

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1889.

TODAY'S FOOTBALL MATCHES.

GLOUCESTER v. LLANELLY.

The first meeting of these teams took place in beautiful weather at the Spa this afternoon, the match constituting the wind up of the English tour made this week by the latter XV. The two previous matches – against Cambridge University and London Welsh – were lost and won respectively by the Welshmen. This fixture excited more than ordinary interest in Gloucester from the fact that last season both the encounters between the teams resulted in favour of the tin plate representatives by narrow majorities, notwithstanding that at Gloucester the home men had much the best of the play.

The supporters of the city team were therefore anxious to turn the tables and avenge their last season's reverses, and a great crowd assembled to witness the struggle, a fast and open game being anticipated considering the favourable state of the turf and weather.

A slight wind was blowing diagonally from the railway end when, at 3.20, the teams took to the field, and Llanelly kicked off against the sun and breeze. The visitors at once got into the home 25, but a couple of "frees" by Hughes removed the game again to the centre, and some splendid passing by George, Ball, Brown, Bagwell, and Whitcomb caused Llanelly to act on the defensive, the ball going into touch at their 25. "Gitto" Griffiths relieved to the centre, but after a little loose play amongst the forwards the home halves again started a round of passing, which was brilliantly maintained until Healing had possession, and he dodged well and passed to George, who was, however, held.

Then the Gloucester forwards dribbled up to the line, but once more Gitto aided by one or two others of his side carried the ball the whole length of the ground by means of a fine dribble, and a touchdown, which was quickly followed up by a second, was exacted from the home team. Gloucester had up till now been playing one man short, Collins being absent, but Sloman, who has not turned out for two seasons, filled the vacancy.

After the kick out, Gloucester laid siege to the visitors' goal, and Cromwell ran to near the line, where he passed to Ball. The latter, however, stopped just on the line, and a minor point was the only result. This enabled the Welshmen to clear their lines, and rush the game into the home half, where Bagwell was conspicuous for a clever run, and the play was fast and loose amongst the forwards for a few minutes, until another grand round of passing gave Bagwell the leather, and he ran down the field in fine style, and passed to Whitcomb, who was collared, and transferred to Ball by means of a good pass. The latter, though trying hard, was unable to break through, but immediately afterwards obtained a free-kick close to touch outside the 25 line, and Hughes taking the place, all but landed a goal, a minor being registered.

This was followed by another free to Hughes, who was tackled by the Llanelly forwards without the usual "five yards," and with a fine drop kick from the centre, he sent the ball over the goal-line. Free kicks appeared to be the order, and by aid of several the visitors worked to the home end and obtained a third minor, making the game even once more.

The Llanelly halves tried to get the ball out, but their attempts were spoiled by the activity of Ball and George, and the leather was handed cleverly by George to Ball, and he to Brown, but the ball was not taken, and Llanelly relieved, but only temporarily, as George, with a well-executed dash was on the point of scoring before being held.

Half-time was called with Gloucester still on the aggressive, and the score reading three minors each.

Cromwell re-started, and Morgan returned into touch a few yards on his own side of the centre flag. Gloucester got a free at the centre for "hand ball," but did not gain much ground, and the visitors soon retaliated, and carried the play to the home 25 line where a "free" was awarded to Llanelly, and Morgan dropped a goal but missed, and Healing punted out to the half-way.

Brown took a pass, and evading several would-be tacklers, transferred to Bagwell, who took the ball splendidly high up, and passed to Whitcombe, who kicked into touch at the Llanelly 25.

The "scarlet runners" played up well, and "Gitto" kicked into home territory, where Hughes twice in quick succession punted half the length of the field into touch, the ball being each time returned by the Llanelly forwards, aided by good play by Lloyd and Richards, and a smart kick by Morgan.

The home forwards, however, broke away and headed by Cromwell dribbled up the ground to the other end, where it was several times sent into touch, and A. Healing dribbled nearer the line from a throw out. Llanelly once more raised the siege, and Lloyd getting possession passed to Griffiths, and he to Rowland, who tried a drop at goal, but failed to bring it off, Hughes touching down.

The kick out was followed by a splendid dribble by A. Healing to within a few yards of the Llanelly goal line, and after George had ineffectually attempted to get over, Cromwell picked up and crossed the line, but was called back for an infringement, and a free-kick being given to the Welshmen they relieved the pressure, and the game was soon waxing fast and strong at the centre.

Gloucester were not to be denied so easily, however, and after some passing and running, George finished up a sharp burst for the goal line by passing forward when all but in. Several tight scrimmages were fought out within a yard of the line.

The home halves were prevented from passing out by their opponents, who were constantly in front of the ball when it was in the scrum, and the Llanelly forwards worked out, the game being gradually carried to the centre, and, amidst the most intense excitement the visitors continued the onward movement till the home 25 was reached, every yard of ground being stubbornly fought for.

After a series of tight "scrums" near the home 25 line, Gloucester were awarded a free kick, but it availed them nothing, for Lloyd returned the kick with interest, and sent the oval into touch near the home line. The spectators held their breath as the Llanelly forwards pushed the home "ups" back on to the line, but Hughes dispelled all fears with a fine piece of play, which destroyed the visitors' chances of victory. He secured the ball when hard pressed by a bunch of opponents, but evaded them all in dexterous fashion, and after running out to the 25 line, steered the leather into touch past the centre, with one of his well-known punts, this excellent piece of play at a critical moment evoking loud applause.

"No side" was immediately whistled, and the game was left drawn, the score reading : — Llanelly 4 minors; Gloucester, 3 minors ; although Gloucester undeniably had the best of a hard fought game.

The following are the names of the teams : —

Gloucester : A. F. Hughes, back; C. R. Brown (captain), T. Bagwell, H. Healing and G. Whitcomb, three-quarter backs; S. A. Ball and W. George, half-backs; R. C. Jenkins, A. E. Healing, H. V. Page, J. Williams, A. Cromwell. E. Ellis, B. Sloman, and C. Williams, forwards.

Llanelly : E. J. Roberts, back; P. Lloyd, T. Morgan, C. Richards, and J. Rowlands, three-quarter backs; G. Griffiths and B. Williams, half-backs; E. Jones, S. Thomas, W. Thomas, W. J. Daniels, J. Davies, T. Jones (captain), H. Evans, and J. Martin, forwards.

GLOUCESTER II v. CHEPSTOW. —

Played at Chepstow. The home team kicked off against the sun, and the ball going over the line, Gloucester touched down. Soon after Jones rushed through, and was given a try. Stoddart kicked over, and Chepstow touched down. Gloucester dribbled over and scored, apparently, but the referee disallowed the try. Watts next ran over, but, not knowing, passed, losing a certain try. Each team score three minors.

After half-time Stoddart intercepted a pass, and nearly scored. Dere and Jackson put in nice kicks, and Watts played well.

Result : — Chepstow, 1 try; Gloucester, nil.