

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1924.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER'S BRILLIANT WIN.

LLANELLY BEATEN AT HOME IN FAST GAME.

AN EXCITING SECOND HALF.

Gloucester had an attractive fixture at Kingsholm this afternoon in the visit of the clever Llanelly team, whose performances this season entitled the side to be regarded as very nearly the best in Wales.

Last year Gloucester beat the Welshmen at home by 13 points to nil, but on the form of the City against Cardiff last week there was not much hope of a repeat triumph to-day.

But Gloucester at Kingsholm are always a different proposition, and the only teams successful at head-quarters so far this season were Abertillery and Devonport Services.

The kick-off was fixed for 3 o'clock, but only half the Llanelly players arrived by the appointed train. The rest of the team missed the connection at Cardiff, and made for Gloucester by way of Bristol, but the earliest train by which they could reach the city was not due until 3.5, which meant a considerable delay in the start.

The rival teams fielded at 3.20 before one of the best attendances since the Newport match.

The weather was fine, though cold, and the ground appeared in capital condition.

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : R. James.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. Brown, T. Millington (capt.), F. Meadows, and R. Miller.

HALF-BACKS : W. Collins and E. Hughes.

FORWARDS : A. Hall, T. Voyce, S. Bayliss, F. Ayliffe, H. Collier, J. Merry, T. Coulson, P. Carter, and T. Coulson.

LLANELLY.

BACK : Ewart Thomas.

THREE-QUARTERS : J. Elwyn Evans, M. Evans, G. H. Davies, and E. Finch.

HALF-BACKS : D. E. John and Arthur John.

FORWARDS : Ivor Jones, E. Phillips, W. Lewis, W. Hopkins, B. Ferris, A. Rogers, Bobbie Evans, and F. Harris.

Referee : Mr. A. J. Lock (Somerset).

THE GAME.

Arthur Jenkins was unable to play, but otherwise Llanelly were strongly represented. The Welshmen kicked off, but the bounce of the ball beat James, and after he had gathered the City custodian was only able to get in a feeble punt to touch ten yards or so from the goal-line.

From the throw out a Llanelly forward secured and passed out, but Hughes tackled him and robbed his opponent of possession. After a sharp dash he started passing, but the movement was checked before the centre was reached. Llanelly made ground from a scrum, and later Arthur John punted over the line for a minor.

Play was keen in the Gloucester half, where Hughes picked up and burst through amongst his forwards, but little ground was gained. In some loose play Bayliss gathered and put in a fine kick up the centre. Following up he again secured possession and handed to Collier.

The latter ran some yards and fed Voyce, who made further headway, and then yielded to AYLIFFE, for the latter to score in a good position amidst great enthusiasm, which was renewed when Millington added the goal points. It was a clever and well worked out try.

Llanelly re-started, and early on Mortimer Evans was prominent with a dodgy run, but he was forced to pass and a promising opening was lost. The Gloucester forwards were distinguished with some capital footwork but later a visitor intercepted a pass from Hughes, and only a forward transfer stopped a try.

Voyce, with a good kick to touch, made 30 yards for Gloucester, but smart work by the visitors regained the ground. Opening out with a long pass by Collins, the City backs handled nicely, and Brown punted, but E. Evans saved.

Gloucester were dangerous a little later through Hughes, but Thomas effected a daring save. Llanelly were playing very keenly, and Arthur John broke away prettily and passed to Finch. The wing man, however, was splendidly tackled and sent to touch by Hughes.

Llanelly attacked strongly with clever work, but the defence was sound. Once the visitors with a strong burst went to the line, but a scrum five yards outside was ordered. Llanelly heeled, but Millington intercepted and effected a good clearance.

Smart combination by the Welsh backs again tested Gloucester, but the passing went astray. Then, with the Llanelly backs well placed for an attack, Brown intercepted and raced clear. He reached Thomas when he passed to Voyce, but the International was tackled from behind, and though he let the ball go, it went wide of Ayliffe, and Llanelly escaped.

The game was contested at a very fast pace, and both teams were making play as spectacular as possible. For Gloucester, Hughes, Millington and Brown passed and interpassed prettily, but with an opening made a forward transfer was given. Gloucester tried another attack on the left, but it did not fructify.

Llanelly, with clever kicking, changed the venue, but James replied splendidly, getting in two fine touch-finders. Gathering the ball from the ground Hughes slipped Dai John and fed Millington, who immediately handed to Brown. The wing man made a great dash and got very close when he passed, but it was not accepted – a very near thing.

