

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1922.

FOOTBALL.

GLO'STER'S BRILLIANT PERFORMANCE.

LLANELLY BEATEN POINTLESS AT KINGSHOLM.

CITY FORWARDS' GREAT DISPLAY.

Not since Cross Keys visited Kingsholm in September, and inflicted the one home defeat sustained by Gloucester this season, had a Welsh team been seen at the City Club headquarters during the present campaign.

Cardiff and Newport had both been met away, and though the results went against Gloucester, the visitors had the satisfaction of giving the two powerful Welsh clubs – both still undefeated – two of the hardest games of the season.

Llanelly – to-day's visitors at Kingsholm – are very old opponents of Gloucester, and followers of the City who can recall the Spa days will have vivid recollections of some stirring struggles between the rival teams.

The famous Scarlets, if not up to the old standard, are still a power in the Rugby world, and their ranks contain some brilliant individual performers, chief amongst whom is Albert Jenkins, the well-known Welsh International centre, who is again a strong candidate for honours.

Associated with Jenkins at three-quarter in the selected team were Bryn Evans, another International, and E. Finch, who was included in the Welsh Probable side for the recent trial.

To beat such a combination the City required their best and strongest Fifteen, but unfortunately Gloucester had to field substitutes for T. Voyce (engaged in the English trial), G. Holford (suffering with a slight attack of influenza), M. Evans, and N. Daniell. Meadows took the latter's place on the right wing, and Collier and Rea came into the forward line vice Holford and Evans.

At the last moment Llanelly had to make a change, Albert Jenkins being unable to make the journey, and letting in C. T. Morgan at left centre.

The weather was dull and rain threatened, and with the early kick-off (2.30) the attendance was considerably below the average for a Welsh match.

Teams : –

#### GLOUCESTER.

BACK : J. C. Collett.

THREE-QUARTERS: S. A. Brown, S. Stone, E. H. Hughes, and F. Meadows.

HALF-BACKS: T. Gough and T. Millington.

FORWARDS: F. W. Ayliffe (captain), Major Roderick, A. Hall, S. Smart, H. W. Collier, A. Rea, S. Bayliss, and T. Coulson.

#### LLANELLY.

BACK: Ewart Thomas.

THREE-QUARTERS: C. T. Morgan, Bryn Evans, E. Finch, and Elwyn Evans.

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

FORWARDS: W. J. Jones, Cliff Williams, Gethin Thomas, Bobbie Evans, Jabez Thomas, Claude Ellery, Fred Harris, and Tom Jones.

Referee : Mr. J. Southby (Bristol).

## THE GAME.

Llanelly started against the wind, but there was only a poor reply to the kick-off, and play opened at the centre. From the first set scrum, Llanelly heeled and there was a series of smart exchanges which left the ball with Bryn Evans, who punted. Brown, however, made a clever mark in the face of the opposition, but his kick gained little ground. A sharp loose rush by the Welsh forwards was checked by Collett, who put in a high punt, but the ball went straight up in the air, and the game remained in the home half.

A telling dribble by the home forwards, with Hughes, made half the length of the ground before Morgan checked in good style. Play was just inside the visitors' end, where Millington tried a burst through, but he was safely held. The same player with a loose kick a minute later sent to E. Thomas, who could only get in a sharp kick to touch a few yards from the line.

Gloucester were in a good attacking position, but it was lost through faulty play, and the Welshmen kicked out to Collett, who punted well, but could not find touch. Llanelly made ground with kicking, but Stone, with a neat run, made headway and passed out to Brown, who, however, was well collared.

The City went close after this, thanks to good work by Stone and Millington, but the Welshmen's kicking abilities again came in useful, and there was a nice clearance to beyond the 25 flag. Gloucester got the ball from successive scrums, but Gough's passes were very wild, and Millington could only kick.

Near the centre Hall broke away from a line-out and passed to Meadows, who cross-kicked and over the line. There was a race for the touch, but Millington was beaten by Bryn Evans, and only a minor resulted.

Even play followed until, from another kick down by Gloucester, Thomas was tackled in possession. The full back, however, neatly got rid of the ball to Finch, who ran and punted to touch at midfield. From the line-out the Gloucester forwards broke away brilliantly, and Finch was only able to get the ball to touch in the nick of time.

Working well in the loose, the City rushed to within a few yards of the mark, where the Brothers John saved the situation between them. Llanelly cleared from a dangerous position with a touch-finder, and then Millington had a shot for goal from a penalty, but failed to find the cross-bar, a minor resulting.

Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges, but play was mostly confined to the forwards. Collett was cheered for a good pick up and dash through the opposing forwards, and then Llanelly showed up with a clever bout of passing, which transferred play to the home half. Gloucester quickly changed the venue, and a strong burst by Millington looked likely to end in a try, but the vice-captain passed and the ball was captured by an opponent. He was quickly pulled down, and Gloucester struggled hard to cross the line, but were not rewarded.

A punt out saw Brown return to touch close in, and then followed a desperate assault on the Llanelly goal-line. Gough, feinting to pass, slipped past the opposing halves, but he was tackled. Ayliffe, however, gathered and made a determined effort to bullock through, only just failing.

Llanelly eased the pressure with timely kicks out, and later Finch made a couple of smart runs which gave his side an advantage. Loose passing spoiled an apparent opening, and Ayliffe came through with a fine dribble, which was carried on by Roderick. Just in time E. Evans managed to pick up and kick straight to touch.

Gloucester made further progress, and from a punt the ball went to touch only a couple of yards outside. The City made strenuous efforts to pierce the defence, but nothing but a minor resulted.

From the drop-out Gloucester got on the attack again through Millington, who cut up the field and passed to Collier, The latter went strongly for the line, but was upset ten yards from the mark. He, however, let the ball go, and it was taken over the line and Roderick scored amidst cheers. Millington just missed the extra points.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
GLOUCESTER ..... 1 try  
LLANELLY ..... Nil

Gloucester had done far more attacking than their rivals, but a three point lead was hardly good enough. The City restarted in good style, Roderick being to the fore with a powerful burst from a line out. The Major passed to a confrere, who made a few yards before being tackled, the ball going to touch in the 25.

Gough, being out of position at the scrum, the visiting forwards came away with a loose rush, which was not stopped until the centre was reached. The contest waged fast and furious, with little in it. Twice Gloucester went down strongly to Ewart Thomas, but the latter, with some luck, cleared effectively with good touch-finders. Gloucester tried a passing bout on the left, Stone cutting inside and handing to Millington, but the latter was soon brought down.

More clever kicking by the Llanelly backs gave the visitors a lot of ground, but Gloucester held their own in general work. Coulson, gathering in the loose, brought off a strong run to Thomas, and then put in a short punt, but a visitor got back and saved. It was hammer and tongs between the respective forwards, and the tackling was terrific. The Welshmen again relieved with kicks, but a dashing run by Collier took Gloucester back, a forward transfer spoiling a possible try.

Gloucester worked desperately to increase their lead, and Gough once looked like beating the defence, but he tried to do too much and was collared. In their own 25 Llanelly started passing, and the two Evans's came away beautifully on the right. Bryn Evans, however, held on too long, and the chance of scoring was lost.

Immediately after, Hughes was prominent with a clever run and, dropping the ball, started a dribble, which Morgan stopped cleverly. Llanelly assumed the aggressive after this, and Gloucester were sorely pressed. From the brothers John an attack was started and Morgan cut through and fed Bryn Evans, but Collett tackled his man a yard outside. The City were called upon to defend, which they did with resolution, but it was an anxious time.

The City gradually worked out of danger, but Gough was penalised at the scrum. E. Thomas had a place for goal, but his kick was charged down by Roderick, and Ayliffe with a hefty kick sent straight down the field. Roderick followed up keenly and tackled E. John, who had raced back.

Exciting play followed, but Llanelly secured the ball and kicked to the centre. Apparently the whistle went for off-side, and Brown, who received, hesitated. He was collared and the game allowed to continue, Llanelly benefitting. Gloucester, however, quickly recovered, and another hot attack followed on the visitors' line. Llanelly's defence, however, stood every test. The City, not to be denied, played up with redoubled vigour, and in some loose play and when surrounded by opponents, Millington secured and dropped a clever goal amidst great cheering.

From the restart the home players started passing, and several took part in a neat bout until Brown failed to accept at midfield. It was still a titanic struggle forward, with the City pack the stronger in the loose. The Welshmen shone in one pretty bout of passing, but Gloucester replied with a brilliant round in which the two half-backs, Stone, Hughes and Meadows took part. The wing man was hemmed in at the corner, but threw back inside to Hughes, for the centre to complete a fine movement with a try. Millington failed at goal.

