

THE CITIZEN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1897.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

COUNTY MATCH AT KINGSHOLM.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE v. MIDLAND COUNTIES.

Played at Kingsholm in fine weather, and before a good gate. The match was only a friendly one, and therefore did not reckon in the County Championship. The Gloucestershire team turned out as selected, but there were several changes in the Midland fifteen, the absentees including F. R. Loveitt and A. Frith (Coventry), W. J. Foreman and R. P. Swain (Leicester), and W. Evers (Moseley). Owing to the late arrival of the visitors a start did not take place till after 4 o'clock.

The teams were as follows : –

GLOUCESTERSHIRE. – B. Hipwood (Gloucester), back; Lewis Smith (Stroud), A. F. Hailing (Cheltenham), Percy Stout (Gloucester), and R. G. Parsons (Bristol), three-quarter backs; W. Needs (Bristol) and T. Willstead (Cinderford), half-backs; W. Leighton (captain), W. Mudway (Cinderford), J. W. Jarman, H. B. T. Bingham (Bristol), F. M. Stout, C. Hall, A. Pitt (Gloucester), and P. Smith (Stroud), forwards.

MIDLAND COUNTIES. – W. Comrie (Coventry), back; R. B. Sparrow (Wolverhampton), J. F. Byrne (capt.), (Moseley), F. A. Byrne (Moseley), and G. Birtles, (Moseley), three-quarter backs; J. C. Hall (Moseley) and W. H. Goodman (Old Edwardians), half-backs; A. St. G. Cummins (Wolverhampton), A. O. Dowson (Moseley), C. Marston (Moseley), D. P. Millar (Stratford), B. J. Ebsworth (Moseley), B. H. Cattell (Moseley), R. Challoner (Moseley), and H. B. Carslake (Old Edwardians), forwards.

Referee : Mr. A. J. Davies (Glamorgan County).

Gloucestershire won the toss, and elected to defend the Dean's Walk goal. Fred Byrne kicked off, Hall replying with a capital punt to the visitors' captain. The latter mulled, and, the Gloucester forwards being well up, he was upset on the centre mark. From the ensuing scrum the home forwards, with Frank Stout in the van, got away with a good rush, but the International over-ran the ball, and a visitor kicked into touch cleverly.

In attempting to check this rush of the Gloucestershire men Fred Byrne got a knock on the head, and a delay was caused within two minutes of the start. The English International recovered slightly, but he had to be led off the field. On resuming the Gloucestershire forwards were again prominent, the ball being taken within a dozen yards of the Midlanders' line. Comrie here effected a good save, and by the aid of a free-kick the visitors got out of danger. Hailing failed to gather from a kick, and the combined counties kicked down to Hipwood, who, however, saved nicely, though hotly pressed.

Play hovered near half-way for a minute or two, but another capital dribble by the Gloucestershire front rank looked dangerous. Leighton, however, got off-side, and by the free-kick which followed the visitors got back to mid-field. Ensuing play was contested at this point for the next few minutes until Needs, failing to take a pass from Willstead, let the Midlanders into the home end. A splendid wheel by the Gloucestershire forwards was well stopped by the Midland half-backs, but another mistake, this time by Whitehead, enabled C. Marston to dribble half the length of the ground, a touchdown eventually resulting.

On the drop-out the Midlanders again exhibited some capital dribbling, and Gloucestershire were forced on the defensive. Frank Byrne had a shot for goal from a free, but it was a poor attempt, and only a minor was recorded. The drop-out was received by one of the Midland three-quarters, but he failed to get in his kick, and the home county had a good chance of scoring, but it was not accepted.

Some splendid cross dribbling by the Counties' forwards conveyed operations to the other end, but Bingham led a grand rush back, Comrie only saving on his 25 line. Getting the ball from the forwards, Willstead started a bout of passing, but Percy Stout threw out wildly to Lewis Smith. A minute later Lewis Smith was prominent with a capital run across the ground, but Hailing missed taking his pass. Smith, however, secured again, and handing sharply to Stout, the latter passed to Parsons, who made a grand effort to score in the corner. He was floored a couple of yards from the mark.

