

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 1905.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. NORTHAMPTON.

BRILLIANT GAME AT KINGSHOLM.

NOTABLE VICTORY FOR GLOUCESTER.

Early in the season Northampton, by superior play, defeated the City team by 10 points to 4, and this fact added to the interest taken in to-day's return match at Kingsholm. Gloucester were minus the services of G. Vears and H. Collins, whilst Northampton came short of Leigh (full-back), Preston (half), and West (forward). Two of the vacancies were filled by Nuneaton players – Andrews and Lee. The afternoon turned out fine, but the attendance at the advertised time of starting was very poor, but the crowd was appreciably augmented afterwards. The teams lined out at 2.55 as follows : –

GLOUCESTER.	Positions.	NORTHAMPTON.
G. Romans	Backs.	F. Coles
C. Smith	Three-quarter	L. H. Johnson
E. Hall	backs.	H. C. Palmer
J. Harrison	"	H. Palmer
A. Hudson	"	J. H. Miles
D. R. Gent	Half-Backs.	H. E. Kingston
J. Stephens	"	A. J. Andrews
W. Johns (capt.)	Forwards.	A. Lee
B. Parham	"	J. Mason
A. Hawker	"	H. B. Follitt
F. Pegler	"	J. W. Warren
J. Jewell	"	A. J. Hobbs
G. Matthews	"	A. C. Chalmers
H. Taylor	"	G. Burke
H. Quixley	"	C. W. Skempton

Referee : Mr. W. PALMER (Bristol)

THE GAME.

The visitors started the game from the Worcester-street goal, and after an exchange of kicks Romans fumbled, and only got in a poor kick to touch near the home 25.

From the throw-out Parham gained possession and sent to the centre, where there was a spell of loose play ending in favour of Northampton, who forced the game to the home quarter. A miss by Gent let the visitors very close, and Miles picking up was only held up in the nick of time. Romans eventually secured and passed to Hudson, who raced down touch to midfield, where he lost the ball in trying to pass.

A clever bit of play by Gent improved matters for Gloucester, Miles being collared well inside his half. Here the City forwards heeled, and the backs indulged in a clever bout of passing; Smith, the last to receive, kicking to touch. Gent receiving punted across the ground, where Hudson and Miles came in collision, and the latter was temporarily laid out. He appeared dazed, and had to be led off the field.

Resuming, Northampton worked out with clever footwork, but Stephens, from a pass by Gent, cut through and punted to Coles, who marked on his line. The kick was a poor one, and Gloucester still confined play to the visitors' end. Gent made a mark neatly outside the 25, but Romans' kick was a long way out.

The Northampton backs next put in a nice bit of combination, and H. Palmer got well away. Harrison, however, intercepted, and ran back, finally passing to Stephens. The latter ran to the full-back and threw inside, but the transfer was not taken, and a certain try lost. Northampton relieved slightly, but E. Hall intercepting ran clear through and looked all over a scorer, when he slipped and fell a few yards from the line.

Play was exceptionally fast, and a clever run by H. Palmer gave the visitors a good opening, but the pass was knocked on. Then a kick sent the ball to Miles, who was hampered by Hudson and forced to kick.

A Gloucester player was knocked out, but the ball not being dead the game continued. E. Hall with a pretty feint started a series of exchanges, in which Hawker shone. A transfer to Parham took the latter to near the line, when he handed to Matthews, who scored a try. Romans added the extra points.

Miles had rejoined his comrades some few minutes before this incident. The re-start was well returned, and play continued fast and interesting. Gloucester were doing exceptionally well, and following a smart bit of work from a line-out by Hawker, Hudson was given possession, and with a strong run scored wide out. Romans made a good attempt at conversion.

Stephens replied to the drop-out, and early on the Gloucester backs were prominent with some fine passing. Harrison ran down and sent out to Hudson, who had only Coles to beat, but trying to cut inside he slipped – hard lines for another score.

Gloucester pressed severely in subsequent play, but a useful kick brought Northampton relief. Stephens, however, sent back, and Smith following up carried Coles and the ball to touch inside the 25. Soon afterwards Northampton had to concede a minor.

After the kick-out the visitors showed up well in kicking, but Romans made his mark, and saved nicely. Good work in the loose by the East Midlanders gained them a lot of ground, and Parham failing to hold, the visitors got very dangerous. Romans stopped them with a smart pick up and kick to touch.

