

# GLOUCESTER JOURNAL

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1889.

## *BOXING DAY FOOTBALL MATCHES,*

### *GLOUCESTER v. PENYGRAIG*

The disappointment of the Gloucester club by Kensington was rather a bitter pill to swallow, and when information was received in Gloucester that the Londoners could not raise a team several telegrams passed between the respective officials, but the attempts made to induce the visitors to stick to their engagement were unavailing.

The club were not disposed to allow the afternoon to go without a match at all, so negotiations were opened which resulted in a match being arranged with Penygraig, a Welsh club, who, though not reckoned amongst the leading clubs in the Principality, have played a good game with some of Gloucester's sturdiest opponents.

The morning match had made the ground rather heavy. Page kicked off at three o'clock from the Beaufort end, and Oswell returned, Ward putting in a good kick back. Within a couple of minutes of the start Walter George picked up near the centre, and passed to Ball, who gave the ball to Bagwell, and it travelled from him to Jackson, who ran well, and lastly to Healing, who ran over the line and completed a grand try, which Page failed to convert.

Now the visitors had a look in, and the forwards rushed into the home 25, where Hughes was collared with the ball, but Ward put in some sterling play.

Two or three passes amongst the visitors' backs threatened the home goal, Oswell being held close to the line. Hughes relieved slightly by kicking into touch, and the forwards got out to the centre, where smart passing by the home backs did not gain much ground.

The Welsh forwards, with Ellis at their head, again got down to the home goal line, but the ball was rushed out again, though Gloucester, owing to the splendid tackling of the opposing backs, could not get out of their own half, and once more the leather was returned to the home goal line, where Hughes had a kick charged, fortunately near the touch-line.

Gloucester again drove them out, and this time effectually, for after rushing into the Welsh half, Brown passed well to Bagwell, and he giving Ward an accurate pass, the latter brought off a clever run past several opponents, and safely grounded the ball over the line. Hughes took the kick, which was from a difficult angle, and failed to improve upon the point.

Some more brilliant passing amongst backs and forwards almost let Ward and Jackson in, and scrums were formed in front of the visitors' goal. From one of these George picked up smartly, and handed to Ball, but the latter lost a splendid opportunity of scoring by sticking to the ball and endeavouring to score himself. Half-time soon arrived, and Gloucester had scored two tries to nil.

Jackson returned the kick-off after the interval, but some unfortunate play by George let the visitors into the home 25. They were shunted from here, however, by means of a run by A. Collins, backed up by some good collaring by Jackson. George picked up from the scrum, and, though held by three opponents, transferred beautifully to Ball, who passed to Ward, and the latter running strongly, and handing off in perfect style, got within an inch or two of the line before being held.

The visitors raised the siege after J. Williams had run over the goal line and been called back, and transferred the scene of action to the centre, only for the home forwards to again reach the 25 line, from which position Healing, A. Collins, and Cromwell dribbled finely over the goal line, and Ball was fortunate in falling on the leather and scoring the third try. Hughes landed an excellent goal from a difficult position.

The kick-off was followed by even play at the centre, and though Oswell kicked into touch at the home 25, Gloucester forced the visitors back into their 25. Penygraig were not to be held, and gradually drove the home men back, and notwithstanding some passing amongst the home backs reached the Gloucester 25.

A penalty kick gave Gloucester relief, and again matters were made uncomfortably warm for the Welshmen, their line being attacked in good earnest. This continued for a short while, until with a rush the Welshmen cleared their lines, and carried the game over the half-way and nearly the home 25. Some scrambling play took place at this point, alternating on either side of the half-way, and when scarcely a moment remained for play, A. Collins secured possession in the loose, and dexterously avoiding the opposite full back, ran nearly three quarters of the distance from one goal to the other, and was unfortunate in being overtaken and grassed on the goal line. The whistle immediately sounded, the game ending in a victory for the home team by one goal, two tries, and two minors to nothing.

