

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1906.

TO-DAY'S MATCHES.

GLOUCESTER v. STROUD.

SCRAMBLING GAME AT KINGSHOLM.

VICTORY FOR THE CITY.

For this match at Kingsholm Gloucester only had Romans and Stephens of the regular back division doing duty, whilst Matthews and Holder (forwards) were also absent. The two latter, with Hudson, Wood, and "Whacker" Smith were playing for the county at Exeter, and Gent and E. Hall are still on the "crooked" list. Stroud had J. Gough and Coniam away forward, both players being injured at work during the week, and Gorin was also an absentee.

There was only a moderate attendance when at 3.15 the teams took the field as follows : —

GLOUCESTER.	Positions.	STROUD.
G. Romans	Backs.	F. Johnson
L. Vears	Three-Quarter	C. Smith
E. Butler	Backs.	W. Pitt
J. Stephens	"	T. Cull
F. Smith	"	A. Price
A. Hall	Half-Backs.	B. Andrews
H. Smith	"	W. Cull
B. Parham (capt.)	"	F. Westbury
A. Hawker	Forwards.	H. Aston
W. Johns	"	F. D. Phillips
G. Vears	"	C. A. King
H. Collins	"	G. Denley
J. Merchant	"	R. Craddock
F. Pegler	"	H. Vickeridge
A. Purton	"	B. Fisher

Referee : Mr. J. H. Milburn (Bristol).

THE GAME.

Craddock started for Stroud from the Dean's Walk goal, H. Smith making only a poor return just outside his 25. Hawker, and later H. Smith, gained ground for Gloucester, and a useful forward rush took play to the Stroud end, where Johnson was forced to touch.

Off-side by Andrews gave Gloucester a free, and from ten yards inside the Stroud half Romans had a shot for goal. The ball went wide, and Pitt punted out to L. Vears, who was collared near the centre. In some loose play King kicked down the field, and the ball was taken to the home goal line, where it rolled to touch-in-goal, a narrow escape for a try.

Gloucester dropped out, Pitt getting in a clever return to touch. The Gloucester forwards made slight headway, and H. Smith, with a useful kick, found touch in the Stroud half. Here play settled for a brief period, but heeling by the Gloucester pack saw A. Hall open out. Stephens, however, was at fault in his transfers, and no ground was gained.

Working the short side of the scrum cleverly, A. Hall sent Smith away, and the latter punted, only to see Pitt mark under pressure. Johnson found touch with a nice kick. Gloucester still monopolised the ball in the scrum, but Andrews spoiled Hall twice in quick succession. From a burst by the City forwards, W. Cull fielded cleverly, and kicked to Romans, who, however, was very safe. Near the centre A. Hall broke away, and passing between the backs saw the Stroud defence beaten, and Collins was credited with a try near the posts. Romans failed at the easy place.

Stroud re-started, and even play followed at the centre. Andrews and W. Cull at length dribbled from a scrum, but Romans sent them back with a lovely touch finder. At mid-field A. Hall got hold, and a series of exchanges left L. Vears with possession, but he was stopped by Johnson and C. Smith.

From this point Gloucester started another attack, but F. Smith muffed his pass, and a Stroud man kicked clear. Hawker was prominent a moment later with a big punt to touch, and then in a scramble Westbury was knocked out, but soon resumed after attention. Ensuing play was scrambling, and frequent mistakes were noticeable. Stroud at length started passing, but Butler intercepted and had a clear field with the exception of Johnson. He, however, hesitated, and his transfer was knocked on by an opponent.

Operations were confined to the Stroud half, until W. Cull came away strongly. A. Hall, however, picked up cleverly and evaded several opponents in smart style. Some splendid kicking by Romans gained applause, but Stroud got out of danger by the aid of a penalty.

H. Smith was conspicuous with a neat run and pass to Butler, but the latter's pass to Vears was too high and wide, and a possible opportunity was lost. Gloucester still had the better of the exchanges, and Romans forced a minor from a kick over the line. The referee's whistle soon afterwards sounded the interval, but there had only been 30 minutes' play instead of 40.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 1 try
Stroud Nil

Parham resumed, Andrews replying to the centre. The Gloucester forwards got off with a good rush, but Pitt gathered nicely and got in a screw kick to touch well inside the home half. Subsequent play was fearfully scrambling, and the backs on both sides were often at fault.

Taking advantage of a mistake on the home side Stroud secured a good opening, but a knock-on spoiled whatever chance there was of a score. Gloucester kicked down, but Pitt, intercepting a pass, raced away, but was brought down from behind and his pass spoiled. Gloucester removed play by the aid of kicking, and later neat play by Stephens worked out a possible opening. Andrews, however, stopped the Gloucester forwards in daring style.

The City pack, carrying a scrum, used their feet well, but off-side stopped them at the 25-line. Hall fed Smith nicely, but in trying to cut inside the latter was tackled. Butler was next at fault in a passing movement, but a minute later L. Vears made a gallant attempt to score from a pass by Stephens.

Play still favoured Gloucester, and A. Hall, taking advantage of a mis-kick by an opponent, ran to Johnson, by whom he was smothered. Stroud worked out of danger, but, from a pass by Hall, Smith dashed through in good style, but he was checked in time.

Gloucester subsequently rushed down to Johnson pell-mell, but they were effectually stopped. A Gloucester forward picked up and threw out, but it was snapped up by a visitor, and Stroud rushed to the other end. Gloucester relieved, but Johnson, with some good touch kicking, kept the game at mid-field.

The City now heeled repeatedly, but their passing lacked finish. L. Vears had a good dash once, but C. Smith bored him to touch. Stroud made ground with useful kicks, but Gloucester worked back again, only to see the passing go astray. Andrews at length got the ball away to W. Cull, who fed Pitt, but Stephens took the ball out of the latter's arms, and passed to F. Smith, who failed to take.