The rival forwards were well matched, and play was desperately keen. Gloucester had the better of the exchanges, but they lost their position through an interception. Lewis ran well and passed, and in the end a long kick went to the home line where it was carried over by James. A scrum followed five yards out from which Gloucester secured the ball and punted clear.

After some close exchanges, Davies, receiving a pass back from Thomas, punted high to the right, but James fielded in great style on the run and got the ball to touch. Soon after there was a brief delay owing to Collins being knocked out, but he was soon able to resume. Immediately the City scrum half was prominent with a good punt to touch.

Following some fast play and good kicking, the Gloucester forwards, with Ayliffe, Voyce, and Coulson leading, swept down the field in irresistible style, but an infringement took place a few yards outside. Llanelly cleared from a dangerous position, but the City came back thanks to a clever opening by Collins. Ayliffe failed to take a shoulder-high pass, and a good opening was lost. Gloucester attacked to the interval, but there was no further scoring.

HALF-TIME :
GLOUCESTER 1 goal
LLANELLY Nil

The game had produced some fine football, and Gloucester's form was in striking contrast to their half-hearted efforts at Cardiff the previous week. Gloucester resumed, and opening play was fought out at the centre.

From a throw-out Bayliss sent Voyce well away, but the referee's whistle sounded for forward, and the International had to come back. Only a couple of minutes elapsed, however, ere Gloucester added to their score with a brainy try. Hughes, receiving from Collins, deceived the opposition by breaking away on the blind side of the scrum, and after working out a nice opening he passed to VOYCE, who dashed over and scored wide out. Millington failed at goal.

There was no response to the restart, and play settled in the home half. Gloucester, however, gradually assumed the upper hand, the forwards heeling nicely, and the backs combined with effect. From a movement on the right Miller cross-kicked, but Thomas got rid of the ball just in time before being tackled by Voyce.

From the ensuing scrum the Gloucester halves opened out, and Millington, with splendid judgment, gave BROWN a chance. The left winger ran hard for the corner, and though he was pushed by Thomas he cleverly got the ball down before he rolled into touch. Millington failed at goal, but Gloucester held the substantial lead of 11 points.

There was no slacking off in the pace of the game on the resumption, and play continued to be delightfully open and attractive. the Llanelly backs indulged in some smart handling but the tackling was very sound, and the desired opening did not accrue.

Gloucester put in some dashing work forward, but Llanelly were not to be denied, and a smart run by A. John put his side on the aggressive. From a line-out Ivor Jones gathered and broke clear away, and sent LEWIS over with a good try near the posts. Jones added the goal points, and the score was now 11-5.

Resuming play travelled up and down the field at a fast rate. James was loudly cheered for a lovely field and return to a high punt. Voyce put Gloucester in the visitors' 25 with a penalty kick, but from the line-out Llanelly burst away and completely changed the venue.

Playing with great dash Llanelly attacked strongly, and following a series of exchanges E. EVANS dashed over with a fine try, which was not converted.

Llanelly, in the last few minutes, had certainly rattled the home players, and on resuming they continued to play with tremendous dash. A combined movement forward threatened danger to the City, but a knock-on spoiled a good chance. The Gloucester forwards, with a great effort, brought the game out of danger, and Llanelly were in turn placed on the defensive. Big kicking came to the relief of the Welshmen, but Gloucester returned with interest. Ayliffe picked up smartly and passed, but the ball went astray.

It was a terrific struggle now, with Gloucester in the ascendancy. The City had two fine openings, but players could not gather the ball. It was an exciting time, but Llanelly kept their lines intact, and before the end initiated a strong attack. There was some clever passing, but the movement was checked. Soon after the end came, with Gloucester winners of a splendid game by three points.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal 2 tries (11 points)

LLANELLY 1 goal 1 try (8 points)

REMARKS.

One of the best games of the season at Kingsholm this season[sic], with Gloucester deservedly winners. The City team to-day was a vastly different side from that at Cardiff, so much so that one could scarcely believe it was practically the same players doing duty. All round there was a vast improvement, but it was most marked behind the scrum, where Millington and his colleagues shone in clever combination, and displayed initiative entirely lacking at Cardiff Arms Park.

Why the change of venue should so adversely affect the Gloucester players is something of a mystery, but there it is, and it dates back a very long time.

