

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1906.

TO-DAY'S MATCHES.

GLOUCESTER v. BRISTOL.

WEAK GLOUCESTER TEAM AT THE COUNTY GROUND.

A PLUCKY FIGHT.

With Gloucester's injured players still unavailable, the City Club had to meet Bristol at the County Ground to-day considerably below full strength. In addition to Gent, Wood, and E. Hall, Matthews had to stand down owing to an injury to his hand sustained in the county match last week, and other absentees were "Whacker" Smith, Merchant, and L. Vears. Hudson had intended taking a rest, but with the Club in such difficulties he consented to fill "Whacker" Smith's place at centre, and F. Bloxsome came in on the wing. Bristol fielded a powerful side.

Teams : —

GLOUCESTER.	Positions.	BRISTOL.
G. Romans	Backs.	W. Nott
F. Bloxsome	Three-Quarter	F. S. Scott
A. Hudson	Backs.	H. E. Shewring
H. Smith	"	M. Neale
F. Smith	"	W. R. Johnston
A. Hall	Half-Backs.	J. Larcombe
J. Stephens	"	J. Spoons
B. Parham (capt.)	"	W. E. Meyer
W. Johns	Forwards.	L. G. Meyer
A. Purton	"	J. L. Mathias
F. Pegler	"	P. Down
H. Collins	"	N. Moore
G. Vears	"	T. Webb
A. Hawker	"	W. Bale
W. Holder	"	J. Vinnicombe

Referee : Mr. W. L. Williams (Midland Counties).

THE GAME.

The Gloucester team arrived late, and the kick-off was delayed twenty minutes. The ground was in fair condition, and there were 4,000 spectators present. Parham started for the visitors, and off the return Hudson marked, Romans sending to touch nicely. From the throw out a Bristol forward passed back, but the ball was missed, and the Gloucester forwards dribbled to Nott, who saved on the line.

Bristol relieved with a forward rush, and, later, some neat passing nearly let Neale in. Gloucester came away with a burst, and a good kick took play right to the Bristol line. The home team kicked out, but from a cross-punt Hubert Smith nearly beat Nott. The Bristol custodian saved on the line, but in a scramble F. Smith picked up and went over, but the whistle was blown for an infringement. Bristol cleared with neat passing, initiated by Spoors, but a re-pass was intercepted by Hudson, who ran to touch.

Some forwards were prominent with a loose rush, but Bloxsome stopped them cleverly. Faulty handling by Bristol lost ground, and the City forwards being well up forced Nott to send straight to touch. Heeling by the Gloucester forwards saw Stephens feed Bloxsome twice in quick succession, but the wing man did not travel far. Bristol got out of danger by the aid of a penalty, but clever handling by the visitors saw H. Smith punt down field. F. Smith raced for possession, but just failed to gather.

Spoors, with a splendid effort, put Bristol on the attack, but Romans saved well. A minute later the home backs were off again. Shewring broke through cleverly, but his pass was not accepted. Penalties followed to either side, Shewring forcing a minor with a drop at goal.

With a big effort Gloucester relieved, and F. Smith put in a fine run and repass to Hudson, but the latter was collared from behind. The visitors attacked hotly, and Bristol's lines narrowly escaped twice.

Dashing forward work by Bristol changed the venue, but Hall effected a fine save. Back Gloucester came with brilliant loose work, and Bristol's defence was sorely tried. The home team eventually cleared, and Shewring brought off a grand run, but tried to do too much, and his pass was smothered by Hudson.

A mistake by the Gloucester halves allowed Larcombe to dribble away, but he tried to pick up and knocked on. After this Neale and Shewring greatly distinguished themselves, but a forward pass spoiled the effort. The Gloucester defence was tested in the next few minutes, but it proved very sound.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester Nil
Bristol Nil

Bristol resumed, and the return went to touch in the home half. A wild pass by a Bristolian was missed, and the Gloucester forwards getting possession they rushed in a body to their opponents' line. Bristol gained relief with a couple of free kicks, and then a telling forward burst was only stopped in the nick of time by Gloucester.

