teignmouth), forwards.

Mr. H. J. Boughton acted as referee.

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