

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1902.

GLOUCESTER FOOTBALL CLUB.

-----

## THE SEASON'S WORK.

-----

## MORE RECORDS SET UP.

Though the season of 1901-2, which was brought to a close with the match against Cardiff, has not been as brilliantly successful as last year - when Gloucester were invincible at home - the City Club are to be congratulated on possessing a record which will bear comparison with that of any first-class organisation in membership with the Rugby Union. Seven defeats, as against 24 victories and 3 drawn games, is a really wonderful record considering the adverse circumstances under which the City team have laboured.

The season opened under the most favourable auspices, and, despite the narrow defeat at Bristol on October 19th, Gloucester scored 144 points in their first six games, as against 18 points by opponents. An early misfortune, however, befell the City Club in the injury to Clutterbuck, and from this point ill-luck dogged the steps of the Kingsholm men. Following Clutterbuck's disablement came the migration of J. Lewis to Bristol and Cecil

Miller to Richmond, and injuries to other players completely disorganised the team.

"Whacker" Smith, Lewis Smith, Cook, and Goddard were all laid up together, and Captain Romans experienced the greatest difficulty in fixing up anything like a representative fifteen for some of the matches. Yet Gloucester finished the first half of the season with but one defeat as against 13 wins and 1 drawn game! What English club could have equalled this performance under such difficulties, and without going outside for assistance?

With the advent of the new year, it was hoped better luck would attend the City team with regard to their players, but it was not until the middle of February that a settled fifteen took the field. In the meantime, both Leicester and Newport had to be met, and Gloucester lost their ground record, which had stood for so long, to the Midland Champions by a penalty goal. The defeat was a bitter disappointment, but Gloucester had themselves largely to blame. Certainly it was a very disorganised back division which opposed Leicester - Goddard, Lewis Smith, and "Whacker" Smith all having to be replaced - but despite this fact Gloucester should have won comfortably, for they had numerous chances of scoring, but threw them away in the most aggravating fashion.

At Newport, Gloucester were not expected to win, but the 18 points to nil defeat was not a true index of the run of the game. The Gloucester forwards gave their powerful opponents a hot time, but behind the scrum Newport were too clever altogether, and with Gwyn Nicholls in great form the City lines were crossed on six occasions. This was the heaviest defeat sustained so far, but the following week Gloucester had a runaway victory over Stroud, and then came the return match with Leicester.

Gloucester had great hopes of making amends for their failure at Kingsholm, but they were not realised, and the City team (again weakened by the absence of Goddard, Romans, and Lewis Smith) were defeated by 2 tries to nil. Both points were scored in the second half, the City forwards failing to last out the game. Thus Leicester had the rare distinction of beating Gloucester twice in one season - undoubtedly the biggest blot on the record.

On the Wednesday following the second Leicester defeat, Cardiff were met on the Arms Park, and Gloucester ran their powerful opponents to a converted goal. This performance ranks as one of the best accomplished by the City team during the season, as up to that time Cardiff had not been beaten at home, and had only lost one game. On the play Gloucester should at least have made a draw, and even the Cardiff press critics admitted the visitors were very unlucky to lose.

This was Gloucester's fourth defeat since the opening of 1902, but then followed a series of successes, including the brilliant triumph over Bristol (which performance kept the club championship at this end of the county) and victories at the expense of Northampton, Coventry, London Welsh, and Penarth, all of whom were beaten handsomely.

The game with London Welsh provided one of the best exhibitions of football seen at Kingsholm, and Gloucester's victory by 14 points to 3 over the strong combination brought down by Willie Llewellyn was a meritorious one.

The more recent matches played by the City Club are fresh in the minds of our readers, and require no special reference. Gloucester failed to repeat last year's great victory over Swansea, but in the match with Cheltenham on Thursday last the team scored a very easy win, and made up the aggregate of points for the season to 542, which beats the record of 522 set up last year.

Though not equalling past performances against Welsh teams, Gloucester have every reason to be proud of the fine games they played against Newport (home) and Cardiff (away), and with ordinary luck the City team might easily have been credited with a win in each case.