Bristol looked dangerous for a minute or two, but Hawker receiving passed to H. Smith, who punted out. Nott was beaten and Johns kicked to touch near the home goal. The game was desperately fought out, and Bristol soon got out to midfield. Further ground was made, and then Larcombe whipped out the ball to Spoons, and following some exchanges Scott dashed over with a good try. Moore failed at goal.

On the re-start both teams played up with great vigour. Bristol tried passing, but they were stopped; but, later, F. Smith failing to field nearly let his side down. Gloucester with a grand forward burst gained a lot of ground, but Spoons intercepting ran back. He tried to jump Romans, and was only brought down by the latter touching his ankle. Bristol had another chance just afterwards, but the visitors defended well. At length Larcombe broke clean away, and passing to Spoons, the latter swerved past Romans and scored. Nott kicked a goal, giving Bristol an eight points' lead.

Gloucester re-started, and for a time kept play to their opponents' end. Bristol, with pretty back play, attacked again, but Holder effected a good save. Stephens, Hall, and Pegler put Gloucester in a good position, but they were quickly sent back.

Moore picking up in the loose ran and passed, but the ball went astray. Romans cleared luckily once with a flying kick, but by dint of hard work Gloucester reached the centre. A long kick down was well followed, and Nott was severely pressed. Bristol obtained temporary relief, but a superb wheel by the visiting forwards again placed the home team in danger.

Hubert Smith was nearly through once, but Nott just managed to save. Then from near their own 25 Bristol rushed right to the other end. Spors looked like scoring, but F. Smith brought off a fine tackle. Brilliant work by Johns gave Gloucester the advantage again, but Shewring, with timely kicks to touch, transferred the game to the visitors' half. Here Spors was conspicuous with another fine run and pass to Neale, who was only pulled down outside. To the end the game was hotly contested, but nothing further was done.

RESULT :

Bristol 1 goal 1 try (8 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS.

Bristol won by reason of superiority behind, but Gloucester played a fine game, and deserve every credit for the splendid fight they made. The game was exceptionally fast and very exciting at times. The visiting forwards surprised the home crowd by their grand display, and taking the match throughout Gloucester had slightly the better of matters in this department.

In the scrums they did remarkably well, while the loose work was conspicuous for dash and cleverness. Johns played a remarkably good game, and Holder, Collins, and Parham were always prominent.

At half Hall and Stephens played well, but Spoors was too fast for them occasionally. Bristol were well served at three-quarter by Shewring and Neale, whilst Hudson and Hubert and F. Smith accomplished great things for Gloucester.

Bristol were superior in combination, and their speed was too much for the opposition. At full-back Romans was severely tested, but he came through a trying afternoon's work creditably. Nott was very safe for Bristol, and more than once averted disaster.

The game, though vigorous and keen, was pleasantly contested, and was greatly enjoyed by the spectators.

GLOUCESTER A v. BRISTOL A.

MODERATE DISPLAY AT KINGSHOLM.

This match, usually one of the most interesting in the Seconds' card, was played at Kingsholm on Saturday. The home team had several changes, D. R. Gent, the City captain, turning out at centre three-quarter for the first time [since] his accident as a "trial trip." Bristol arrived two short, but substitutes were found for them.

The teams were : –

Gloucester A. – F. Welshman, back; H. Butcher, D. R. Gent, W. Egerton, and Beard, three-quarter backs; F. Arthur and W. Dix, half-backs; W. Blackford, D. James, L. Meek, J. Welshman, D. Hollands, J. Wyburn, P. G. Savage, and T. Guy, forwards.

Bristol A. – S. Levy, back; C. Phillips, C. Boddie, D. I. Llewellyn, J. O'Neill, and W. I. Llewellyn, three-quarter backs; A. Straker and T. Lempriere, half-backs; W. Cooper, E. Kibbey, R. Milton, H. Reynolds, J. Carter, Hopkins, and J. W. Hobbert, forwards.

Gloucester kicked off, and there being only a poor return, play opened in the Bristol 25. The ground was greasy on top, and the ball apparently difficult to handle.

