

GLOUCESTERSHIRE CHRONICLE

DECEMBER 3, 1898.

FOOTBALL ITEMS.

The keenness of the rivalry between Gloucestershire and Somerset in the cricket field is only exceeded by the partizanship shown when the county fifteens meet under Rugby rules, and though the weather was miserable in the extreme at Bristol on Saturday for the annual encounter, the excitement was as great as ever, and the attendance but little below the average.

Prior to Saturday in 18 games played, Somerset had won nine, lost five, and drawn four, and in the early part of the week it was confidently predicted by their supporters that they would add another to their list of victories.

But almost each succeeding post brought disappointments through ill-health and other causes, to the Somerset Selection Committee, and the team that eventually turned out was but a shadow of that originally chosen.

They lost by seven points to three (a dropped goal and a try to a try) but it was a long time past the interval before the Gloucestershire players could claim any advantage. Indeed, for a long period in the first half, just before the interval, Gloucestershire were very hard pressed, as their forwards were thoroughly beaten, and it was only the safe defence of Oates (Bristol) that kept their line intact.

Gamlin (Wellington) at back for Somerset, was also in champion form, and it seemed as though these two men were simply trying to out-Herod each other. Be that as it may, Somerset had all the best of the first half, but luck was dead against them, and they got no score.

The second moiety of play was also well advanced, and then after Somerset had much the best of matters, Percy Stout suddenly gathered the ball for Gloucestershire and scored a grand try, failing, however, to convert. Very quickly on the top of this, Ebden, who took a pass from Pearse, equalised for Somerset, but again the conversion did not take place.

With the scores level again and every prospect of a draw, both sides simply went for all they were worth, and only a few minutes before the close Percy Stout was again the centre of attention, and dropping a grand goal for Gloucestershire, they were the lucky winners of one of the most sensational matches ever played in the West.

It is worthy of note, and also not generally known, that Percy Stout, the International, who on this occasion covered himself with glory, was formerly a prominent Gloucester Association player, and as recently as two years ago was Captain of the Gloucestershire team that sensationally beat Aston Villa by two goals to nil, both the goals on that occasion being scored by Stout. It was on that occasion that the Villa "discovered" George, their present goalkeeper, who that day kept goal against them.