

THE CITIZEN

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1904.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. LONDON WELSH.

For the third of their holiday fixtures Gloucester only made one change from the side which gained such a decisive victory of the Old Merchant Taylors on Boxing Day, E. Hall coming in at centre vice Hyam. London Welsh, who were defeated at Cardiff on Saturday, rested on Monday. They brought a powerful side, for though E. T. Morgan was a notable absentee, places were found for Cecil Biggs, Gunstone, and Young, of Cardiff. There was again a capital attendance when the rival teams took the field as follows : —

Gloucester. — G. Romans, back; C. Smith, E. Hall, J. Harrison, and A. Hudson, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent and J. Stephens, half-backs; W. Johns (captain), B. Parham, A. Hawker, F. Pegler, G. Matthews, G. Vears, H. Collins, and J. Jewell, forwards.

London Welsh. — F. Young, back; C. Biggs, J. Gunstone, C. E. Lewis, and H. T. Maddocks, three-quarter backs; H. Morris and C. F. Rowlands, half-backs; A. F. Harding, J. F. Williams, W. F. Hodge, F. H. Clay, T. James, H. Coppock, A. E. Evans, and J. Davies, forwards.

Referee : Mr. H. Smith (Bristol).

THE GAME.

The Gloucester captain won the toss, and Harding started for the Welshmen, there being no reply. Gent was early prominent with a useful touch-finder, and then a dashing forward burst took play to the Welsh 25. There the visitors took part in a bout of passing, the ball coming right along the line to Biggs, who re-passed to Gunstone. The latter, however, knocked on.

A huge punt by Hawker sent the ball to Young, who was floored by Smith, and the ball getting loose, Hudson picked up and attempted to dash through, but he was pulled down. The Welsh relieved by the aid of Maddocks, and then a cross-kick enabled Biggs to find touch in the home 25. Playing well together, the Welshmen attacked, and a long pass by Biggs was nicely taken by Lewis, who ducked under Smith's arm and passed nicely to Maddocks. Romans collared his man, but could not prevent a try. The place-kick failed.

Resuming, Gloucester got to the centre, where there was some fast play. Here Gent secured and passed to Stephens. The latter cut through nicely, but his transfer was knocked on by an opponent. Gloucester, however, again got the ball, and a kick sent it over the line. Hudson raced up and touched down, but the ball was over the dead-ball line, and only a minor was given – hard lines indeed.

Harding dropped out with a mighty kick, Romans finding touch nicely. Heeling by the City forwards saw Gent pass out sharply to Stephens, but Smith missed the latter's transfer. Gloucester a minute later got on the attack again, and the forwards were nearly over. From just inside the 25 line a brilliant bout of passing, initiated by Gent, saw the whole of the backs handle, and Smith scored a smart try. Romans converted amidst great enthusiasm.

Harding restarted, and the pace continued terrific. The Gloucester forwards heeled splendidly, and the backs shone in some neat exchanges. Stephens and Gent, with clever work, put Gloucester in a good position, but the Welshmen changed the venue with a sharp rush. Harrison once looked like going through, but Lewis floored him.

The game came out to the centre, where Stephens fed Hudson nicely. The wing man dashed down at a fine pace, but Young brought him down. Hudson, however, managed to pass to Parham, who slipped an opponent and passed to Peglar, who knocked on when there was an open goal. The Welshmen replied to this effort with a fine run and punt by Maddocks, who nearly scored again from the quarter line.

Gloucester, working grandly in the loose, rushed back, and the defence was nearly beaten. The ball eventually went to touch near the visitors' 25, where Gent and Stephens combined in a clever bit of work down the blind side. Some neat exchanges followed, ending in Hawker planting the ball safely over the line. Romans failed at goal.

The Welshmen restarted, and play continued to furnish many brilliant incidents. Gloucester were playing in fine style, and the backs indulged in some beautiful exchanges. The defence, however, was good.

A smart bit of work by Rowlands put the Welshmen on the attack, but Lewis was tackled and brought down by Smith when matters looked dangerous. A beautiful wheel by the Gloucester forwards brought the game out, and Harrison, fielding in front of Biggs, passed sharply to Jewell, who failed to hold.

Hawker, from a scrum, came away with a grand dribble, taking the ball down to Young. The Cardiff custodian dropped low, but in checking the movement he sustained an injury to his shoulder, and had to leave the field. Hudson left at the same time with something the matter with his leg; and the teams resumed with fourteen men each side. Vears came out on the wing for Gloucester, but only for a couple of minutes, as Hudson resumed.

Gloucester at once got on the attack, and from a loose dribble Williams (who was playing full back) was almost beaten. From a throw-out well inside the quarter line Vears burst over, but not straight was ruled, and the point was disallowed. The Londoners cleared from a dangerous position by a beautiful dribble by Harding, and mid-field was the scene of operations.