Against English clubs the three defeats sustained from Leicester (2) and Bristol spoils the splendid record held by Gloucester, but it is worthy of note that in five seasons the City teams have only lost six games out of 112 engagements with English combinations. The full record for the five years is: Matches played 112 - won 97, lost 6, drawn 9. Points for, 1,751; against, 169.

During the season several more records have been set up, and to "Whacker" Smith belongs the dual distinction of having scored the largest number of tries in one match (18 against Clifton), and also the highest aggregate in one season. The record of 18 - to the credit of G. Coates and W. H. Taylor - stood for a number of years, but G. Clutterbuck reached 23 last season and J. Cook 19.

Those figures, however, have been easily topped by Smith, who is to be heartily congratulated on his performance. Altogether Gloucester scored 135 tries during the season, as against 123 last year, 95 in 1899-00, 72 in 1898-9, and 74 in 1897-8. Romans' goal-kicking, however, has not been so successful as in the past two years, but he has not had the best of luck with a number of shots.

Unlike last year, when C. Hall and C. Smith gained their caps, no Gloucester player has been recognised by the Rugby Union for International honours, but C. Hall, R. Goddard, and G. Romans took part in some of the trial games. The City Club, however, bore a prominent part in securing the Southern County championship for Gloucestershire, and though the final was lost the home county can take credit for making a good fight.

Financially, Gloucester did splendidly with one or two matches (notably the Bristol fixture when the receipts beat all previous records for club matches), but the less popular fixtures did not attract average gates, and with the membership showing very little increase on last year, the City Club are not likely to get a big balance on the season's working.

Still we hope that when the time for the annual meeting comes round Mr. Treasurer Dancey will be in a position to announce a satisfactory state of affairs. With the close of the season, there are rumours of several players taking definite leave of the game, but though this may be the case with one or two men, we shall hope to see the majority of this year's team (including Captain Romans) again ready to do battle for the old club.

The following is a complete record for the season:-

Played 34 - Won 24, Lost 7, Drawn 3.

				FOR			AGAINST		
				G	T	P	G	T	P
Sept. 21	v.	Clifton	W	10	8	74	0	0	0
Sept. 28	v.	Old Edwardians	W	6	5	44	1	0	3
Oct. 5	v.	Northampton	W	0	3	9	0	0	0
Oct. 12	v.	Newport	D	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oct. 19	v.	Bristol	L	0	1	3	1	1	7
Oct. 26	v.	Pontypridd	W	2	2	14	1	1	8
Nov. 2	v.	Stroud	W	2	0	7	1	0	4
Nov. 9	v.	Richmond	W	1	1	8	0	0	0
Nov. 23	v.	Cheltenham	W	0	1	3	0	0	0
Nov. 30	v.	Bath	W	3	2	21	0	1	3
Dec. 4	v.	Cambridge University	W	0	4	12	1	0	3
Dec. 7	v.	Coventry	W	3	4	27	1	0	5
Dec. 14	v.	Penygraig	W	2	3	19	0	0	0
Dec. 26	v.	Old Merchant Taylors	D	1	0	5	1	0	5
Dec. 27	v.	Bath	W	5	1	26	0	0	0
Dec. 28	v.	Penarth	W	1	2	11	0	1	3
Jan. 4	v.	Bridgwater	W	2	1	11	0	0	0
Jan. 11	v.	Clifton	W	1	5	20	0	1	3
Jan. 18	v.	Old Edwardians	W	3	5	30	0	0	0
Jan. 25	v.	Leicester	L	0	0	0	1	0	3
Feb. 1	v.	Lydney	W	2	4	22	0	0	0
Feb. 8	v.	Newport	L	0	0	0	0	6	18
Feb. 22	v.	Stroud	W	7	3	44	0	0	0
Mar. 1	v.	Leicester	L	0	0	0	0	2	6
Mar. 5	v.	Cardiff	L	0	0	0	1	0	5
Mar. 8	v.	Northampton	W	3	4	27	0	0	0
Mar. 15	v.	Bristol	W	1	2	11	1	1	6
Mar. 22	v.	Coventry	W	2	4	22	0	0	0
Mar. 28	v.	London Welsh	W	1	3	14	0	1	3
Mar. 31	v.	Penarth	W	3	3	24	0	0	0
Apr. 1	v.	Plymouth	D	1	1	6	1	1	6
Apr. 12	v.	Swansea	L	0	0	0	2	0	9
Apr. 17	v.	Cheltenham	W	2	6	28	0	0	0
Apr. 19	v.	Cardiff	L	0	0	0	0	1	3
				64	78	542	13	17	103

