

GLOUCESTER JOURNAL

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The Week's Sport.

At Kingsholm on Saturday Gloucestershire concluded their series of matches in connection with the south-western group of the County Championship, their opponents being the representatives of Cornwall. Both teams had succumbed to Devon and Somerset, so that the struggle resolved itself into a contest for possession of the "wooden spoon" of the group.

The unenviable distinction had been held by the Cornishmen for the two previous seasons, and on the form shown by them in their contests with Somerset and Devon it looked any odds on their again holding the position. The visitors, however, did not go under as easily as expected, and in the end were only defeated by five points.

The Gloucestershire team did not turn out as originally selected, Wallace Watts (Newport) and A. Collins (Gloucester) both crying off. The fifteen, as finally constituted, was therefore composed of seven Bristol men (Fenner, Pearce, Birch, Bowley, Davis, Lockyer, and Jarman), four from Gloucester (Taylor, Price, Leighton, and Wellings), and one each from Stroud (Haines), Lydney (Whitehead), Clifton (Lias), and Cinderford (Daunter). The weather was fine, but there was only a moderate attendance of spectators.

As an exhibition of football the game was decidedly disappointing, the display given being below what would have been expected from second-class exponents. Nothing really brilliant occurred during the whole match, which was a general scramble and utterly devoid of interest. Taking the play right through Gloucestershire had slightly the best of matters, but it cannot be said that they deserved their victory.

The first try obtained by the home county was scored from a palpably forward pass, which mistake, however, escaped the vigilance of the referee (Mr. Crane, Midland Counties). Haines successfully negotiated the point, thus giving Gloucestershire a lucky five points' advantage. Immediately after, Cornwall got dangerously near the Gloucester goal, and from a penalty kick succeeded in landing a goal. This was all the scoring up to the interval.

In the second half Lockyer added a try to the credit of Gloucestershire, after a smart run and kick by Taylor, but the place-kick failed. The Cornishmen, just before the finish, indulged in a splendid bout of passing, which thoroughly deserved a score, but a throw forward at a critical moment lost the opening, and nothing more being done Gloucestershire ran out winners by 1 goal 1 try (8 points) to a penalty goal (3 points).

Where Gloucestershire were let down so badly was at centre three-quarter and half-back, and a weaker display has seldom been witnessed on the Kingsholm enclosure. The players doing duty in these positions, Haines and Whitehead and Lias and Pearce respectively, apparently could do nothing right, Haines' exhibition being especially wretched.

The two halves are known to be clever players, but on Saturday they both appeared to be decidedly off colour. The wing three-quarters, Taylor and Fenner, had comparatively nothing whatever to do. Daunter gave a creditable display at full back, kicking strongly, and proving a safe tackler. The forwards played a hard game, but met their match in the tight scrums.

Cornwall were best represented behind by Hammond and Hosking, but the forwards worked well together, especially in heavy scrimmaging work.

While Gloucestershire and Cornwall were contesting for the bottom place, the rival counties of Somerset and Devon were fighting out their claims to the premiership of the group at Weston. The match attracted a good deal of interest in the West, and a capital game resulted.

Somerset showed up strongly in the forwards, but the Devon backs were greatly superior to their opponents. In the end Devon gained the championship by 1 goal 1 try (8 points) to 1 goal (5 points).

- A circular, signed by 69 prominent football players, international and others, belonging to all parts of the country, was issued on Monday night. It states that the recent manifesto was passed *nem. con.* by a full meeting of the Rugby Union Committee, thus showing that the representatives from all parts of England were unanimous on the necessity of the step. In the face of these facts, it is the duty of every club loyal to amateurism to support the action of the committee entirely.

The objection to Law 4 as being un-English is looked upon as a subterfuge. The Rugby Union cannot employ constables and detectives to secure compliance with their regulations, nor can evidence be taken on oath, nor witnesses compelled to attend investigation. Minor points must be waived, and the manifesto supported. H. V. Page, T. G. Smith, W. J. Lias, C. A. Hooper, and F. O. Poole are among the signatories.