Encouraged with this further success Gloucester took the game in hand, the forwards and backs playing in irresistible style. One long forward rush completely beat the opposition, and the result was a try to Ayliffe, which Millington again failed to convert.

Llanelly were outplayed subsequently, and the City only missed another try by inches, whilst a clever bit of combination well deserved reward. To the end the City dominated the game.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER ... 1 goal (d) 3 tries (13 pts.)

LLANELLY ..... Nil

REMARKS.

It was a desperately keen contest, and for three-parts of the game the result hung in the balance. But following Millington's wonderful dropped goal, which gave Gloucester the substantial lead of seven points, there was only one team in it. The City forwards, who had played a great game all through, were simply irresistible in the loose, and Llanelly were a well beaten side. It was a splendid finish on the part of Gloucester, and credit can be given the whole team for the decisive victory achieved.

If the game did not produce much in the way of spectacular football, there were many exciting incidents, and some of the cleverest kicking imaginable on the part of the Llanelly backs, who were always adepts in this department. Again and again the Welshmen were able to ward off dangerous attacks by timely punts to touch, and the players were ever mindful of saving their forwards as much as possible.

Gloucester, with the amount of attacking they did in the first half, ought to have held a double-figure lead at the interval, but somehow the necessary penetrative power was lacking, though in one or two instances the Scarlets were very lucky in saving their lines. Llanelly now and again handled smartly, and the men were very nippy, but the marking was very close.

I anticipated a very close struggle for supremacy after the change of ends, but Llanelly were never really able to get on top. Twice the visitors came near scoring, but after Gloucester had thwarted these attacks the City set to work and dominated the game to some purpose.

There were several exhilarating individual bursts, but the combined dribbles took the eye most and rarely has a City pack accomplished better all-round work. The ball was controlled perfectly at times, the backing up was excellent, and there was plenty of devil in the movements. Well done, forwards !

It is hard to individualise, but Ayliffe, Roderick, and Hall were in great form to-day; whilst Collier, Coulson and Bayliss also came into prominence for fine work. But the other two members of the pack – Smart and Rea – were little inferior. All put out their strongest and best, and the result was a display as good as one could wish.

At the rear of the scrum Gough had a keen opponent in E. John, and it was not until late in the game the Gloucesterian was able to obtain the mastery. Gough has still something to learn in the art of serving his partner. Some of his one-handed passes off the ground to-day went astray, and with a less vigilant and clever colleague than Millington things might have gone awkward for the side. The vice-captain was soundness itself; he was always doing something useful, and he capped everything with that dropped goal of his.

The Gloucester three-quarters performed very satisfactorily as a line. Hughes and Stone were smart in attack, and their defence never wavered, Brown and Meadows, on the respective wings, also did well, the latter showing capital judgment in passing inside to Hughes and enabling the centre to score the best try of the afternoon. At full back Collett was never at fault, and one or two of his saves were masterly.

Llanelly, until the last quarter, were always a dangerous side when on the move. The forwards were very sharp on the ball, but there was a distinct tendency to lying off-side. The brothers John combined well at half-back, and of the three-quarters Bryn Evans and Finch were the pick, though E. Evans and Morgan rendered useful service. Ewart Thomas proved a worthy successor to more famous custodians who have figured for the Scarlets. His fielding was generally very safe, and he kicked well, even under the greatest pressure.



Next week : Swansea, at Kingsholm.

The Dix testimonial cards will soon be out, and football enthusiasts are asked not to forget the veteran's splendid services.

W.B.

### GLOUCESTER A v. BRISTOL A.

#### A POINTLESS DRAW.

Played on the Memorial Ground, Bristol. From the kick-off Gloucester assumed the aggressive, but they were faulty in passing. Play was taken to the Gloucester 25 through a fine run by Evans, the visitors being forced to concede a minor. The home forwards were heeling well, but though the backs had plenty of chances they failed to cross the line, though Wring was only just stopped in time. Gloucester were well served at full back, and Webb led a neat dribble, only to see Evans bring relief to the home side.

#### HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A ..... Nil  
Bristol A ..... Nil

Some fine passing between Evans and Hunt saw the latter beat several of the Gloucester side, only to be brought down on the line. Bristol then lost the services of their full-back, Wregg, through injuries. Gloucester then attacked, but a good kick brought relief. Play became very scrappy towards the end, and the Gloucester defence was heavily taxed, for Bristol, despite the handicap, made several strong efforts without success.

#### RESULT :

Gloucester A ..... Nil  
Bristol A ..... Nil