

THE CITIZEN

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1906.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. OLD MERCHANT TAYLORS.

GOOD SPORTING GAME.

CITY WIN BY SUPERIOR BACK PLAY.

This annual Boxing Day fixture attracted only a moderate attendance at Kingsholm, the wintry weather no doubt keeping a large number away.

Gent re-appeared for Gloucester after a long absence, but Johns was an absentee, J. Welshman coming in as reserve.

The Old Merchant Taylors arrived one short, and D. Hollands, of the City Seconds, assisted.

The teams were : –

Gloucester. – G. Romans, back; A. Hudson, C. Smith, H. Smith, and F. Smith, three-quarters; D. R. Gent (Capt.) and J. Stephens, half-backs; J. Welshman, A. Hawker, G. Matthews, H. Collins, J. Merchant, G. Vears, A. Purton, and W. Holder, forwards.

Old Merchant Taylors. – G. Saunders, back; J. E. Raphael, R. A. Lepingwell, M. J. Lepingwell, and W. H. Bull, three-quarter backs; C. J. Sherwin and W. T. Cheesman, half-backs; G. T. Hankin, A. A. Hanhart, S. S. Nevill, J. R. Pound, T. Elderton, R. E. Burnege, A. F. C. Tannahill, and D. Hollands (substitute), forwards.

Referee : Mr. A. J. Lawes (Bristol).

THE GAME.

Gloucester having won the toss, the Taylors kicked off, Holder's return going to touch at the centre. The visitors heeled from the first scrum, and Raphael, receiving from the outside half, punted to touch. Gloucester early replied, and Gent started a pretty movement which saw the ball go out to Hudson, but the wing man's re-pass was knocked on by an opponent.

The Taylors' backs passed nicely a minute later, but M. Lepingwell was collared. Gent and Stephens were prominent with a clever combination down touch, the pair re-passing prettily, but the Taylors checked at mid-field. From a mark a Londoner kicked to Gent, who found touch with a good return.

Ensuing play was fast, both teams heeling smartly, but no opening could be gained. Sherwin broke away from a scrum, but his pass was taken by Holder, who kicked well to touch. Some loose forward work by the Taylors carried the ball to Romans, who put in a fine kick, and a little later he did a similar performance. Fast following up by Collins, Matthews, and Vears gave Gloucester an advantage, and Raphael was forced to run back to clear. From his punt out Gent marked, but Romans' kick for goal went wide, and only a minor resulted.

The drop-out was well returned by Collins, but a dashing burst by the Taylors carried them to mid-field, where Hudson gathered and punted, an opponent marking. The kick did not avail much, and operations were kept at the centre. Some fast forward work by both packs was heartily applauded, but it resulted in the game being brought back to mid-field. The ground was very treacherous, and the players retained their feet with difficulty.

Loose footwork was indulged in by both teams to advantage, and then Gent brought off a splendid bit of play, which was cheered to the echo. In subsequent play numerous mistakes were witnessed, but they were excusable under the conditions.

Picking up from a scrum Stephens passed out wide to Hudson, who ran and punted. Hawker fielded and tried to break away, but was pulled down. Immediately after Stephens gathered cleverly and dashed through, but Welshman, to whom he passed, failed to cross. After this Gloucester went dangerously closed, and twice in quick succession they went right to the line. More clever work by Stephens and Gent saw the captain make a dash for the corner, but he was pushed to touch.

Gloucester still attacked, but a pass being intercepted a visitor ran to Romans and transferred to a colleague, but Holder tackled well. Gent next intercepted, and after doubling an opponent sent to F. Smith, who ran well, but was collared from behind when looking dangerous.

The Taylors put in some dashing forward work, but Gloucester retaliated, and a flying kick sent the ball to Saunders. Hawker followed up, but the Londoner cleared him and several other men, and eventually started a bout of passing. Raphael received and kicked, but a Gloucester man turned the ball to touch.

The game was exceptionally fast considering the conditions, the Taylors performing grandly in the forwards. Gent distinguished himself with a brilliant run and pass, but H. Smith failed to take, with Hudson in a good position. C. Smith was next at fault in handling after Gent and Stephens had opened out beautifully. Marks fell to either side, and then Romans, fielding a kick, brought off a clever run and pass to Hudson. A subsequent transfer, however, went astray.

In some loose play Gent kicked across the ground to F. Smith, who dodged Raphael and looked all over a scorer, but being pressed he passed, and the ball went astray. The Taylors worked out with good forward work, and Cheesman, sneaking a pass, ran down, but his pass was ruled forward. Near the centre Gent was given possession from a scrum, and following pretty combination between the captain, Stephens, and C. Smith, the latter crossed in the corner. Romans failed at goal.

