

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1902.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. COVENTRY.

EASY WIN FOR THE CITIZENS.

For the return match between these clubs, at Coventry, the City team was well represented, the only change from the side which defeated Bristol the previous week being F. Rooke for Collett at centre three-quarter. Coventry, who have only performed moderately this season, also had their full strength, but on form they had little chance of beating Gloucester.

The teams were as follow(s) : —

GLOUCESTER	Positions.	COVENTRY
G. Romans (capt.)	Backs	W. W. Hollins
C. Smith	Three-quarter	A. Starkey
F. Rooke	backs.	W. Palin
J. Stephens	"	A. Shilton
Lewis Smith	"	A. Randle
G. Hall	Half-backs.	J. Chamberlain
R. Goddard	"	F. J. Warth
C. Hall	Forwards	A. J. Arch
A. H. Click	"	W. Cleaver
F. Westbury	"	N. J. Walker
F. Oswell	"	R. G. Carruthers
J. Jewell	"	F. Cleverley
Bert Parham	"	C. L. Pigott
E. Essex	"	H. W. Whitton
G. H. Smith	"	B. Rotherham

Referee : W. L. Williams (Moseley).

THE GAME.

The afternoon turned out beautifully fine, but there were not more than 200 spectators present. Gloucester started, but several players getting in front of the ball, a scrum followed at the centre. Coventry tackled nicely, and useful kicks sent play inside the visitors' half. Romans gained ground by the aid of a penalty, but Lewis Smith missing a pass from Goddard, Coventry dribbled well inside Gloucester's half.

Picking up by a Coventry forward started a bout of passing, but a knock-on spoiled a good opening. Then, from a pass by G. Hall, Goddard sent to Lewis Smith, who raced down the touch-line and, beating Hollins cleverly, scored a fine try. Romans failed at goal.

Resuming, Gloucester immediately returned to the attack, but bad passing spoiled a good opening. Play continued to favour the visitors, and Westbury and C. Hall were nearly over. Coventry worked out by loose forward rushes, but Gloucester got on the aggressive again and the Coventry lines narrowly escaped. The City team had several splendid chances of scoring, but the attack was sadly lacking in finish, and nothing but minors accrued.

Coventry, with a sharp rush, reached midfield, where some even play was witnessed. Gloucester eventually got set going again[*sic*], but they were stopped outside. Romans here had a shot for goal from a penalty, but the ball fell short.

By dint of a lucky kick the home team relieved, but a smart round of passing by the Gloucester backs enabled Lewis Smith to run over nicely. The place-kick failed.

Subsequent play was all in favour of Gloucester, and following some smart combination amongst the City forwards, Click scored. Romans failed at goal.

Resuming, play was wholly confined to the Coventry end, but Gloucester made mistakes and lost several easy openings.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester.....3 tries
Coventry.....Nil

Coventry re-started, Romans replying to near the centre. Heeling by Gloucester saw the visiting backs indulge in a bout of passing, but Lewis Smith was thrown into touch. The Gloucester forwards heeled smartly from every scrum after this, but the backs failed badly in handling, and missed repeated openings. Rooke once broke through cleverly, but with a clear run in for Lewis Smith a forward transfer was given.

With a couple of useful punts Coventry worked down to the Gloucester half, but play was quickly transferred to the other end by G. Hall, who dribbled cleverly, He was, however, pulled up through a palpable mistake by the referee. From the subsequent scrum the City half got hold, and after a neat opening passed to George Smith, who scored easily. Romans converted.

On the drop-out Coventry kicked down to the Gloucester 25, where operations were confined for some minutes. The City team at length came right away, and Coventry were hard pressed. From a cross-punt by Romans, Essex secured a splendid opening, but he held too long, and an easy score was lost.

Coventry's defence was sorely taxed after this, but the visitors failed to make the best use of their opportunities. A brilliant bit of work by Stephens and Rooke gave "Whacker" Smith a chance, but the International failed to take his pass. Soon afterwards the ball came across to the other wing, and after Lewis Smith had just failed to cross, Goddard slipped over in the corner. Romans made a fine attempt to convert from the difficult angle.

Immediately on resumption Gloucester attacked again, and Goddard sending out a sharp pass to "Whacker" Smith, the latter dodged through with a good try. Romans this time added the extra points.

In the last few minutes Coventry assumed the aggressive, but Gloucester's defence was sound. Once the home team looked dangerous, but Romans kicked out of danger, and at the finish play was at mid-field.

RESULT :

Gloucester..... 2 goals, 4 tries (22 points)
Coventry.....Nil

REMARKS.

It was a poor, scrambling game throughout, spoiled in a great measure by the referee, who made frequent mistakes. Gloucester had considerably the best of matters, but the play of the City team at times was very ragged.

Forward Coventry did not do badly, especially in the first half, when they continually beat Gloucester in the tight scrums. Their backs, however, were of no class, and the visitors' defence was never seriously troubled.

In the second half the City forwards controlled the ball, but the backs never seemed able to settle down, and mistakes in handling were frequent. Romans played a splendid game, and easily outshone his opponent. Goddard and G. Hall did smart work, but they were badly supported.

Though scoring heavily, Gloucester might have easily doubled their points with the chances they had. Gloucester only played thirteen men in the last quarter of an hour, C. Hall and Lewis Smith retiring. Hall received a telegram that his wife was taken seriously ill.