

THE CITIZEN

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1905.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. LONDON WELSH.

KEEN GAME AT KINGSHOLM.

THE WELSHMEN BEATEN.

The return fixture between these teams was played at Kingsholm on Wednesday. The previous game, in London, went in favour of the Welshmen by one goal to nil, this being their first victory over the City club. Gloucester were without Hudson, whose place was taken by H. Hughes, of the A team. The visitors brought a strong side, including several Welsh internationals. The teams were : —

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

London Welsh. — A. R. Phillips, back; T. J. David, H. T. Maddocks, W. Harvey, and J. T. Timmins, three-quarter backs; C. F. Rowlands and J. Hillman, half-backs; A. F. Harding (capt.), J. F. Williams, J. C. Jenkins, C. T. Hawkins, F. H. Clay, H. G. Thomas, G. Travers, and H. Coppock, forwards.

THE GAME.

The weather was beautifully fine, and there was again a capital attendance. The visitors kicked off, and Romans returned to the centre, where some desultory play followed. Gloucester at length opened out, and the ball came right across to Hughes, who was floored by David.

From the line-out the Gloucester forwards dribbled through, but they were stopped by Timmins kicking to touch. Maddocks just previously had to be attended to for an injury sustained against Cardiff on Saturday.

Resuming, the Welsh forwards broke away with a loose rush, but Hall checked them beautifully and got in a good kick to touch. Heeling by the visitors saw Hillman feed David, but the latter was thrown out of play. Gloucester replied with some useful footwork, and Stephens, with a useful punt, sent play to the Welsh 25.

In some loose work Rowlands picked up and sent to Harvey, who yielded to Maddocks. The wing man went down touch at a good pace and shook off Smith, but Romans brought him down. The Gloucester forwards made headway from a line-out, and next Gent initiated a series of exchanges. Smith missed Hall and sent to Harrison, who ran some distance, but was collared in trying to double inside.

Merchant, from a throw-out, burst away and passed to Parham, but a forward transfer was ruled. With a grand wheel the visitors carried play to the Gloucester half, where Rowlands tried to open out, but the passing went astray. Gent marked nicely under pressure, but Romans failed to find touch with the kick. Parham and Harding collided just now, but both were soon able to resume.

Gloucester at once broke away, and Parham fielded cleverly in the open, but a wide pass to Hughes was not taken. A sharp pass from the scrum by Gent to Stephens was missed, and Hughes failing to gather he had to kick to touch to save. Near mid-field Gent started his backs going, and considerable ground was gained with a combined movement. Smith's re-pass, however, was not taken.

Play was confined to the Welsh half, where Hillman was penalised for off-side, but little ground was made. Stephens, failing to take a low pass from Gent, Rowlands kicked down the field, Romans sending to touch. Gloucester worked out with a good forward rush, but Maddocks sent them back with a clever screw kick to touch.

Passing by the visitors went astray, and Hughes stepping in he tried to get clear, but was stopped. He essayed a transfer to Hall, but it was not taken, and the Welsh easily saved. Ensuing play was very scrappy and lacking in incident. The Welsh, however, got close to the home line, and from a cross-kick by David the ball went over the line, and Romans sent dead.

The drop-out was well followed up, and a visitor losing possession, Merchant picked up and got well away. He was, however, collared from behind, and losing the ball a Welshman ran back. Harvey now worked at half-back in conjunction with Hillman, and the pair tried hard to feed their backs, but their attempts were not very successful. Gloucester followed suit, and the right wing put in some capital exchanges, but Smith's re-pass was knocked on by an opponent. The Welshmen worked back with strong forward play, and from a kick over the line a minor was conceded.

On the re-start Gent got the better of some exchange kicking with Phillips, but later Romans failed to gather a kick, and he was at once pounced upon. From a line-out Harding burst away in grand style, and a score appeared certain. The pass was not taken, and though the ball was subsequently dribbled over the Gloucester line, it went dead just as Harding got up. Soon after the drop-out the interval was sounded.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester Nil
London Welsh Nil

Hawker resumed, and the return found touch at the centre line. Gloucester secured in the throw-out, and made good progress with some exchanges, but a pass forward spoiled the movement.

Some loose kicking followed, ending in little advantage to either side. From the next scrum Stephens fumbled a pass from Gent, and Hillman coming along picked up and passed, but the next transfer went yards forward.