Play hovered in the Gloucester 25, the visitors working desperately for a score. Gent brought temporary relief with a timely kick, but [the] Northampton backs, with a fast combined run got on the attack. Miles made a very fine effort to cross, but was pulled down on the line by a couple of Gloucester players. The City forwards worked out a little, but Miles picking up in the loose, tried to bore his way through and was again hurt, having to leave the field.

Resuming Mason came out at three-quarter and with an extra man in the scrum Gloucester quickly changed the venue. Gent fed Stephens nicely and there was promise of a nice bout of passing, but Smith sent a bad transfer to Hall. The latter in the next minute put in a fine punt to Coles, who returned to the centre, where play was contested at the interval.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 1 goal, 1 try
Northampton Nil

Hawker re-started for Gloucester, who now had to face the strong sun. The ball went to touch near the centre, where play was fought out for a brief period. Both sets of backs were early set in motion, but the tackling was sound. Harrison was eventually conspicuous with a clever run down the touch-line, beating several opponents neatly, but he was collared from behind when nearly through. On the 25 line Gent fed Stephens, and the ball came right along the home line of three-quarters to Smith, who raced for the corner. H. Palmer tried to tackle the Gloucesterian, but he was hit off, and Smith got the ball down safely amidst applause. Romans failed at goal.

Immediately on the drop-out, Gent worked out a beautiful opening, and with five Gloucester men to a couple of opponents a score appeared a certainty. E. Hall, however, missed Smith's pass with a walk over the line. The mistake, however, mattered very little, for in less than a couple of minutes Harrison, fielding from a loose kick, feinted and dodged and scored a clever try, which Romans could not improve.

On the drop-out Gloucester got on the attack again, and Harrison, with another wonderful run, in which he beat the opposition in simple fashion, ran over in a good position. Romans added the extra points.

Northampton, though out-pointed so badly, played up pluckily, and with a good movement reached the centre. Miles returned at this stage, and almost immediately H. Palmer raced along from a pass by Kingston. Johnson took his transfer all right, but Romans bored him to touch.

This was the first time Northampton had crossed the centre this half, but they were quickly cleared, and Gloucester were hot on the attack again, mainly through a clever individual effort by Gent. Faulty play in fielding lost Gloucester this advantage, and Northampton gradually removed the game to more favourable quarters. Kingston made one strong burst for the East Midlands but the collaring was sound, and the movement he started was checked in good time.

Near the centre Gent fed Stephens, and the ball went from the latter through the hands of Hall and Harrison to Hudson, who made off at top speed. Coles confronted the Gloucester left wing, but he was cleverly beaten, and Hudson finished up a grand effort by scoring behind the posts. Romans converted, making the total points 24.

Northampton re-started, but they were forced to defend, the Gloucester forwards putting in some telling footwork. Clever combination by Gent and Stephens placed Gloucester in a good position, but a high pass from a forward was snapped by Miles near his 25. He was partially held, but shook himself free, and running strongly came down to Romans. The latter failed to stop the International, and though Hudson effected a collar on the line, Miles was not prevented from scoring a well-deserved try, and one that was heartily applauded. Kingston just failed at conversion.

Gloucester resumed, and play was of a fast, open nature. Hudson got in another strong run, but Coles and Johnson brought him down on the line. The City forwards once or twice looked dangerous with loose rushes, but Northampton saved well. H. Palmer relieved with a neat run for the visitors, but the Gloucester backs responded with a truly brilliant combined effort. Smith received from Hall, and when tackled by Coles re-passed to Hall, who scored easily. Romans goaled with a neat kick.

The visitors re-started, and Matthews was at once prominent with a fine dribble, which took the ball half the length of the ground. Northampton retaliated with some running and passing, and a splendid kick by Coles sent to touch near the Gloucester line.

Gloucester worked out by clever footwork, and a combined dribble saw Coles beaten. Johns picked up and went for the line, but he was collared from behind, and Northampton saved luckily. To the end the pace was well maintained, but there was no further scoring, and a truly delightful game ended in a brilliant win for Gloucester.

RESULT :

Gloucester 4 goals 3 tries (29 points)

Northampton 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS.

The games with Northampton are generally productive of some interesting football, but to-day's contest will stand out as the finest display of the series. It was an exhibition that appealed to the spectators, being delightfully open and free from anything approaching foul or shady tricks.