The most prominent forwards on the visiting side, who were as strong in the front, though not nearly so clever with their feet or as tricky as the home ups, were the two old Gloucester players E. Ellis and T. Taylor, whilst Oswell was good in the defence at three-quarter, Lloyd being dodgy and fast. The halves both played a good game, and bothered the Gloucester pair considerably, though the latter were as sharp as ever.

Ward was seen to better advantage than ever before on the Spa, and played finely throughout, kicking, running, and tackling splendidly. Jackson, who played for the first time with the 1st XV., also gave a capital account of himself, and will doubtless be tried again when an opportunity offers.

Bagwell and Brown played a good hard game, but Hughes seemed hardly up to form and could not raise the ball sufficiently. Of the forwards the pick were Healing, A. Collins, Cromwell, and Jenkins.

The teams were : –

Gloucester : – A. Hughes, back; T. Bagwell, C. E. Brown (captain), E. J. Ward, and W. Jackson, three-quarter backs; S. A. Ball and W. George, half-backs; A. Cromwell, R. Jenkins, H. V. Page, A. E. Healing, T. Collins, A. Collins, J. Williams, and C. Williams, forwards.

Penygraig : – G. Llewellyn, back; J. C. Evans, T. Jones, D. T. Lloyd, and J. N. Oswell, three-quarter backs; M. W. Rees and T. Morgan, half-backs; Atkins, E. Ellis, T. Taylor, Rowlands, Prosser, Casey, Batemen, and another, forwards.

#### GLOUCESTER II v. LLANDAFF.

A large crowd assembled at the Spa on Boxing Day to witness the match between the above teams. The start was delayed till 11.15, owing to several of the home team not putting in an appearance at the proper time. A team was, however, got together, A. H. Brown playing instead of Hopewell, who did not turn up,

The ground was in good condition, and the weather favourable for football. Powell started from the Beaufort end, and Phelps kicked into touch in the visitors' 25. The visitors, playing a rather fierce game, got out to the centre, and on to the home 25, their play being characterised by a propensity for tackling their opponents when they had not got possession of the ball.

The play was very fast, and a forward rush by the visitors caused the home team to concede a minor point, which, however, did not give the desired relief, as the visitors kept the game in the Gloucester half for some considerable time. Their efforts were eventually rewarded, as a forward bursting away from a line out near the centre, avoided Smith, and fell over the line near the goal whilst in the embrace of George and Stoddart. A goal was easily kicked from the place.

After the kick-off, Gloucester pressed, and Phelps passing the ball over George's head lost an opportunity of scoring, Powell shortly afterwards repeating the operation. Dere twice received a good pass, and preferred to kick rather than pass to Stoddart, who, on at least one occasion, had an opening.

Llandaff then cleared their half of the ground, and after a stubborn resistance advanced for the home 25, a scrum being formed near the goal line. A free kick failed to bring relief owing to the mulling of Smith, but after a maul in goal had resulted in a scrum five yards out, Gloucester worked out to the centre and half-time was called.

The ball having once more been set rolling, a fair catch was secured by a visiting three-quarter, but Smith returned it with interest, and George kicking on the Llandaff 25 was reached.

George made a gallant effort to get round, but was pushed into touch. Morgan got a free kick near the touch-line outside the 25, but Watts' kick at goal was charged. Llandaff now got a little relief, but Gloucester returned to the attack, only to be again repulsed after a somewhat prolonged attack.

Notwithstanding a fine run by Powell, the game was carried well into the home end, and more than once the visitors looked like scoring, a forward dribble being stopped by George, who was now playing full back, close to the line, which was immediately followed by a rush over the goal line, George saving by kicking dead.

Still the visitors pressed, and, though the home backs passed well, the advantage was soon neutralised, and another minor conceded by Gloucester.

The Llandaff forwards pushed the home men back in the tight scrums and dribbled well in the loose, but eventually the Second cleared their lines, and got into the visitors' 25.

The sojourn here was of brief duration, but after Llandaff had worked back to the other end, the home team retaliated, and the game was being carried out at the centre when the referee's whistle sounded denoting "no-side," and Llandaff, who cannot be complimented on the gentlemanly nature of their play, were the winners by one goal and three minors to nothing.

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