

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1905.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. STROUD.

THE ALL WHITES ROUTED.

For their match with Stroud at Kingsholm to-day Gloucester had a sadly disorganised team, only two of the regular backs (Romans and "Whacker" Smith) being available. The other five players were taking part in the contest with Devon, as was also G. Matthews (forward). The vacancies were filled by Second teamers, with the addition of an old player of the First Fifteen who occasionally assists.

Stroud also had a difficulty in completing their team, W. Cull, Lester, Partridge, Gough, and King being absent, the last-named playing for the county. T. Cull was really unfit to play, and the front was completed by the inclusion of two St. Mark's (Gloucester) men, Draper and Blunt.

GLOUCESTER.	Positions.	STROUD.
G. Romans	Backs.	F. Johnson
H. Smith	Three-quarter	C. Smith
C. Smith	backs.	W. Pitt
C. Goddard	"	T. Cull
L. Vears	"	Dai Williams
A. Hall	Half-Backs.	C. Harrington
H. Ewers	"	C. H. Robinson
W. Johns (capt.)	Forwards.	F. Westbury
A. Hawker	"	H. Snell
B. Parham	"	- . Draper
J. Jewell	"	E. Wheatley
F. Pegler	"	F. W. Harrison
H. Collins	"	G. Denley
G. Vears	"	- . Blunt
J. Merchant	"	F. Coniam

THE GAME.

There was only a small attendance when the teams took the field in a shower of rain. Wheatley kicked off for Stroud from the Worcester-street end, Pegler returning to the centre. From the ensuing line-out the ball got loose, but no headway was made. From the first scrum the Stroud forwards got away, but Westbury was off-side, and Romans found touch near the 25 flag.

Romans misfielded, but it made no difference, as all the Stroud forwards were off-side, and were fetched back. Hubert Smith made a pretty opening, but "Whacker" Smith passed badly with the line practically at the mercy of Goddard and Vears, and a lovely chance was thrown away.

Stroud worked out of danger, and the ball was sent to Romans, who, however, replied with a good touch-finder. Again the Stroud line had a narrow escape, and Harrington touched down. A moment later Hall passed to "Whacker" Smith, who cut through beautifully and handed to Vears. The latter ran over and grounded behind the posts. Romans goaled.

Another bout of passing between Hawker, Goddard, "Whacker" Smith, and Hubert Smith gained a good slice of ground. The Gloucester forwards were heeling excellently, and twice in quick succession Hall got the ball away, but it went astray. However, Gloucester kept up the pressure, and Romans landed a magnificent penalty goal from well beyond the 25 line amidst great enthusiasm.

From the kick-off, Pegler received and dodged through a lot of opponents, but lost possession. Ewers cleverly tricked the opposition and set the left wing in motion again, but the men were too huddled together, and a knock-on resulted. L. Vears was responsible for a nice movement right across the ground, but Hubert Smith missed his pass. Another lovely open movement, initiated by Hall and carried on by Parham, Goddard, and L. Vears, carried the game right from the Stroud 25 to the other end.[*sic*]

Pitt intercepted Hall's pass close to the Stroud line, and Romans was collared in possession, but the ensuing scrum went in favour of the home men, and central play followed. The Gloucester forwards were getting the ball back practically every time, and after some nice passing, which completely baffled the Gothamites, Goddard put Vears over again with a try, which Romans easily converted.

From a long kick over the line Romans touched down, but the exchange of kicks which followed centred play. Hall set his third line in motion again, but Johnson effected a fine tackle of L. Vears and averted danger. Cull cut through prettily, but lost the ball, and Hubert Smith dodged half through the visitors, but passed very wildly, and the ball rolled into touch – a good individual effort spoilt by thoughtlessness.

"Whacker" Smith marked, and sent the game to the centre again. Then followed one of the finest tries ever scored on the ground. A scrum was formed beyond the half-way line, and Hall gathering beautifully from the feet of the Stroud half passed out to Goddard. The latter, after drawing the opposition to the wing, passed back inside, and after Goddard, Smith, and Parham had all handled, the latter passed to Johns, who put the finishing touch to a grand bit of play by scoring under the bar. The cheering was loud and long, and was repeated when Romans landed a goal.

Stroud paid a short visit to the Gloucester end, but were quickly beaten off to neutral ground again. They, however, returned to the attack, and Pitt was nearly through, but in endeavouring to dodge Romans he ran into the vice-like grip of "Whacker," and the movement ceased.

Pitt was temporarily disabled, but he resumed amidst encouraging applause. Romans was forced to run back behind his own line, but he managed to clear all right with a big punt from behind the line. The first penalty was then given against Gloucester, and Johnson landed a capital goal from the 25 line.