Hawker, picking up in a loose scrum, tried to force himself through the opposition, but he succumbed to numbers. The Stroud line was subjected to a hot attack, but the defence prevailed. A lucky kick went to Romans, who ran and punted finely. L. Vears followed up and tackled Smith, and Stroud were again in danger. For standing off-side, T. Cull was penalised, and Gloucester got a free straight in front of goal. No charge was allowed, and Romans landed a good goal.

Stroud resumed, and Johnson from a free found touch well inside the home half. Owing to some misunderstanding in the throw out, Stroud got clear away, with the line at their mercy, but a home player saved at the critical moment.

Gloucester soon cleared from this position, but they were sent back again. Near the Gloucester line A. Hall passed back to Romans, who punted out. C. Smith fumbled, and L. Vears coming up dribbled away.

Johns and one or two other City forwards followed up and kicked past Johnson, but C. Smith got back and put in a punt which was fielded by Stephens. The latter passed to G. Vears, who handed on to a colleague, and finally the ball was sent to Collins, who galloped over the line. The movement deserved a try, but the last transfer was ruled forward, and the point consequently disallowed.

Stroud, by dint of hard work, got to the centre, where the Gloucester defence was cleared, but Gloucester saved luckily. The City transferred operations to more favourable quarters, and H. Smith came away, and dribbled past Johnson. Johns followed up and gathered, but slipped near the line and lost a certain try.

Stroud played up strongly, and a long kick to Romans was only moderately returned. Play was in the home half, where Stephens got a kick charged down. The ball bounced nicely for a Stroud forward, who gathered and passed to W. Cull, who ran in under the posts. Johnson kicked a goal, and only a single point now divided the teams.

Gloucester restarted with vigour, and the Stroud defence was hotly assailed. Inside the visitors' half H. Smith broke away cleverly, and Stephens taking a pass on the run, cut clean through to Johnson. A well-judged pass to F. Smith was nicely accepted, and the wing man completed a pretty movement by scoring a good try. Romans added the extra points, and made the game safe.

Gloucester held their opponents till the end.

RESULT :

Gloucester ...	2 goals (1p), 1 try (11 points)
Stroud	1 goal (5 points)

REMARKS.

At its best the game was of a poor standard, and neither team added in any way to their reputations. Gloucester, with the chances they had, ought to have appreciably augmented their score, but wild passing and faulty handling spoiled a number of promising movements.

Stroud were clearly outplayed in the scrums, where the City pack were greatly in evidence, but matters were fairly equal in the loose. The visitors played with determination all through, and were smart on the ball, but they did not show any particular cleverness in any phase of play. Westbury put in a lot of work against his old clubmates, and King, Phillips, and Craddock were a prominent trio. The Gloucester forwards again displayed a tendency to pick up the ball in loose rushes – a mistake which should at once be rectified.

Johns, Vears, Parham, and Collins played a sterling game, and the ex-captain had exceedingly hard lines in not scoring on one occasion. At the scrum, Albert Hall and Hubert Smith combined nicely, and if the pair had been properly supported, Gloucester would have run up a fairly tall score. Andrews was useful in stopping rushes for Stroud, and W. Cull made the best of the few opportunities which came his way. At three-quarter the form on both sides was inconsistent. Butler was a weak spot in the centre for Gloucester, but he will improve with experience. What he wants is more dash when in possession.

Stephens was at fault when Stroud scored, but he fully made amends for this mistake by sound and clever play at other points in the game. L. Vears, at left wing, was full of dash, and never failed to have a go for the line. F. Smith scored his try very prettily, but he has something to learn in the art of taking a pass. Now and again he appears to be too anxious to get the ball, with the result that a knock-on usually follows. Pitt was the more useful of the Stroud three-quarters, with T. Cull a good second. Neither of the wing men distinguished himself except in defence. At full-back Romans and Johnson were in good form, the latter holding a slight advantage in touch finding.

GLOUCESTER A v. OLD BOYS

THE OLD BOYS VICTORIOUS.

The Old Boys were at home to Gloucester A at Hempsted on Saturday afternoon, and a good crowd witnessed a capital sporting game, the Old Boys still maintaining their unbeaten certificate.

For the first twenty minutes the City Seconds held the advantage, but the Old Boys' defence was equal to the strain, the tackling being very close and keen. Eventually by capital footwork the Old Boys relieved and transferred operations to the other end. Some hot work followed in the Gloucester 25, and from a scrum the Old Boys front rank broke away in fine style, and rushed the ball over the line, Horace A'Bear being credited with a try. Jim Romans majorised with a good kick.

The City Seconds played up very strongly after this, and carried the game into the Old Boys quarters. From a scrum on the 25 line the ball came out to Bloxsome, who tricked the defence nicely and scored a try. The place kick failed.

Crossing over with an advantage of two points, the Old Boys started the second half strongly, and pressed at once, but they failed to hold the Seconds, who gradually forced their way into the Old Boys' 25, where the game remained for some time, and several times the Seconds looked like getting through. They did not manage it, however, the sterling defence of the Old Boys being equal to the occasion.

About six minutes before time the spectators were treated to a really magnificent bit of play, resulting in a score for the Boys. Alec Lewis obtained near the centre and passed out to Vance on the wing. The latter made a good slice of ground and passed back inside. Some very pretty inter-passing followed between Lewis and Vance, which beat the opposition pointless, and the latter scored a well-earned try amidst applause. J. Romans failed at the place kick.

The Old Boys held their opponents to the end, and were fully entitled to their victory on the day's play.

RESULT :

Old Boys 1 goal 1 try (8 points)

Gloucester A 1 try (3 points)

JC