

GLOUCESTER JOURNAL

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1893.

The Week's Sport.

The first of the series of matches to decide which is the premier county in the South-Western group in the County Championship was played at Bath on Saturday, when the representatives of Gloucestershire and Somerset tried conclusions. Neither side was fully represented, Gloucester[sic] being without Wallace Watts, G. J. Witcomb, and A. Collins, and their opponents being minus the services of Boucher, S. M. J. Woods, and P. F. Hancock. In the back division, however, the former county were enabled to command the services of all their best available players, including W. Jackson, who journeyed from Halifax to assist his native county.

For some little time Gloucestershire had the better of the game, the whole team doing well, but it cannot be said that the form was maintained throughout. Fenner and W. H. Taylor were at times prominent, but neither of them received much consideration from the inside representatives.

Following some give-and-take play, a very fine passing movement by the Gloucester three-quarters ensued, and from a scrum close to the line T. O. Davies scrambled over and claimed a try. This was disputed by the Somerset men, who urged that Davies went into touch, and the referee upheld their appeal. The ball was then forced down the field, but Ford fell upon it just in time. This was succeeded by a smart run by Bagwell, who took a pass from Jackson. He, however, lost the oval in transferring to Fenner, and the game again turned in favour of Somerset. Jackson, however, by a grand effort, took the game to the home goal. He received a pass from Pearce, and, dodging through a whole crowd of his opponents, got up to the full back, when he unfortunately stumbled, and lost what seemed a certain try.

The Somerset players continued to be very hardly pressed. Fenner made his mark, but Jackson's attempt at goal was a failure. Following a second free kick to the home team, Fenner responded by dropping a goal, but, though the attempt was a good one, it failed.

An exciting bit of play followed a little later. Vernon brought the ball out of the scrum, and it found its way into Parham's hands. The latter eluded Taylor, and after traversing a long distance scored amidst tremendous enthusiasm. Half time arrived with the score : – Somerset, 1 try; Gloucestershire, nil.

In the second half scrimmages followed each other in rapid succession, and from one Pearce got off and kicked high in the air. Culverwell dashed up, secured the oval, and made off down the field at a rattling pace. He, however, failed to elude Jackson, who tackled him smartly; but from the ensuing scrum Parham made off, and dodging Fenner, ran down to Hughes, who gave him very little trouble – indeed, Gloucestershire's full back was sadly at fault throughout – and the Bath half finished up a rattling run by grounding behind the posts.

Somerset still maintained their advantage for a while, but eventually Gloucestershire's supporters had the satisfaction of seeing one of their representatives get in. Taylor got possession in the loose and travelled down the wing in his old style, scoring in a position which did not augur well for the goal. Jackson, however, landed a beauty, and being only one point behind the remaining portion of the game was anxiously watched by the Gloucesterians, but no further point was scored, and Somerset thus won by one point.

The final score was : – Somerset 2 tries (6 points) Gloucestershire 1 goal (5 points).

The result was disappointing to the Gloucestershire supporters, as it was generally concluded they would win with a bit in hand. The forwards, however, failed to keep up the good form exhibited in the first half, and were thoroughly beaten in the last 15 minutes.

T. Parham, the Somerset half, played a remarkably good game, running and dodging in a marvellous manner, and was, without doubt, the most prominent man on the field. On the Gloucestershire side Hughes was decidedly off colour at full back, and will most probably lose his place for the Devon match.

Bagwell and Jackson in the centre, played a wonderfully good game between themselves, but sadly neglected their wings. The forwards were too light to cope with their opponents, but showed up well when the ball became loose.