

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1905.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. CINDERFORD.

CITY TEAM IN THE FOREST.

A HARD GAME.

VISITORS BEATEN BY A TRY.

FORESTERS MAINTAIN THEIR GROUND RECORD.

After a lapse of four years, fixtures were resumed between Gloucester and Cinderford this season, and the first of the two matches arranged was decided at Cinderford to-day. The visit of the City team naturally aroused the greatest interest in the Forest, and with the weather conditions extremely favourable a record gate was confidently looked forward to.

Cinderford's performances this season have attracted considerable attention, and the team took the field to-day with an unbeaten certificate as regards home matches, and a full record of 13 wins, one defeat (to Llanelly by a single point) and two drawn games.

Gloucester could not point to a similar record of achievements, but it must be remembered the class of teams met by the city are a bit above those opposed by Cinderford.

Gloucester have pulled up considerably since December, and of the last eight engagements, seven were won and one lost. Cinderford, however, are well known as redoubtable opponents at home, and with a knowledge of previous close games on the Recreation Ground, to-day's contest was looked upon as being a very open one.

Gloucester, unfortunately, were severely handicapped, owing to the inability of both their regular half-backs to turn out. Gent was at Cardiff, whilst the injury sustained by Stephens against London Welsh kept him out of the team.

A. Hall, the West End captain, deputised for Gent, and with regard to the outside position, Harrison was brought up from centre three-quarter, which let in E. Hall. These were the only changes from the side victorious last week, Quixley again doing duty for Johns (forward).

Cinderford were short of the Brothers Ridler, both down with influenza, and locally the Foresters were regarded as possessing more than an outside chance of obtaining a triumph over Gloucester.

The following were the teams : —

GLOUCESTER.	Positions.	CINDERFORD.
G. Romans	Backs.	F. Fields
C. Smith (capt.)	Three-quarter	O. Burgham
W. Hyam	backs.	W. Rhodes
E. Hall	"	J. Wright
A. Hudson	"	W. Smith
J. Harrison	Half-Backs.	T. Willstead (capt.)
A. Hall	"	F. Niblett
A. Hawker	Forwards.	A. Teague
F. Pegler	"	A. Smith
G. Vears	"	J. Hyndman
H. Collins	"	J. Bevan
H. Quixley	"	C. Russell
J. Jewell	"	G. L. Jones
B. Parham	"	H. Williams
G. Matthews	"	H. Trafford

Referee : Mr. A. LAWS (Bristol).

THE GAME.

A bitterly cold wind blew right across the ground, but there was a splendid attendance of spectators, the new grand-stand being well patronised.

Cinderford won the toss, and Romans kicked off down the hill. There was no response, and Hudson charging down robbed Fields, and Gloucester nearly scored in the first minute. Immediately after Cinderford conceded a minor. Following the drop-out the Cinderford forwards put in a fine rush, but the visitors saved. Then Harrison punted down, and Smith was forced to kick to touch near his 25.

Even play ensued until Cinderford made a good burst up to Romans, who put in a clever touch-kick. A punt and follow up by the Gloucester forwards saw Burgham tackled at midfield, and Gloucester made further headway. Play was exceptionally keen, the Cinderford forwards doing grand work.

A loose rush took the ball down to Romans, who was pulled down on his 25. Harrison cleared with a useful kick, but Cinderford replied with dashing footwork, and Gloucester were again pressed. A beautiful touch-finder by E. Hall gained a good slice of ground for the City, and this was followed by a brilliant loose forward rush, Rhodes saving finely at the critical moment.

Gloucester now attacked strongly, and Harrison cut out a fine opening, but Hudson missed his pass with a walk in. Profiting by this lucky escape, Cinderford played up strongly, and a smart effort by Jones only just missed a try. Harrison brought relief with clever kicks, and Fields being at fault in fielding, Gloucester gained more favourable quarters. From this point the City worked close to their opponents' line, where the Cinderford defence was severely tested. A. Hall went very close twice, but the Foresters eventually cleared to midfield. Gloucester made another attempt to get through, but the passing was faulty, and the interval arrived with the score-sheet blank.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester Nil
Cinderford Nil

Cinderford re-started, Hawker replying with a fine punt over Fields' head. The home custodian had to run back, but managed to get the ball to touch in his 25. Cinderford worked out a few yards, but Gloucester sent them back with a dashing forward burst. Play was very scrambling, and out of some loose play the Foresters got to midfield.

A mistake by Burgham was taken full advantage of by Smith, who dribbled well down to Fields. The latter, however, succeeded in turning the ball out of play. Gloucester were in a good position for attack, and the ball coming out the backs tried passing. E. Hall, however, was smothered as he was about to pass, and lost the ball. The Cinderford forwards came right away, and the game was carried right to the Gloucester line. Play was desperate now, but Harrison changed the venue with a clever kick to touch. The same player later gave Cinderford an anxious moment, but the situation was saved.

