

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1923.

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. NEATH.

CITY GAIN GOAL-KICK VICTORY.

A SECOND HALF REVIVAL.

Neath provided the opposition for Gloucester at Kingsholm this afternoon, and in anticipation of a keen game there was a large attendance. Gloucester had been by no means successful against Welsh teams this season, Llanelly being the only team of Welshmen defeated at Kingsholm, and feeling amongst the home supporters as to the outcome of the match was none too confident. Gloucester were without Voyce and Brown, and Neath lacked the services of Baker, an International forward. After a heavy storm in the morning the afternoon was gloriously fine.

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : J. C. Collett.

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

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

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

NEATH.

BACK : Hugh Jones.

THREE-QUARTERS : H. R. Crabtree, Glyn Jones, W. E. Allin, and Ivor Jones.

HALF-BACKS : E. Watkins and T. H. Francis.

FORWARDS : Jack Thomas, M. Davies, Rev. Gleaves, S. Daymond, E. Harris, P. Jones, D. J. Davies, and F. Coope.

THE GAME.

Ayliffe kicked off against the sun and there was a good return. From the line-out Hall obtained and after a sharp run gave to Holford who burst to the Neath 25 before relinquishing the ball. Neath picked up and punted down, Collett fielding and narrowly missing a dropped goal. Hugh Jones ran the ball out, but failed to clear and there was another rush for the Neath line headed by Smart. A beautiful kick gave Neath a footing in the home territory and Ivor Jones receiving from the scrum put in a run and punt, but David got back and picking up cleanly sent to touch outside his 25. Gloucester now set up an attack and Hughes executed a nice run down touch, but his pass inside was not accepted.

Gloucester continued to press, and Neath had hard work to keep them out, a score nearly coming in the far corner. Then Crabtree got off-side, and Millington made a splendid attempt to kick a goal, but the position was not good enough.

Gloucester continued to press severely, but a splendid chance was lost by Stone, who knocked on after the forwards had heeled and David had made a good opening. The home forwards were playing grandly in the loose and after a Neath burst they ran the length of the field, Holford and Meadows exchanging passes in grand style. Holford, however, passed inside and the ball becoming loose was kicked to touch by one of the visiting backs.

A change now came over the game, and Neath attacked strongly, the three-quarters making several dangerous dashes. Allin only just missed a drop goal, but the pressure continued until the Welshmen were penalised and Collett put in a wonderful kick from his line to touch at half-way.

Neath were not to be denied, however, and attacked again, Crabtree and Glyn Jones making a wonderful run up the line, Jones giving the "dummy" beautifully to Collett and running in with a try. The position was difficult, and Hugh Jones missed the extra points.

The last few moments had shown the Neath backs to be superior to the home three-quarters in speed and resourcefulness, and it was evident that the home defence was being keenly tried.

A penalty against Gloucester led to no result, Millington fielding and sending well to touch. From the line-out the ball was kicked to Hugh Jones, who put in a lengthy kick to touch, which again put the City on the defensive. Millington helped to clear with a useful kick to touch, but the ball was then kicked down to Hugh Jones, who had a long drop for goal. The Neath three-quarters followed up quickly, and Collett only just touched down in time. A couple of penalties against the visitors and good kicking by Collett let Gloucester into the Neath 25, but a wild pass from Gough let the Welshmen come again. Collett again distinguished himself with a champion kick to touch, which placed Gloucester in a good position.

A little later Gloucester had the hardest possible lines. The forwards had heeled well, and Millington breaking through sent to Stone. The inside right sent to Meadows, but although the wing man got over, he had just scraped the touch line and the flag went up.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
NEATH 1 try
GLOUCESTER Nil

There was an exchange of kicks on the resumption, which ended in favour of Gloucester, but the Neath backs got in motion and ran to the home quarter. Collett relieved with a fine kick to mid-way, and from the line-out the home backs handled, David and Stone showing up well. The movement broke down near the visitors' 25, and a rush by the Neath forwards was stopped by off-side. Millington took the kick, but the distance was too great.

A moment later Watkins was penalised, but this time Millington's kick was charged down. He followed up smartly, however, and there was a rare struggle before the ball went to touch in the Neath corner. The ball travelled across to the opposite side, where Hughes had a try to break through but was bored into touch a few inches outside.

Gloucester kept up the pressure, and the Welshmen were hard put to keep them out. Millington, with a useful kick, kept Gloucester well down. Shortly afterwards Gough received from a scrum near the Neath posts and ran right through the opposition, scoring a beautiful try amidst great excitement. Millington made no mistake with the place-kick.

Two points up Gloucester redoubled their efforts and a fine forward burst led by Holford only just failed to materialise. Then Hughes put in a clever dodgy run, but he was not supported, and the ball went loose. Hugh Jones kicked across the field, and it looked as though Collier only had to catch it to score, but it passed him and went to touch.

The home team were putting up a splendid fight, and it was only by the most resolute defence that Neath were able to keep them out, Stone having hard lines in being held when nearly over. After a while the Welshmen gained relief by a good kick to touch.

At half-way Gough was penalised, but Collett fielded and neutralised with another fine kick to touch. Neath continued to attack, but the home forwards showed up well in defence and prevented the visitors from getting far into their 25. The Neath three-quarters began to handle, and Crabtree ran and punted. Collett, however, was safe, and fielding nicely sent to touch well down.

The City were unable to clear properly, and again found their line heavily attacked. Gough kicked out, but Hugh Jones sent it back; and it was not until Roderick made a mark that they were able to gain a respite. Francis took a drop for goal and would probably have succeeded had not the kick been charged down. It was left to Holford to pick up and finally clear the Welshmen out of the home 25.

Gloucester were by no means comfortable, and with Neath again in their quarter, and pressing hotly, matters were by no means safe. At last they managed to cross the half-way line by dint of strenuous forward play. Gough was again penalised, and Hugh Jones regained a good slice of ground for Neath.

Following the line-out, Ivor Jones and Allin executed a fine run down the wing, but Jones punted ahead a little too hard and David, gathering the ball in his stride, stopped a dangerous movement.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal (5 points)
NEATH 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS.

It was a stern struggle from start to finish and the result being in the balance until the final whistle. In the first half the home team clearly had the worst of matters and but for a keen defence, in which Collett was the shining light, would have had a much bigger margin against them.

The interval, however, worked wonders, and during the greater part of the second half Gloucester were attacking continuously. A dangerous relapse towards the end, however, made the home supporters quake.

Collett was again the most conspicuous and successful player in the City team. He fielded wonderfully well and time after time found the touch line with lengthy kicks. The opposing full back was very little behind him and contributed largely to the attacking powers displayed by Neath in the first half.

The visiting three-quarters were a useful combination and appeared to be a more dangerous lot than the home backs. In the second half they were closely marked and had few chances whilst the Gloucester backs improved.

There was little to choose between the Gloucester three-quarters except that Meadows was hardly speedy enough on the wing, and Stone was none too safe with his hands. Allin and Ivor Jones were the most progressive wing for Neath.

At half back Watkins appeared to have the better of Gough, but both the halves were risky and were often penalised. Gough's try was the redeeming feature of his game.

In the front line the home forwards, while having a difficulty to get the ball in the scrum, worked splendidly in the loose, Holford being always to the fore with Ayliffe, Roderick and Hall helping all the time.

Next week : Guy's Hospital, away.

JC