Gloucester's brilliant win came as a great surprise, but though the score rather exaggerates the superiority of the City team, it must be confessed the East Midlanders were a thoroughly beaten side. In no really first-class match this season have the Gloucester players been seen to such advantage. The men excelled themselves in every department, forwards and backs combining in a remarkable manner.

Northampton undoubtedly suffered in having Miles off the field for some time, but Gloucester were playing in such irresistible style that the presence of the International could not have effected the run of the game to any serious extent. Seldom indeed has so many exceptionally fine tries been recorded in one afternoon at Kingsholm. Several of the points were registered from over the half-way line, and after movements which were carried out with remarkable precision.

Gloucester early took the game in hand, and it was hard luck that the City did not have an advantage of more than eight points at the interval. Both Hudson and E. Hall cleared the defence cleverly, but had the misfortune to slip a few yards from the line, and could not recover before being pounced upon.

The pace throughout was terrific, the ball travelling up and down the ground at a great rate. Gloucester for the most part held an advantage forward, and this gave Gent and Stephens opportunities which the Gloucester couple were not slow to avail themselves of. At the base of the scrum Gent was in splendid form, and again and again he circumvented the watching tactics of the opposing couple.

Stephens at outside half, was also on the top of his form, and the home three-quarters were kept continually on the move. In pace Northampton had the pull, but the superior cleverness and resource of the Gloucester third line were continually in evidence. In the centre Harrison was trickiness personified, and his two tries were obtained with a coolness and simplicity that was perfectly astounding.

The Northampton players were completely mystified with the feint to pass, and on the second occasion Harrison beat half a dozen men and not a single hand was laid on him. Hall was not so safe as usual in taking his passes, but apart from this he was wonderfully smart, and always kicked a beautiful length.

On the respective wings Hudson and Smith greatly distinguished themselves, The former's second try was only surpassed by Miles' great effort later in the game, whilst Smith showed splendid judgment in re-passing to his centre, the movement being attended with success on one occasion. The passing and running of the Gloucester backs were a treat to witness, and it is to be hoped the men will exhibit the same aptitude in next week's cup final.

The Northampton backs were a dangerous lot when on the move, Miles especially running very strongly. The International sustained concussion as the result of his collision with Hudson, but after being knocked out a second time he came back to assist his colleagues, and scored after a wonderful run, which was enthusiastically applauded. H. Palmer made one or two clever dashes, but he was not allowed much licence.

Kingston divided his attentions between half-back and centre three-quarter, and in both positions he was noticeable for some clever work. Andrews was not a great success at half, and the visitors undoubtedly missed the services of Preston, their smart scrum worker.

At full-back, Coles was several times beaten cheaply, but he kicked well though not always finding touch. Romans was in excellent all-round form, his goal-kicking being very good.

Of the Gloucester forwards, Hawker, Johns, Matthews, and Pegler were the pick of a clever eight, the first-named being continually prominent in the open. The first try scored by Gloucester came as the result of a movement initiated by Hawker, and on several other occasions he got the ball well away to the three-quarters. Matthews' footwork was again a feature, and he was well seconded by John.

For Northampton, Follitt played a hard game, and Hobbs, Chalmers, and Burke put in a lot of useful work.

GLOUCESTER A v. ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE.

EASY WIN FOR THE SECONDS.

On the College Ground, Cheltenham. From a good bout by the three-quarters Hughes ran in with a try in the corner, but Vears failed to majorise. Shortly afterwards Wixey picked up in the loose and scored a second try, Vears failing at the kick. Gloucester continued to have the better of matters, but did not add to their score up to the interval.

Early in the second half the visiting three-quarters were seen in good form, but the College played a plucky game and defended well for some time. Eventually Vears scored, the same player converting.

Immediately after Hughes ran over, but the pass was a forward one. The Collegians worked to the visitors' quarters, but Gloucester soon came back with a run, and Vears crossed but again the pass was forward.

The next minute Ewers cut through beautifully, and scored another unconverted try. Smith followed with another a few minutes later.

The homesters again came away to the Gloucester 25, but did not remain long, and Gloucester gradually worked towards the homesters' goal line. Picking up from a scramble a few yards out Hall beat all opposition and crossed, Vears converting.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 2 goals 4 tries (22 points)
Training College Nil