Rhodes sneaking a Gloucester pass ran and punted over Romans' head, and this gave Cinderford a distinct advantage. Vigorous play followed, play being mainly of the kick and rush order. Operations were confined to the Gloucester half, but there was no chance of an opening. Wright once swung out a wide pass to Burnham, but the latter was pulled down by Smith.

Cinderford continued to have the best of matters, and Gloucester had all their work cut out to successfully defend. At length from a scrum Niblett slipped over the line near the posts, amidst great enthusiasm. The goal-kick, however, failed, the ball touching a Gloucester man in transit.

Resuming, Gloucester gained a footing in the home end, but fumbling behind lost ground, and Cinderford again returned with a warm attack. Passing saw the ball go out to Burgham, but some infringement occurred.

Gloucester worked out of danger, only to see Cinderford return with a desperate forward burst, which was only stopped in the nick of time. In the last few minutes Gloucester made a big effort to draw level, but were unsuccessful.

RESULT :

Cinderford 1 try (3 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS.

It was a desperately fought game, and on the play Cinderford just about deserved to win. Gloucester ought to have done better with their chances, one or two nice openings being lost. Cinderford, however, suffered also through mistakes, but faulty handling was excusable in such bitterly cold weather.

Cinderford made the game a forward one, and the Foresters' fine pack were seen to great advantage in loose rushes. In the scrums Gloucester were better, but in other respects the advantage rested with the home eight. At half, A. Hall and Harrison did good work, the latter especially.

There was not much work for the three-quarters on either side in attack, and combined movements were few. Rhodes played cleverly for Cinderford, whilst E. Hall was best for Gloucester. The full-backs were about equal. The try by Niblett was a simple one, the Cinderfordian being unmarked.

Cinderford's victory was naturally hailed with enthusiasm by their supporters, and great satisfaction was expressed that the Foresters had maintained their ground record.

Gloucester were regarded as the severest trial of the season, and the team think they can go through the remaining fixtures all right.

GLOUCESTER A v. CINDERFORD A

CITIZENS PILE ON POINTS.

These teams were opposed at Kingsholm, meeting for the first time this season. The success attendant upon the Cinderford Premier XV. has been reflected upon their Second string, and with the performances the visitors have already given this season Gloucester A realised they would have to go all the way to secure victory.

The teams lined out as follows : —

Gloucester A. — J. Watts, back; H. Hughes, E. Hook, H. Cook, and L. Vears, three-quarter backs; H. Smith and H. Ewers, half-backs; F. Pyart (capt.), H. Taylor, R. Davis, H. Wixey, R. Craddock, C. Voyce, T. Meadows, and H. Lane, forwards.

Cinderford A. — S. Thomas, back; R. Adams, J. Cowmeadow, F. Parker, and F. Trafford, three-quarter backs; A. Hall and W. Beach, half-backs; F. Butt, T. Webb, H. Jones, T. Price, G. Leighton, J. Hayward, W. Phillips, and R. Dobbs (capt.), forwards.

Referee : Mr. G. Page.

The night's frost had been nicely taken out of the ground, which was in capital condition. There was a fair crowd of spectators present. Cinderford were twenty minutes late.

The visitors won the toss, and chose to defend the Kingsholm end. Immediately after the start Cinderford were penalised for off-side, and from the kick Gloucester got down, and play ensued in the Cinderford 25. From here the citizens worked down into position, and a scrum was ordered not far out from the line. A pass was missed and that spoiled things, the Foresters rushing up to mid-field.

The City representatives returned to the attack. Watts waited too long for the ball, with the result that it went into touch, and the leather saw mid-field again.

The Cinderfordians then got into the home half for the first time. Hughes intercepted cleverly a kick from S. Thomas, and sent smartly across the field. From this a rush was made, which resulted in Meadows crossing with a try, which Vears converted.

With a lead thus early established the Citizens were put in a scoring mood. Hughes again distinguished himself with a kick and a speedy follow-up, and the visitors' citadel was once more in danger.

Chances were missed, however, and the Foresters' front line got away, but Watts stemmed the tide in good time, and the ball went into touch at mid-field. A visitor made his mark and the ball came to Cook, who returned it up-field. Scrambling play in the centre followed, in which there was little of interest.

The visitors were working down into position, when Ewers relieved with a neat run, but held the ball too long. Further progress was made by another corkscrew evolution by a home forward, and the Foresters' defence was kept busy. Thomas relieved his side with a mark. There was a marked dislike to opening up the game, and the sequence of scrums became tiresome.