The Taylors dropped out, and Hankin distinguished himself with a clever dribble, but Gent saved with a wonderful pick up. The interval was then called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 try

Taylors Nil

Vears re-started for Gloucester, and in the early stage some close scrummaging was witnessed near the centre. The Taylors eventually got the ball out, but the passing did not gain much ground. From a throw out Hudson secured, and made off down touch, but he could not beat Saunders. Hankin led the Londoners forwards in a good rush, but Gent stopped them by sending to touch.

Even play followed at midfield until Purton dribbled well into the Taylors' quarters. The visitors soon got out of danger, and Stephens breaking away threw out a wide pass to the left wing to Hudson, who picked up and handed to C. Smith. The latter returned the ball nicely for the International to dash over the line with a good try. Romans failed to convert.

The game, on resumption, was keenly contested, Gloucester doing capitally in all departments. Some neat exchanges saw H. Smith beat the opposing centre cheaply, but when in the act of feeding Hudson he slipped and fell. The ball luckily came across to the other wing, where F. Smith was conspicuous with some good play, but he just failed to beat the defence.

Gloucester looked to have a good chance in the next minute, but they lost the position, and the Taylors transferred operations to the other end. Here. R. Lepingwell put in a grand run, but he was splendidly tackled by Hudson a dozen yards outside. The Taylors worked hard for a score, but they were beaten off, and Gloucester again took up the attack. The Londoners defended well, but at length an opening came through Hawker picking up in the loose and sending to F. Smith, who beat three men in remarkably clever style and scored wide out. The goal-kick was a failure.

The Taylors re-started, and play continued keen and vigorous. Stephens and Gent were prominent for some splendid fielding of the ball off the ground and tricky runs, but the tackling of the visitors was very deadly. Hesitation by Hudson lost ground for Gloucester, but Romans covered his mistake. C. Smith, charging down a kick, broke through and collared Saunders, but later the visitors made headway with some good touch kicking.

A cross punt by Raphael was well taken by H. Smith, who raced down some 30 yards, but his transfer went astray. Holder did some fine work for the City under difficulties, and gradually the Taylors were pressed to their line. Saunders, at back, however, was very safe.

Gent and Holder were to the fore for good work in subsequent play, but the Taylors confined operations to near the centre. Some brilliant footwork by the Londoners gained them a lot of ground, but Gloucester replied with similar tactics, and then at mid-field came a fine bit of play. Stephens, gathering the ball cleverly, whipped out a nice pass to F. Smith, who went off at full pace, beating Raphael and Saunders in splendid fashion he completed a lovely effort by scoring a try. Romans made a good but unsuccessful shot at goal.

After this further reverse the Taylors played up strongly, and obtained a footing in the home half. Carrying the scrums, they rushed to the line, and the ball was taken over, but only a minor resulted.

Gloucester showed up well on the resumption, Matthews dribbling in good style. Hawker, too, made a capital effort to secure an opening for F. Smith, but the pass went wrong.

Play to the end was well contested, but there was no further scoring.

RESULT :

Gloucester 4 tries (12 points)
Taylors Nil

REMARKS.

It was a remarkably good game considering the unfavourable conditions, and some capital football was witnessed. The Taylors, as usual, played a powerful game forward, and their effective footwork was one of the features of the match.

The Gloucester front were good at periods, but the tackling at times was very weak. Holder was in great form, and Matthews, Purton, and Hawker were often conspicuous.

Gent's re-appearance at half worked a great difference in the play of the home backs, and he and Stephens combined beautifully.

At three-quarter some clever work was displayed, though Hudson was distinctly below par. F. Smith, on the right wing, played a wonderfully smart game, and both the tries he scored were really splendid efforts. The Brothers Smith did well in the centre, Hubert making several nice runs.

For the Taylors, Sherwin played a good individual game at the scrum, and the Brothers Lepingwell distinguished themselves in the third line. Raphael did not get many chances on the wing, but he kicked well at times. Sanders, the visitors' custodian, gave a remarkably good display, and Romans did well for Gloucester.

GLOUCESTER A v. OLD BOYS.

A KEEN GAME.

OLD BOYS MAINTAIN THEIR RECORD.

Played at Kingsholm on Boxing [Day] morning, on a snow-covered ground, in the presence of a fair attendance. Considerable interest was centred in the match owing to the Old Boys holding an unbeaten record.

The teams were as follows : –

Gloucester. – F. Welshman, back; J. Beard, W. Egerton, G. Cook, and F. Bloxsome, three-quarter backs; A. Hall (captain) and F. Arthur, half-backs; R. James, H. D. Willis, J. Wyburn, D. Hollands, J. Hall, L. Meek, H. Bird, and G. Draper, forwards.

Old Boys. – R. Trew, back; P. Rodway, F. Stephens, A. Lewis, and W. Vance, three-quarters; J. Romans and K. Chief, halves; S. D. Lane, H. A'Bear, H. Lewis, W. A. Platts, G. Vance, L. Peckover, W. Pearce, and A. C. Guilding, forwards.