## COMPARISONS.

For comparisons we append the records for the past six years:-

	P	W	L	D	For.			Against.		
					G	T	P	G	T	P
1896-7	31	18	8	5	31	34	251	13	24	131
1897-8	35	24	5	6	48	48	335	10	24	120
1898-9	34	27	6	1	37	40	300	14	17	116
1899-00	32	23	7	2	55	44	406	18	10	110
1900-01	34	24	5	5	71	59	522	9	13	75
1901-02	34	24	7	3	64	78	542	13	17	103

## CONCERNING THE PLAYERS.

During the season Gloucester have had to call on the services of 42 different players, but of these 14 appeared in less than five games. No single player had the honour of taking part in every match, but J. Stephens and G. Hall only missed four each, and F. Westbury five. Owing to the difficulties which beset the team at various periods, there has been a lot of changing in positions. Romans played full-back, centre, and wing three-quarter, and J. Stephens three-quarter and half-back. The following is a list of players who took part in more than five matches:-

J. Stephens	31	L. Smith	13
G. Hall	31	A. Purton	12
F. Westbury	30	J. Gough	11
A. H. Click	30	W. Essex	11
G. Romans	29	C. E. Miller	10
C. Smith	28	F. Rooke	10
F. Oswell	28	G. H. Smith	9
C. Hall	27	J. Merchant	9
R. Goddard	23	W. Gardner	9
J. Jewell	22	G. Clutterbuck	9
B. Parham	21	J. Lewis	8
T. Spiers	20	W. Tozer	7
J. Cook	15	A. Hall	6
G. F. Collett	14	B. L. Watkins	6

The following also played:-

A. Hawker, L. F. Morgan, W. H. Taylor, 4 games each; C. Goddard, W. Nelmes, A. James, 3 each; R. J. Goss, 2; and F. M. Luce, A. S. F. Pruen, A. Smith, B. A. Bowers, L. Vears, A. Jones, and F. M. Stout, 1 each.

### LIST OF SCORERS

Player.	Tries.	Goals		Mark.	Pen.
		Con.	Drop.		
C. Smith	29	0	0	0	0
L. Smith	10	0	0	0	0
F. Oswell	9	0	0	0	0
C. Hall	9	0	0	0	0
G. Hall	8	0	0	0	0
F. Westbury	6	0	0	0	0
C. E. Miller	5	0	0	0	0
T. Spiers	5	0	0	0	0
J. Cook	5	0	0	0	0
J. Stephens	5	0	0	0	0
F. Rooke	5	0	0	0	0
R. Goddard	4	0	0	0	0
B. Parham	4	0	0	0	0
A. H. Click	4	0	0	0	0
G. Clutterbuck	4	0	0	0	0
G. Romans	4	52	0	1	4
G. F. Collett	4	0	0	0	1
J. Lewis	2	0	0	0	0
W. H. Taylor	2	2	0	0	0
G. H. Smith	2	0	0	0	0
A. Purton	2	0	0	0	0
J. Jewell	1	0	0	0	0
A. James	1	0	0	0	0
J. Merchant	1	0	0	0	0
A. S. F. Pruen	1	0	0	0	0
W. Johns	1	0	0	0	0
W. Essex	1	0	0	0	0
L. Vears	1	2	0	0	0
W. Gardner	0	1	0	0	0
L. F. Morgan	0	0	1	0	0
	135	57	1	1	5

Romans' goal-kicking record was 52 out of 121 attempts from tries, whilst he also placed one goal from a mark, and four from penalties. Last season the City Captain converted 53 goals out of 98 attempts, and in 1899-00 his record was 41 out of 70.

