

From the Magpie, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1893

Transcribed by Malc King

### **Gloucestershire v Halifax**

*The event of the week was, of course, the match between Gloucestershire and Halifax yesterday (Thursday). That it had been looked forward to with much pleasure is but poorly expressing the anticipations of local football enthusiasts. Both teams included players of the very first order; the weather was exactly suited for the popular winter game – cold but fine – the ground was in perfect order for fine open play, and as a consequence the large concourse of spectators witnessed a grand game. On this result Messrs Hanman, Mitchell and Weaver are to be congratulated, for it was by their efforts chiefly, if not altogether, that we are indebted for the treat of an exhibition by combinations of the best footballers of the day.*

*The representatives of Halifax are a fine looking lot of athletes, and their performance was in keeping with their looks. Gloucestershire, too, though minus the services of one or two internationals whose names were down to play, put a first-class team in the field. The home team started the ball, and for some time had slightly the best of the game, though there was really little to choose between the two. The passing of the Halifax backs was, however, superior to that of Gloucester, and this enabled Toothill to cross the line once in the first half. The place kick was a failure, and before half time Gloucester had equalised, Fenner scoring a try in the corner which Jackson made a capital but unsuccessful attempt to convert. The play became exceptionally fast, but nothing further resulted until change of ends, when the Yorkshiremen went at it with renewed vigour, Varley at the start getting possession of the leather and by a wonderfully dodgy run taking it into the Gloucestershire twenty-five, and almost immediately afterwards starting a round of passing which enabled Toothill to score behind the posts, an easy goal resulting. This success stimulated to greater effort, and for the next ten minutes they had decidedly the best of the game. Smithies getting the ball from a scrum in front of the Gloucester goal essaying a drop which from the top end of the field appeared to go clean over the cross bar, but which actually, however, went a trifle wide. After this Gloucestershire woke up considerably, and gradually forced their opponents back, Fenner eventually scoring another try in the corner. This also Jackson failed to convert, the northerners thus leading by three points. From a line out subsequently, Cromwell, “the little boy”, as some of the spectators facetiously dubbed him, secured and dashed over the Halifax line near the uprights, amidst loud applause, which was almost deafening, Gould took the kick and landed a goal, making Gloucestershire winners by two points.*

*I have little space left to devote to the players, but I may say A J Gould was the pick of the Gloucestershire team. On several occasions he saved splendidly, was always first in the breach, and his play throughout was characterised by coolness and judgement which may be emulated with advantage by members of the city fifteen. Leighton of Cinderford, fully justified his selection, and put in some fine work; while Fenner, Taylor, Jackson and Bagwell each shone conspicuously, Taylor showing his remarkable speed on one or more than one occasion by overhauling Dyson when the latter was making fair tracks to score. The forwards all worked well, Hanman, Cromwell and Jenkins, in addition to Leighton, doing good service.*

*The visitors were a game lot all round, and their passing bordered on the marvellous at times. Toothill executed some extraordinary fine runs, as did also Dyson, and Smithies, the latter being collared finely towards the end of the game by Taylor, and in the scramble which ensued getting his knee damaged was compelled to leave the field. With this exception, no mishap worthy of the name occurred, and one of the best matches ever witnessed at Kingsholm ended in a perfectly satisfactory manner – certainly to Gloucestershire.*

*The promoters have had to put up with many discouraging influences, and I hope the balance from the gate will prove sufficiently large to be some compensation, and justify them in attempting to make the match an annual event. I understand that the nett takings are expected to reach the respectable total of £130.*