Gloucestershire now attacked strongly, but mistakes behind the scrum enabled the Midlanders to get out of danger. By loose kicking the game was carried to the home half, but Percy Stout, securing possession, brought off a grand run, but he just failed to get round his wing man. Carrying scrums in fine style the visitors attacked, but Hall relieved with a useful punt into touch. From out of some loose play Jarman gathered smartly in his own 25, and passing neatly to Hailing, the Cheltenham captain got off with a fine sprint. Being pressed Hailing handed to Needs, and the latter subsequently yielded up to Percy Stout, who put the finishing touches on a magnificent bit of combined play by scoring a try. The same player failed to convert, though the shot was well directed. The Counties' re-started, but a couple of minutes later the interval was sounded.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucestershire 1 try
Midland Counties Nil

Percy Stout started the second half, and after an exchange of kicks play settled in the visitors' half. Fred Byrne now returned to the field of play amidst encouraging cheers. Both teams were working hard, but Gloucestershire held the advantage.

Heeling out nicely Needs got a chance of distinguishing himself, and feinting to pass the Bristolian made a good opening for Percy Stout. The city club's centre made off at full speed, and beating several opponents cleverly, he got to the full back.

Comrie went for his man, but the Gloucestrian knocked him off, and continuing his journey, concluded a fine effort by scoring behind the posts, loud and continued cheering greeting what was an exceedingly splendid performance. Stout easily goaled.

The Counties re-started, and play was fast and interesting. The Gloucestershire backs were conspicuous with some clever open play, and Frank Stout getting a pass from his brother went over the line smartly, but the referee had him back for an infringement.

Play continued to go all in favour of Gloucestershire, who attacked desperately. The visitors, however, defended splendidly, and gradually worked out to near mid-field. Here some loose play gave the Midlanders an opening, but Frank Stout, with a bit of superb individual play, not only relieved his side, but dribbled to his opponents' quarter before being stopped. In his effort Stout came into collision with Comrie, and was laid out for a minute or two.

On resuming the game hovered near the centre until Willstead initiated an onward movement towards the visitors' goal. Here out of some loose play Frank Stout got possession, and with a smart dash managed to get over with a try about twenty yards wide of the posts. Percy Stout failed to convert.

On a resumption being made the home county continued to hold the upper hand, but they could not score. At length the visiting backs endeavoured to raise a siege, but it was nipped in the bud. In being tackled by Hailing, Fred Byrne again got hurt, and was carried off the field. A short stoppage ensued.

From the first scrum on resuming Willstead got away smartly, and passing to Needs the latter made a grand opening. Being pressed the Bristol half-back handed the ball to Hailing, and the latter went over with another fine try in the corner. Percy Stout this time landed a brilliant goal from near the touch-line.

From now to the finish Gloucestershire had all the play, and only just failed to add to their score on two occasions.

RESULT :

Gloucestershire 2 goals, 2 tries (16 points)
Midlands Nil

REMARKS.

Gloucestershire thoroughly deserved their success, for they were considerably the smarter team all round. The forwards generally had considerably the better of matters in all departments. Frank Stout, Jarman, Hall, and Bingham showed up well in the open, the two former especially playing in brilliant fashion. Needs and Willstead combined capitally after the first quarter of an hour, the first-named making some fine openings.

Percy Stout was undoubtedly the hero of the match, for besides scoring two tries he did many other brilliant things. Hailing was not up to his usual form, and made more than one mistake in handling the ball. On the respective wings Parsons and Lewis Smith both did well, though the latter did not get so many chances as the Bristolian. Hipwood proved a safe custodian, and kicked well all through the game.

The gate amounted to £50.