At last Cinderford assumed the aggressive, and gave the Citizens' defenders some work. The leather indulged in a flight into the other half of the field, bringing relief for the homesters, and the result of a race for possession saw Thomas find touch in his own 25 just in time. The home team were not making the best of things, and allowed their opponents to get possession when they should have scored, with the result that Cinderford invaded Gloucester ground again.

A capital dribble by the Citizens' front line put the home team again in a favourable position, but nothing resulted. Play was very keen, but gave evidence of more good intentions than scientific accomplishments. Vears got away all alone, but was off-side. The centre of the field was freely patronised for some little while. Eventually the visiting forwards had a chance, but Watts spoiled their tactics.

The home team made periodical incursions into Cinderford territory with ineffectual results, and play was pretty evenly contested. Hook marked, and Vears essayed a kick for goal about 12 yards in front of the Cinderford 25. A good attempt to score just went outside the post.

An effort of the home three-quarters was brought to naught, a pass being snapped up by a Cinderford forward, who was, however, "downed" in time. Both sides were tackling well, and it was not easy to get away with the ball.

The Gloucester forwards got the leather at their feet and dribbled half the field. A score seemed certain, but the ball was touched down in the nick of time. Cinderford then pressed. Hughes bungled, but smartly recovered. Ewers made his mark in the "All Reds" 25. From this Vears ran over, and scored behind the posts. He converted his own try, and thus gave the homesters the substantial lead of 10 points.

Resuming, Cinderford came away with a rush, and should have been penalised for off-side. Watts rose to the emergency and stopped the movement.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A	2 goals
Cinderford A	Nil

Cinderford celebrated the re-start by an aggressive movement, and paid a visit to the homesters' 25. Vears found touch in an emergency, and Ewers helped his team to a few yards more. Cook ran away, and transferred well, but the chance was lost. Then Ewers got away, and whilst the Foresters were engaged in a discussion anent a question of touch, scored between the posts, Vears again converting.

A 15-points' lead practically assured victory for the homesters, who continued to have all the game, and they settled down for a regular siege of the visitors' citadel. Vears and Hook put in a splendid run, and were stopped only just in time, a scrum ensuing five yards out. From this the Foresters had to concede a minor.

Pyart initiated a delightful piece of combination among the three-quarters, who, transferring and receiving in true Welsh International style, sent Hughes over in the corner. The attempt to majorise proved a failure. This was followed by another effort which should have meant points, Vears fumbling Hook's pass when right on the line.

Watts' position was becoming a sinecure, but such times as the leather did roll his way it was speedily returned into the "All Reds' " 25, which was the theatre of operations. Gloucester were penalised. By a desperate effort the visitors changed the venue for a minute to Gloucester ground, but Hughes found touch in the Foresters' compound, and the Citizens returned to the attack. Cooke got away, but at the critical moment failed to transfer to Vears, who had a clear run in. Another splendid chance was lost by off-side play.

Opportunities came to the Gloucestersians time after time, but were not adequately accepted. Cinderford adopted aggressive tactics, and got into a good position near the home line. For a while the aspect of the game changed, the visitors maintaining the pressure. The immediate peril was met by the home defence in an effective manner.

Once or twice the City three-quarters got away, but would not pass freely enough. Then Hook and Vears contributed a noteworthy run down three-parts of the ground. The former gave to his comrade at the exact moment, and Vears went over the line with no one to stop him. The same player converted.

Cinderford were thoroughly and decisively beaten, but played up with plenty of vigour, and re-starting, rushed the leather to the home line, where they were narrowly prevented from registering points. They kept at it in ding-dong fashion, playing a hard game. Manœuvring near the Gloucester citadel they made repeated efforts, but met with no success.

RESULT :

Gloucester A4 goals, 1 try (23 points)
Cinderford A Nil

REMARKS.

A game in which, until after half-time, science was somewhat at a discount, resulted in easier victory for the Citizens than their most sanguine supporter could have reckoned upon. Cinderford throughout played a hard, sturdy game, and at no time allowed the odds against them to daunt their spirits.

The home team were, however, superior at all points, and having beaten the visitors forward the three-quarters were given plenty of opportunities for distinguishing themselves, which altogether they did, though fault might be found in evident disinclination to part with the ball. Indeed, the score should have been even heavier than it was had the passing been more free.

Taken as a whole the City Seconds showed capital form. Vears was pre-eminent, his place kicking being particularly good. Hughes, Hook, Cook, and Ewers were noticeable for excellent endeavours, whilst Watts was a very safe custodian and kicked with judgment and accuracy.

Cinderford were unfortunate in not scoring towards the end of the game, when they maintained a heavy pressure on the home defence and hovered dangerously near the line.