Hughes was next prominent with a couple of good tackles, and then from a punt by Stephens Smith followed up and tackled Maddocks. The ball getting loose Stephens cross-punted, but the Welshmen saved. Gloucester, however, got on the attack, and Hughes forced a minor with a kick over the line.

There were a series of marks to either side on the drop-out, and then came a beautiful combined effort by the Gloucester backs. Gent started it, and Stephens, Harrison, and Hall handled in turn. The centre ran up to Maddocks, and then yielded to Smith, who raced down, and jumping the full-back scored a grand try. Romans made a feeble attempt at conversion.

On the re-start Gloucester showed up strongly again, and Hall with a clever dribble carried the ball past the opposition and raced for a try, but Timmins beat him on the post and touched down. Play was exceptionally fast on the resumption, both sides doing well. A long kick down transferred play to the home 25, where Hillman got the ball out. Rowlands raced through, but passed forward to Maddocks.

Gloucester were hotly pressed for a couple of minutes, but Gent brought relief with a clever bit of footwork, and Stephens gained further ground with a timely punt to touch. Inside the Gloucester half the home backs started passing, and Hall kicked to the open, and following up put his men on-side. Matthews gathered, but was collared from behind, and a scramble ensued, in which Phillips was injured and had to be assisted off the field.

Harding went full-back on the game being continued, and the Gloucester forwards were soon conspicuous with a good rush, which took play well inside the Welshmen's half. Here Gent got the ball out to Stephens, but Harrison's transfer to Hall was very slow. The centre, seeing Smith had absolutely no chance on the wing, took a drop for goal, and with a lovely kick added four points to the score amidst great cheering.

Collins replied well to the re-start, and Harding, misjudging the ball, he had some difficulty in getting his kick to touch. Hall was twice to the fore with clever touch-finders, and then for palpable off-side by Hillman and Harvey Gloucester were awarded a penalty. Romans had a place for goal, and a beautifully judged kick just failed, the ball dropping a foot or so short of the cross-bar.

Phillips now resumed playing, but Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges. Harding at length broke away with a fine run, but the International slipped and lost a promising opening. The ball later came across to the Welsh left wing, and Williams looked dangerous, but Harrison effected a good tackle. There was some hot forward work in front of the grand stand, and the referee had to warn a visitor.

Continuing, Johns securing a line-out, ran clear, but Williams smothered him from behind when the captain was just about to pass. Gent and Stephens, with clever play down touch, gained Gloucester a lot of ground, but Harding (who was playing outside the scrum) changed the venue. Good kicking by the Welsh backs took play to the home 25, and Harvey and Hillman were nearly through. The Welsh tried hard for a score, but the defence was too sound.

Then Hughes, with a big kick, sent to Phillips, who misjudged the flight of the ball, which went behind him. He had to run back, and Pegler following up charged down his kick, but unfortunately the ball turned into touch, or the Gloucester forward would have had a certain try. The Welshmen got out of danger, and the last four minutes' play was in the Gloucester end.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal (d), 1 try (7 points)
London Welsh Nil

REMARKS.

Gloucester were extended this afternoon, especially in the first half, when the powerful forward contingent representing the Welshmen were seen to advantage. The City pack, however, stuck pluckily to their opponents, and after the change of ends they held their own splendidly.

"Whacker" Smith's try was a very fine effort, and Hall's dropped goal, too, was very cleverly obtained. Play was inclined to be scrambling at times, but it was contested at a fast pace throughout. Outside the scrum Gloucester were decidedly superior, and against a less determined defence they would have scored several more tries.

Gent and Stephens were opposed to a smart couple in Hillman (the old Newport half) and Harvey (Pill Harriers), the latter changing places with Rowlands midway through the first half. Gent, however, was generally on top, and though Stephens missed some passes he did a lot of good work.

In the centre Hall played a champion game, and Harrison, with few opportunities, was very resourceful. Smith, who is going strongly just now, was of great service in defence, whilst in attack he took a lot of watching. Romans was again a reliable custodian. With a bit of luck he might have been credited with a couple of goals from the field.

The Welsh forwards were splendidly led by Harding, and the International was easily the pick of the side. Williams, Jenkins, and the rest of the pack were distinguished in loose footwork, whilst the eight heeled smartly at times.

The half-backs were the best pair that have represented the Welshmen at Gloucester, but the three-quarters were not effective in combination. Maddocks made a couple of good runs, but Timmins was not so prominent as usual. The full-back gave a decent display.