At Llanelly, in December, the City were hopelessly outclassed by a team far superior in all phases of play, but the famous Scarlets, as they have previously experienced, found an opposition of different mettle to-day. Gloucester at one period of the game held a lead of 11 points, and it cannot be said they were not worthy of the advantage. With a bit of luck the Kingsholm men might have been further ahead, for two or three tries were missed by mistakes at critical moments.

But though well behind Llanelly never relaxed, and for a quarter of an hour in the second half the Welshmen made a tremendous effort to save the game. Attacks were made with a persistency that evoked admiration from the crowd, and with the Gloucester men "cracking up" under the assaults the visitors quickly scored eight points.

At this point the game became more exciting than ever; it was a toss up as to how the final result would pan out. But Gloucester recovered splendidly, redoubled their efforts for a final spurt, and successfully retained their three points margin.

It was exciting football fought out at a tremendous pace, with some great-hearted tackling, but all fair and legitimate. Llanelly are always popular favourites with the Gloucester crowd, and the sporting and clever display they gave this afternoon added to their reputation.

With Gloucester at full strength forward, the City pack were seen at their best. Llanelly had a fast, dashing pack – men who were clever and resourceful with hands as well as feet – but they found their match to-day. The home eight were capable and efficient in all departments, and every player was distinguished at one time or another.

Voyce was a fine "forager," and he was always handy to carry on attacking movements. Ayliffe played his best game of the season, being very effective in the open, and Bayliss and Coulson were splendid workers. But, as previously remarked, all were good, and the combined work could hardly have been improved upon.

With the City pack holding their own in the scrums, Collins had a fair share of the ball, and he utilised his opportunities to capital advantage. The Llanelly wing forward was somewhat of a trouble; but Collins got the ball away very smartly, and also did a lot of stopping.

Hughes worked hard and successfully, and that try he gave Tom Voyce was one of the best. A sharp turn put the Llanelly backs off their guard, and the intention of the Gloucestrian was not grasped until the defence was beaten.

Hughes held on too long several times, but this was the only blemish on a capital display, in which his deadly tackling was a feature. He stopped Finch on one occasion when the Llanelly winger looked a certain scorer.

The Gloucester threequarters were a far more effective line this afternoon, and a good deal of their work was highly meritorious.

Millington and Meadows did well at centre, and Miller and Brown on the wings gave nothing away. The latter was the more prominent, and several of his dashes deserved better reward.

Llanelly were a clever set behind, with the Johns' tricky and resourceful at half, and Mortimer Evans and Emlyn Evans a very strong wing. As usual, the visitors kicked beautifully, and it was their smartness in this department that frequently eased severe pressure.

James opened shakily at full back, but later he made full amends, and some of his fielding and his kicking surpassed anything he has previously accomplished for the Senior team. Ewart Thomas also served his side well, his stopping of forward rushes being a feature.

Next week : Richmond, at Richmond.

GLOUCESTER A v. LYDNEY A.

CITY SECONDS' DISAPPOINTING DISPLAY.

The alterations from the selected teams were as follows :

For Gloucester A. K. Norman and W. Williams came in for Daniells and Loveridge in the three-quarter line, and A. Rea for J. Webb forward; and for Lydney, Harris Hoskins and R. Darters replaced others.

Lydney were the first to attack, but Williams cleared nicely to touch. The City forwards heeled, and Fisher and Crowther put in some good passing but met with a sound defence.

Lydney then attacked, Hughes and Ferris showing up prominently, but Williams saved. W. Lewis made tracks for the City line, but kicked across instead of going on with the defence practically beaten. The City being penalised, Remnant landed a good goal.

The City were pressed, Hughes, Howell and Ferris being stopped just in time. Hughes lost a certain try by not passing. The City attacked, but Fisher was well stopped.

HALF-TIME :

Lydney A	1 goal (p)
Gloucester A	Nil

In the second half Mansell retired injured for a time, but pluckily resumed. Lydney attacked and Hughes nearly got through. The City relieved through Norman, and their forwards heeling a good passing movement followed. Hoskins and others dribbled finely for Lydney, but Williams saved.

Wickson and Ferris did good work, but the latter was forced to touch. Porter placed Lydney on the attack, and keen play followed, the game being chiefly forward. Williams had a lot to do, and did it well.

Fumbling by the Lydney backs enabled Norman to score with ease, for Williams to convert.

Lydney made great efforts again to obtain the lead, and right on time the City were penalised and Remnant with a lovely kick landed a goal.

RESULT :

Lydney A 2 goals (p) (6 points)

Gloucester A 1 goal (5 points)

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