Referee : Mr. F. Abbey.

Gloucester started the game, but owing to players getting in front of the ball a scrum was ordered at the centre. The Old Boys early broke away with a loose rush, and the ball was taken to the line, where off-side gave the Seconds a penalty. Some exchange-kicking ensued, ending in the game settling at the centre.

By strong forward play the Old Boys dribbled down to Welshman, who got in a good clearance kick. Owing to the slippery nature of the ground the players experienced difficulty in keeping their feet, and mistakes in handling were frequent. By judicious kicks the Old Boys gained a position close to the home goal-line, where A'Bear made a strong attempt to break through. Gloucester relieved slightly, but near the 25-line Chief passed to J. Romans, who with a splendid kick dropped a goal.

Gloucester restarted, and play was keen and fast. The Old Boys carried a scrum in fine style, and Welshman had some difficulty in clearing. At length Hollands led a good rush of the Seconds, and the ball going into the open Bloxsome had a good opening. In trying to pick up, however, he lost the ball. Gloucester now attacked, but J. Romans and Trew in turn relieved with timely kicks.

Centre play followed until Arthur broke away with a neat run and pass. Bloxsome cross-kicked, but nothing resulted. A minute later Trew touched down as the result of a kick over the line. Cook received the drop-out, and with his return found touch well inside the Old Boys' 25.

By the aid of a free the visitors removed play to more favourable quarters. Cook, however, sent them back again, and the game hovered in the Old Boys' quarter. In some loose play the ball was kicked in the open, and Beard, fielding cleverly, put in a strong burst and scored near the posts. Welshman failed at goal.

With only a point separating the teams the game was keener than ever. The Seconds, working well together, attacked with vigour. After passing, Beard made a bold bid for a score, only being pushed into touch a few yards from the line. From the throw-out the Gloucester backs got possession, and Bloxsome apparently crossed, but only a minor was given – a lucky escape for the Old Boys.

After this the visitors showed up strongly with loose footwork, and for a time had the better of the exchanges. Gloucester eventually relieved, and Bloxsome carried operations to beyond the centre, where Trew saved.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Old Boys 1 goal (d)

Gloucester A 1 try

The Old Boys restarted, and for an infringement the Seconds were early penalised. J. Romans had a shot for goal from the centre, but the kick fell a long way short. The Old Boys' forwards, however, got to the ball and looked dangerous, but the movement was checked.

Lewis next brought off a capital run for the Boys, but in trying to cut inside the full-back he was collared. The Seconds responded with a pretty bout of passing, but Cook was upset and losing the ball Trew gathered and punted clear. Passing by the Old Boys gave Vance a chance on the right wing, but he was pulled down in touch inside the 25.

Gloucester quickly changed the venue, and some clever handling took the Seconds right down, Beard being well tackled. Immediately after the ball came out to the Gloucester left wing, Cook feeding Bloxsome nicely, but the latter was upset by Lewis.

A spell of even play followed, any headway made by Gloucester being neutralised by the splendid touch-kicking of J. Romans. A rush by the Boys' forwards, headed by Lane, took the ball to Welshman, who ran around and tried to kick, but missed the ball. The Old Boys took the ball on, but it went to touch a few yards outside. Working desperately the visitors got the ball out, and Chief initiated a nice movement from the scrum. Lewis ran well, and at the right moment sent to Vance, who raced over with a good try amidst the shouts of their supporters. Romans failed at goal.

Gloucester dropped out, and were early prominent with some neat exchanges. Egerton, however, held on too long. Gloucester had a possible chance after this, but Trew saved just outside, and then a big forward rush by the Boys cleared to midfield.

The last five minutes were hotly contested. Gloucester gained a footing in their opponents' quarters, and from a penalty Cook kicked a goal. No more scoring took place, and the end arrived with the Old Boys winners by a point.

RESULT :

Old Boys 1 goal (d) 1 try (7 points)
Gloucester A 1 goal (p) 1 try (6 points)

REMARKS.

It was a splendidly-contested game considering the conditions, and on the run of the play the Old Boys just about deserved their victory. The winners were very powerful forward, and it was here that they held the advantage. Peckover was a conspicuous performer throughout, and Pearce, Platts, A'Bear, and Simmonds were often distinguished for good work.

At half-back J. Romans was the outstanding player, his magnificent touch-kicking repeatedly gaining ground for his side. He had a useful partner in Chief, who, apart from a tendency to off-side, worked capitally in the scrum.

In the three-quarter line, Lewis and Vance were very smart, and Trew was safe at full-back. Welshman did his part well in the latter position for Gloucester, and in the third line Cook and Beard were the pick.

The forwards worked hard, Hollands, James, and Willis being noticeable. Arthur and A. Hall did some neat work at half, and initiated some nice passing movements. The Old Boys having successfully preserved their unbeaten record should stand a good chance of going through the season.

JC