## INDIVIDUAL FORM

Dealing with the form of the team as a whole, one is bound to admit that the high standard of play set up by last year's combination has not been maintained in the season just terminated. The cause is not far to seek, and may be attributed to the frequent changes that have taken place in the personnel of the fifteen. In several games - notably against Richmond (home), Cardiff (away), Cambridge University (away), Bristol (home), and London Welsh (home) - the team rose to the occasion in fine style, but these exhibitions came intermittently, and in the intervening periods we had some very poor football. Still, with the knowledge of the difficulties which the team have had to contend against, one is not inclined to criticise too severely; rather the occasion is one for praise for doing so well under adverse circumstances.

At full-back George Romans, though not so brilliantly consistent as in former years, has done grand work, and he can look back upon his third season of captaincy with a good deal of pride. There have been occasions when Romans has been off colour, but in some of the biggest matches, especially against Newport and Cardiff away from home, his form was quite up to International class. A fine kick when at his best, with a sound defence, Romans has rendered splendid service, and it will be a great loss to Gloucester if he should carry out his present intention of retiring.

These resolutions are not to be taken in too serious a light at the close of an arduous season, and we trust that with the arrival of another campaign he will be again found occupying the position he has filled with so much distinction for the past four years. When Romans was engaged for the county and in International trial games, Walter Gardner acted as reserve full-back, and efficiently discharged the duties. An injury last month, however, kept Gardner out of the field for the remainder of the season, and some difficulty was experienced in finding another reliable under-study.



Last season Gloucester were splendidly served at three-quarter by "Whacker" Smith, Cook, Stephens, and Clutterbuck - a quartette fully capable of extending any opposing line in all phases of play. Combination especially was brought to a high state of proficiency, and there was not a cleverer line in the country. With the same players available again, Gloucester were fully expected to prove a formidable opposition, and the opening matches promised well. Clutterbuck, however, was early placed *hors de combat*, and with Cook getting out of hand with the Committee, the famous combination was broken up.

Other misfortunes, in the shape of accidents to players, caused repeated changes in the line, and under the circumstances it was no surprise to find a falling off in form all round. Individually, "Whacker" Smith stands out for special recognition, not only for the new records he has set up (8 tries in one match, against Clifton, and an aggregate of 29 for the season, as against Clutterbuck's 23 last year), but for his sterling play during the greater part of the season.

Defence has always been regarded as "Whacker's" forte, but the popular three-quarter has shown that when properly served he is a very dangerous man in attack. No player, perhaps, has been so knocked about as Smith - due to his fearless stopping and deadly tackling - and no doubt this affected his play in several games.

Once again J. Stephens has proved himself a thoroughly sound centre, a marked feature of his play being the wonderful consistency he has shown. In all departments Stephens displayed a reliability which was lacking in players of a more brilliant type, and Gloucester often benefitted by his cool-headedness and aptitude to relieve the situation at a critical moment.

J. Cook and G. F. Collett were the principal colleagues of Stephens in the centre, and both did good work. The ex-Cantab found a regular place in the team in February, and though perhaps not so effective in attack as Cook, he played some beautiful games and fulfilled all expectations. He should prove of great service to Gloucester next season.

At left-wing Lewis Smith made an excellent substitute for Clutterbuck up to the time he got hurt, but on his return to the team he appeared to have lost a good deal of the pace and dash which gained him such prominence in the earlier matches.

Of the other reserves called upon during the season, the most promising was F. Rooke, a clever player, but lacking the necessary stamina to go through a season of first-class football. A. James (Bream) played in two or three matches, and shaped well, but he was only available when his own club was not engaged. The veteran Walter Taylor came to the assistance of his old club when in difficulties, and George Romans had to play three-quarter several times in order to complete the line. It is some years since Gloucester were so badly off for reserve backs, and unless some latent talent is discovered during the summer the outlook for next season is none too promising. The cup ties did not assist the Club in finding any likely players, and the only youngster who showed form above the average was Lindsay Vears (Gordon Wanderers), who should certainly be drafted into the A team.

