

# GLOUCESTER JOURNAL

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## *The Week's Sport.*

Gloucester came up smiling, but with a non-representative team, after their thrashing of Wednesday, to meet Swindon on Saturday. Hughes had injured his arm in collaring Dyson on Wednesday, and Cromwell, Witcomb, and Jenkins were also absent. The only place where Gloucester suffered seriously, however, was at full back, Hughes's splendid kicking being much missed.

The team were able to account for Swindon, after having the best of the game, by two goals and a try to nothing. All these points were scored in the first half, and after the interval the game was fairly even, being characterised chiefly by dribbling rushes on both sides, the ball going from one end of the field to the other, and not remaining long in one place. Ball took his place again, and he and George carried on their passing game to perfection during the first half, but were considerably interfered with in the second, by the opposing half backs, who, watching the home forwards heeling out, pounced upon George before he could get hold of the ball.

In the first half the game was more open than afterwards, the home scrummagers heeling out splendidly, and the backs passing well, except for occasional blunders; but later in the game, abandoning the heeling out policy, the Gloucester pack played a dribbling game. The consequence of this was that the backs had not so much to do, and passing and running were not so frequent.

At three-quarter back Gloucester beat their opponents, who were not fed by their halves as Ball and George fed the home men. Indeed, the play of the whole back contingent was a great contrast to that of Wednesday.

If the exclusive game of the Gloucester half-backs is interfered with the play of the entire back team is completely upset, and instead of the passing and running to which they treated the spectators in the first-half on Saturday, the three-quarters are all "at sea," scarcely ever securing the ball, and failing when defensive tactics have to be resorted to. The return of Ball seemed to set matters right on Saturday, and the machinery of the backs was once again set in motion, with the result that instead of being only conspicuous for blunders, the three-quarters played well, and outshone those on the opposite side of the scrum.

Phillips was always prominent for sterling play, and proved to be the stay of the Swindon team behind. He seemed "here, there, and everywhere," wherever the ball was, and was constantly showing up with a dodgy run, or a judicious kick, or by putting an effectual stumbling block in the way of an opponent who was making tracks for the goal line. The other visiting three-quarters can be dismissed with a word, for they were not by any means equal to their captain.

Of the Gloucester quartet Bagwell was "head and shoulders" (metaphorically speaking) above the rest. All the tries were the outcome of his runs, and the run he made which resulted in A. H. Brown scoring was an "eye-opener." Securing the oval at half-way he ran through the middle of the visiting team, keeping up a splendid pace, and dodging superbly till right on the goal line, when before being collared, and when he stood a rosy chance of getting in himself, he showed commendable unselfishness by passing to Brown and thereby making the try certain, as the latter had a clear course in. It was only fitting that this brilliant effort should be crowned with a goal, and this Collins, with a fine kick, accomplished. Bagwell's magnificent run was naturally loudly cheered, but when a moment later the same player ran in under the posts, and himself kicked a goal, the applause was renewed with redoubled energy.

C. E. Brown certainly played a better game than on Wednesday, but his form would allow a considerable improvement still. He was good at stopping rushes and ran strongly, but when it became necessary to pass he often, and generally at the most critical moments, failed ignominiously to transfer the ball to the intended recipient.

Dere did well, being particularly attentive to Phillips, whom he succeeded in "earthing" on a great many occasions. Healing also succeeded in doing himself justice, though he was a little slow in his movements at times, and when once under weigh he appears to take a good deal of stopping.

We can only say of Ball and George that they played their game thoroughly well, but during the latter part of the match, were handicapped by the questionable play of the opposite halves, or at least one of them, who appeared to devote themselves more to the task of throwing down George before he got the ball, than to feeding their three-quarters.

The forwards were evenly matched, the tight scrums being stubbornly contested, while if one side indulged in a dribble half the length of the field the other was sure to reply with a similar movement in a very short space of time. Smith at back only partially made up for Hughes's absence, his kicking being feeble.

The following were the teams : –

Gloucester : E. Smith, back; C. E. Brown, T. Bagwell, G. F. Dere, and F. H. Healing, three-quarter backs; S. A. Ball and W. George, half-backs; E. D. Tandy, H. G. Brown, W. Leighton, J. Williams, C. Williams, T. Collins, E. Ellis, and A. H. Brown, forwards.

Swindon : Collins, back; Phillips, Wainwright, Briggs, and Jones, three-quarter backs; Harry and Miles, half-backs; Warner, May, Booth, Chapman, Hassell, Stote, Middleton, and Loveluck, forwards.

Gloucester 2nd XV. went to Stroud, and gave the home team a sound thrashing, piling up no fewer than five goals and four tries to a try.

The tries were scored by H. George (3), Jackson (2), and Watts, Gorin, Collins and Phelps one each, whilst, Watts kicked all the goals.

Merrick scored for Stroud, as a result of a good run by Gillman, who afterwards received an injury to the shoulder.

George played a fine game, and Jackson was also in good form. Watts did exceptionally well, and the best of the forwards were, Powell, Collins, and Gorin.

"Wanderer," writing in the *Sportsman*, says: 'Was there any truth in the rumour that reached my ears to the effect that a couple of members of the Gloucester first fifteen had been offered lucrative engagements in the South Wales districts by two separate clubs, or on their behalf, one in violation of the rules against professionalism? It is stated that both offers were declined, but no harm will be done by my drawing attention to the matter and eliciting its truth or inaccuracy. The Welsh Rugby Union should be told pretty plainly that such things could not be tolerated.'