A mark to Bristol brought them little relief, and they were shortly forced to concede a minor. They got well down from the drop out, but Beard sent them back with a good kick. Levy, however, replied, and Welshman having his kick charged down, Bristol got dangerous for the first time.

Gloucester relieved by kicking, and centred play. Gent broke up a movement by the Bristol backs, and the play, which was scrambling, remained in neutral territory.

Bristol were penalised, and Gloucester reached the Bristol quarter. Arthur dribbled away from a scrum neatly, but Levy saved in the nick of time. From the ensuing scrum Bristol were penalised, but Welshman's kick went wide.

Gloucester prevented a kick out, and maintained the pressure, the forwards going over in a bunch and Guy being credited with a try, which Welshman improved with a fine kick.

Butler cut through beautifully from a line-out, but there was no one backing him up, and a certain try was lost. Bristol worked out of a dangerous situation, but Gloucester were quickly back in their 25 again. In fact, the home men were having much the best of matters generally, but the handling was poor.

From a mis-kick by a Bristolian the ball went over the line, and Dix dashing up grounded the ball, but he went into touch in goal. On the drop out Gloucester were quickly on the attack again, and James went over, but the point was not allowed. Beard, Gent, and Dix looked to have a chance a moment later, but a knock-on spoilt it. The Gloucester forwards, "Long" Welshman in the van, broke away capitally from a line-out, but off-side lost a possible advantage.

A long kick resulted in Levy touching down, but Welshman put in a fine reply to the drop out and put Gloucester in position again. F. Welshman shone a moment later with another fine touch finder, and to half-time Gloucester continued to have the best of matters.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 1 goal
Bristol A Nil

On restarting, Gloucester at once took up the aggressive, and the first real passing movement was shown. Beard started it, and the ball travelled quickly to Dix and Butler, and then back inside to Beard, who secured a thoroughly deserved try. Welshman's kick was too low.

On the drop out Welshman was collared in possession, and Bristol found a footing in the Gloucester quarter, but the forwards came away well and sent the game to the other end. Dix was conspicuous in making a pretty opening, and Arthur and Beard went away, but Levy brought the little half down in fine style a yard outside.

Bristol tried passing, but their attempt was poor and gained no ground. Gloucester got on the attack once more, and Beard narrowly missed a try, being dragged down just on the line. Guy was knocked out, but quickly resumed, and from the next scrum the ball came out nicely to Dix, who dropped a pretty goal.

By judicious kicking Bristol reached the home quarter, and Levy kicked over the line. Bristol played up a bit after this, and kept a footing in the Gloucester 25 for some time. But when a possible chance presented itself they kicked too hard, and Gloucester had no difficulty in clearing.

It was now getting dusk, and difficult to distinguish players on the far side of the ground. Phillips looked dangerous once, but Gent tackled him finely, and Gloucester worked to the centre. With a fine open rush Gloucester carried the game well-down to the Bristolians' line.

Bristol tried hard to clear, but Gloucester kept at it hard, and their efforts were rewarded by Dix dodging over with a tricky try. Welshman failed at the kick.

Not much time remained, and nothing further of note occurred.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 2 goals (1 d), 2 tries (15)

Bristol A Nil

REMARKS.

It was not a great game to watch, and Bristol have to thank Gloucester's weakness in attack more than their own powers of defence for the comparatively small margin against them.

On the day's play Gloucester were half a dozen tries better than the visitors, but at the critical moment something went wrong. Gent did not have much chance to shine in attack, but he was very useful at times. His shoulder apparently stood the test all right, and Gloucestersians will look forward to seeing him back in his proper place. Beard is certainly an acquisition. He is fast and goes straight for the line.

In front Gloucester had the best of matters, and James, Hollands, Wyburn, and Savage played with distinction. Dix, as usual, played a tricky, clever game, but Arthur was too closely watched to do much. Welshman kicked well, but his vis-a-vis, Levy, was up to him in this, and generally served his side well.

There was nothing startling done on the visitors side to call for comment, but Bristol deserve praise for the manner in which they stuck to their opponents, although apparently a badly beaten side.