With Goddard and G. Hall in charge at half-back, Gloucester had nothing to fear, for with matters even forward the City pair were able to hold their own with any couple. Both players have exhibited brilliant football, and with the three-quarters up to last season's form Gloucester's record would have shown a distinct improvement. Hall has fully sustained his reputation as a clever worker at the heels of the forwards, whilst his spoiling, stopping, and general play have earned for him frequent praise. As outside-half, Goddard has no equal, to our mind, in the South; certainly we have seen no individual player at Kingsholm with more resource and ability to make openings. Oughtred (the Durham and International half-back) came to Gloucester with a big reputation, but in the County championship final Goddard frequently had the measure of his opponent, and beat him continually. The complete understanding existing between Hall and Goddard was utilised to the best advantage, and the pair several times worked out an opening and carried it to a successful issue solely on their own. Two tries readily occur to mind - the points scored by Goddard against Richmond and Bristol. These efforts were real gems, and stand out as amongst the best tries ever scored on the Kingsholm ground.

As at three-quarter, so at half-back, Gloucester are sadly deficient in capable understudies, and this matter is one that should receive the serious attention of the Committee.

C. Hall has proved an admirable leader of the forwards, and despite the changes rendered necessary in the pack by the loss of Lewis, Miller, and Gough, the front rank has done well. Hall has played wonderfully good football all through the season, and why he was so religiously discarded by the English Rugby Union will always remain a mystery to his admirers. The vice-captain's experience has been of the greatest service to the recruits, who came on splendidly under his charge.

A great failing with the forwards has been lack of ability to get possession of the ball in the scrums - a very old complaint. In many instances the City eight have certainly been out-weighted, but all through this weakness has been noticeable. In other respects the men have worthily upheld the reputation of the Club, dash, cleverness, and resource being prominent features in open play; whilst one or two players (notably Click and Parham) have proved very effective in loose rushes. The veterans, Hall, Click, and Oswell, have certainly shown the way to their younger colleagues in many instances, and deserve praise for keeping up their form to the end. Of the new members, Westbury has been a notable success, whilst Parham and Jewell clearly established their claims to regular places in the team.

T. Spiers did fine work up to the time he was injured, and G. H. Smith, W. Essex, and A. Purton also showed up prominently. Among the reserves, W. Tozer and J. Merchant were most frequently called upon, other players assisting occasionally being A. Hawker, W. Nelmes, and B. L. Watkins. With Hall and Click definitely retiring from the game, Gloucester will be seriously handicapped next season, and it behoves the officials of the club to lose no time in looking around for possible recruits. Both Hall and Click deserve their retirement - they have done grand service for the Club - and we trust the testimonials it is proposed to give them will be worthy [of] the occasion.

## GLOUCESTER A.

---

Played 19 - Won 15, Lost 4, Drawn 0.

		FOR			AGAINST			
		G	T	P	G	T	P	
Oct. 5	v. Barnwood	W	4	1	23	0	0	0
Oct. 12	v. Newport A	W	0	1	3	0	0	0
Oct. 19	v. Bristol A	W	1	1	8	1	0	4
Oct. 26	v. Bream	W	1	2	10	0	1	3
Nov. 2	v. Stroud A	W	4	2	26	0	0	0
Nov. 16	v. Cardiff A	W	1	0	5	0	1	3
Nov. 23	v. Cheltenham A	W	2	4	20	1	0	4
Nov. 30	v. Chepstow St. Mary's	W	2	0	10	0	1	3
Dec. 7	v. Lydney	L	0	1	3	1	0	5
Dec. 14	v. Gordon League	W	1	1	8	0	0	0
Jan. 4	v. Barnwood	L	0	1	3	0	2	6
Jan. 11	v. Chepstow	W	6	2	24	0	0	0
Jan. 18	v. Lydney	L	0	1	3	2	0	10
Jan. 25	v. Stroud A	W	2	1	13	0	0	0
Feb. 8	v. Newport A	W	0	3	9	1	1	8
Feb. 22	v. Gordon League	W	1	2	11	0	0	0
March 15	v. Bristol A	L	0	0	0	2	2	15
March 31	v. Bream	W	2	0	10	2	0	9
April 12	v. Chepstow	W	1	0	5	0	0	0
			-----			-----		
			28	23	194	10	8	70