On resuming Gloucester quickly got going again, and the "Hall and Smiths combination" nearly brought it off on the right. Hubert, however, was flung to touch. At half-time Gloucester were attacking hotly.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 4 goals (1p)

Stroud 1 goal (p)

Having crossed over with a substantial lead, Gloucester quickly began scoring again, and before the second half was two minutes old the Gloucester forwards got the ball amongst them, and Johns ran through with a good try. Romans added the extra points.

Gloucester were now perfect masters of the situation, and Johns narrowly missed his third try a moment after the restart. The Gothamites, however, dead game, temporarily worked out of danger, but the superior passing of the homesters bothered them completely, and they were busy defending again very soon.

Again and again the Gloucester men indulged in brilliant passing, but then a Stroud man slipped away with the ball at his feet. He gathered nicely and kicked across, and it looked odds on a score, but Harrison mulled, and Romans, coming across at a great pace, stopped the movement for a moment. The ball, however, was taken over the Gloucester line, but Romans got back and touched down – a good save.

A moment later, Stroud, who had rallied strongly, forced "Whacker" to touch down again. Then the home men got going once more, and Vears and Goddard between them did the trick. In the opposite corner after more good passing Parham nearly scored, but Johnson touched down.

The Gloucester forwards were playing finely and controlling the ball well, but Cull intercepted smartly and had only Romans to beat. The latter, however, proved an insuperable stumbling block, and Cull threw forward when attacked.

The game was in neutral territory for some time, when the Stroud forwards came through a scrum in good style and reached the home 25. They were not long there, however, for the two Smiths got the ball and carried the game well in to the visitors' quarter. Here Ewers and Hall by pretty inter-passing beat the opposition easily, and the former was credited with a neat try. Romans could not quite negotiate the goal this time.

Gloucester continued to have the best of matters, and Hubert Smith took a drop for goal, but it was not a great attempt. Stroud relieved the pressure somewhat, but Vears was very nearly through on his own with a strong burst. He held too long, however, and was collared.

Stroud were nevertheless hard pressed, and from a scrum nearly on the line a movement by Hall, "Whacker," and Vears only just missed a score, the latter being bored into touch-in-goal. Gloucester were penalised for off-side, and Johnson found touch in the Gloucester 25, but Hall and Ewers evaded the Gotham halves beautifully, and the former got right away. He punted over Johnson's head, but failed to re-gather the ball before it went to touch.

Gloucester were not long to be denied further blood, for a few minutes later Hall and "Whacker" Smith made a lovely opening, and the latter handing to Hawker at the psychological moment, the City forward scored under the posts, and Romans goaled.

To the end Gloucester pressed, but did not add further to their aggregate.

RESULT :

Gloucester	6 goals (1p), 1 try (31 points)
Stroud	1 goal (p) (3 points)

REMARKS.

The wonderfully good show made by the weak City team came as a bit of a revelation to some of the Club's supporters, but it was nevertheless very welcome.

To give Stroud their just due, they too were suffering from absentees, but the most sanguine Gloucesterian hardly expected such a substantial margin in the home team's favour. That they deserved their victory there is not a shadow of doubt. They were superior to the Gothamites at all points, and practically had the whip-hand throughout.

The passing was, taking into consideration the disarrangement of the back division and the wet ball, of a very high standard, and few better and more interesting games have been witnessed on the home enclosure. The ball went from hand to hand with safety and rapidity, and the visitors were quite dumbfounded at the transfers, and were certainly, in this department, beaten pointless.

The visitors rarely opened out the game, for the very good reason that they very rarely got the ball, their forwards failing altogether to cope with the City men in the scrums.

At half, too, Hall and Ewers were immeasurably superior to their vis-a-vis, and with a winning pack fed the three-quarters liberally.

Here again Gloucester enjoyed the advantage, the whole line playing with such dash and success that it would be invidious to individualise. Romans was in excellent form, his kicking being well judged and accurate – the score sheet indicate[s] this – and his penalty goal was certainly a beauty.

Of the forwards nothing too complimentary can be written, all playing a sterling game, Johns, Vears, Hawker, Pegler, and Jewell perhaps being most to the fore.

For Stroud, Westbury, Harrison, and Wheatley did their best in the front to stem the tide of disaster, but with the exception of Johnson, who played well behind a beaten team, the backs were poor.

GLOUCESTER A v. CINDERFORD A.

At Cinderford.

The home team were without Hyett (playing for the first), Woolford (injured while at work on Wednesday), Smith, and Trafford.

Beach deputised for Hyett at full back, and J. Lewis and T. Niblett came in for Woolford and Smith at half.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 1 try (3 points)

Cinderford A Nil

Earle scored. A poor game.