A grand burst from a line-out took Gloucester close again, but they were driven out by a big forward rush. At this juncture Young returned amidst encouraging applause.

With matters equal the visitors got away, and Biggs, intercepting a pass, looked a certain scorer. Romans just missed him, but Harrison pounced on the Cardiffian at the critical moment and saved the try. Immediately after half-time was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 1 goal, 1 try
London Welsh 1 try

Hawker re-started, Biggs allowing the ball to go to touch well inside the visitors' half. Hudson was conspicuous with a bit of footwork down touch, and the forwards joining in Young was severely pressed. He, however, relieved in grand style, finding touch outside the 25.

A cross kick by Stephens put Maddocks in possession, but he was robbed, and a City player kicked out of play. A mistake by Stephens allowed the Welshmen to get away with a dangerous dribble, but Gloucester saved. Some exciting play followed at the centre, ending in the home team gaining a fine opening, but over-eagerness lost the chance.

A lot of loose play ensued, in which the rival teams in turn got the advantage. Gent was prominent with a clever save, but Lewis replied for the Welshmen with a neat run. Harrison upset him, but the Newportonian was up again and got in his kick. Heeling by the City forwards enabled Gent to set Stephens going, and Hudson taking a short pass shot through beautifully. When hemmed in he passed wildly, and a visitor receiving he punted down to Romans. The latter was closely hampered by Maddocks, but he managed to get in his kick.

Just now there was some rough work between some of the forwards, the tackling being too keen at times. Gloucester, by dint of grand all-round work, gained the upper hand, Stephens working in great style. Hudson missed a likely opening by knocking on a transfer from Harrison, and in the next minute Stephens was all but over. Mistakes in handling lost Gloucester ground, and the Welshmen found a footing at mid-field.

Here some desperate work ended in Harding and "Whacker" Smith coming to blows, the Welsh International being the offender. There was a general scuffle, but the players were separated, and after shaking hands the game was resumed.

Some loose kicking in the open gave the Welshmen an opening, but the ball was over-run. Later it was sent over the line, and Romans conceded a minor. Romans dropped out with a lovely kick, which bounded into touch inside the Welsh half.

From this point Gloucester hotly assailed their opponents' lines. "Whacker" Smith getting possession from the halves, dodged superbly, and made a desperate effort to cross, but was held outside. The Welshmen relieved temporarily, but Gloucester got back again, chiefly through Stephens. The visitors' defence was fine, but Gloucester kept at it, and finally Stephens, with a pretty move, slipped the opposition and went over with a neat try. Romans goaled, and Gloucester led by ten points.

Harding resumed, and there was no easing up. The Welsh backs, from a passing bout, looked dangerous, Lewis running well. He, however, was well collared by Harrison amidst the shouts of the spectators. In the next few minutes the Welshmen held their own, but Hall proved very useful to Gloucester with some neat kicks to touch. Young, with a fine kick, placed the visitors on the home 25, where there was some exciting work. The ball was eventually sent over the line, where Hudson touched down.

Following the drop-out, "Whacker" Smith distinguished himself by stopping Lewis and collaring Maddocks, and then the Gloucester forwards indulged in some brilliant exchanges. An opening presented itself, but it was not accepted. To the end the game was vigorously contested, but nothing further was scored.

RESULT :

Gloucester 2 goals, 1 try (13 points)
London Welsh 1 try (3 points)

GLOUCESTER A v. SOUTH END.

At Kingsholm on Tuesday morning, a late start being made. The Seconds opened well, and following a neat bout of passing Smith cross-kicked under the visitors' goal, South End luckily saving. The End kicked out of danger, but a clever move initiated by Hughes led to Cook scoring a good try. Curtis failed at goal.

Resuming, Gloucester maintained a hot pressure, and the South defence was sorely taxed. Smith (St. Mark's) was only pushed to touch a yard outside, and this was followed by several fruitless drops at goal. Subsequent play was very scrumbly, but entirely confined to the South half. Smith relieved the monotony with a clever dash down touch, and then the End, with a loose forward rush, got down to Watts, who was pulled down near his line. The visitors played up strongly, carrying several scrums in good style, but the backs were at fault, and Gloucester cleared. At half-time the Seconds led by a try to nil.

On the restart, South End by resolute forward play got close to the home line, where a succession of scrums and lines out followed a few yards outside. The defence, however, proved equal to all emergencies and eventually relief was gained by conceding a minor. Immediately on the drop-out the End returned to the attack, but a penalty taken by Cook enabled Gloucester to reach the centre. The game, however, was totally devoid of interest, consisting in the main of scrambling forward play. Gloucester had the better of the exchanges during the last five minutes, but nothing further was done.

RESULT :

Gloucester A	1 try (3 points)
South End	Nil