

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1912

FOOTBALL.

RUGBY.

GLOUCESTER v. SWANSEA.

CITY'S FIRST AWAY MATCH.

WEAK SIDE AT ST. HELEN'S.

SIXTEEN POINTS' MARGIN AGAINST GLOUCESTER.

(By W.B.)

Gloucester's usual ill-luck when journeying into Wales was again in evidence to-day, for the City had to meet Swansea at St. Helen's minus the services of Hudson, Washbourne, Holford, and Berry. The captain and Washbourne were out of the side as the result of injuries sustained last week, for though the last-named played for the county on Thursday, the ankle trouble reasserted itself and he had to cry off.

Holford is still unfit, and Berry could not make the journey owing to the death of his sister, a bereavement in which he has the sympathy of his colleagues. Webb filled Hudson's position, but with Bloxsome, the next reserve for the wing, also disabled, the Committee had to call on Sysum, who performed so creditably against Northampton. His proper place, however, is centre or half-back, and it was feared he would not have the pace to hold the faster Swansea winger. Still he was regarded as the best substitute available.

Gloucester, as is well known, have never won a match on the St. Helen's ground, and with the disorganised forces out to-day the prospects of breaking the record were remote indeed.

Swansea, despite the retirement of Owen and Ivor Morgan, and the absence of Trew, have performed brilliantly in all their matches, and the scoring powers of the backs have been up to the club's best standard. They played practically the same side that defeated the Plymouth Services so handsomely last week.

The teams were : —

GLOUCESTER.	POSITIONS.	SWANSEA.
C. Cook	Backs.	J. Bancroft
F. Webb	Three-Quarter	H. Lewis
L. Hamblin	Backs	W. Davies
A. Lewis	"	A. Thomas
W. Sysum	"	Bryn Lewis
W. Dix	Half-Backs	Dodger Owen
W. Hall	"	O. Jenkins
W. Johns	Forwards	D. J. Thomas
G. Vears	"	T. Williams
S. Smart	"	T. Morgan
J. Meadows	"	H. Moulton
S. Millard	"	G. H. Hayward
W. Dovey	"	E. Morgan
N. Hayes	"	R. Shepherd
F. Pegler	"	B. Williams

Referee : Mr. Ben Lewis, Pontypridd.

THE GAME.

There were two changes in the Swansea team, Dodger Owen (no relation to the famous International of that name) taking the place of R. Williams at half and B. Williams replacing Hollingdale forward. The weather was fine and the ground in perfect condition, but the attendance moderate for the Swansea ground.

Swansea started the game and an exchange of kicking gave Cook the advantage, the ball going to touch beyond the centre. The Welsh backs early got away, and a good punt sent to the Gloucester end. Owen further improved with a short dribble, but two lovely punts by Hall returned the game to mid-field.

Subsequent play was very quiet, but Gloucester were doing good work, and following a splendid touch-finder by Hall the forwards rushed very close. Keeping up the aggressive the City pack heeled and Dix fed Hall. The latter took a drop for goal, but a capital effort went wide of the posts. Soon after Sysum forced another minor with a kick over the line.

So far the game had been absolutely devoid of incident, but at length Swansea opened out, and after passing by the backs Howell Lewis punted ahead and forced Hall to kick to touch a few yards outside. The Gloucester forwards relieved with a good rush, Johns being to the fore, and the danger was averted.

Swansea got back, but Hamblin cleared with a beautiful effort to the centre. Hayes was prominent with good work in the line-out, and then Dix and Sysum worked the short side of the scrum, but the latter went to touch. Bryn Lewis changed the venue with neat play, but Gloucester at once got back, Swansea saving by making a mark.

Following this each side in turn was penalised, which left matters even. Hall checked a loose rush by the Welshmen in smart style, and Smart, getting in a useful kick, Swansea were pressed. Gathering the ball in the loose Hayes darted away and passed to Sysum, who could not keep out of touch. Bancroft eased the pressure on his line, and then the backs passed, only to see Hamblin intercept. The centre passed out, but Webb could not gather, and Hayward secured and punted clear.

Another passing bout saw Bryn Lewis sprint well, but he was pushed to touch in time. Subsequent play was fast and even, both sides doing well, though nothing brilliant transpired.

From a passing movement Howell Lewis cross-kicked and a forward went over, but he was ruled off-side. In the next scrum, however, Gloucester were penalised, and Bancroft dropped a lovely goal. Gloucester attacked strongly to the interval, but could not cross.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Swansea 1 goal (p)
Gloucester Nil

Vears restarted, and early on a run and cross-kick by Howell Lewis put Swansea well up. From a mark Bancroft punted high, and Gloucester failing to take the home backs had a splendid chance, but a wild transfer on the line threw it away.

Keen tackling by the City checked a likely score on the right, and in the next minute Bryn Lewis was only collared in the nick of time, Cook being laid out in making the tackle. After attention he was able to resume.

Swansea made two desperate efforts to cross from lines-out close in, but they were beaten off, and the City rushed out to beyond the quarter flag. A penalty kick against Gloucester was well returned by Lewis, and from another free Bancroft forced a minor.

Following the drop out the Gloucester forwards showed up with some grand footwork, but the ground was recovered by Bancroft by the aid of a penalty. A smart movement initiated by Owen gave Howell Lewis a chance, but Cook tackled his man grandly. Gloucester, however, were kept on the defensive, and some brilliant exchanges, really the first seen in the game, resulted in Bryn Lewis darting over in the corner. Bancroft failed to convert.

Gloucester dropped out, a mark following. Bancroft kicked high, and Cook missing the ball altogether, T. Williams gathered and went clean under the posts, Bancroft adding the goal points. This was a soft try indeed. In justice to Cook it should be said he had the sun dead in his eyes.

Gloucester restarted, and the City made a splendid breakaway, but Millard got mixed up in a melee and was injured, having to be carried off the field.

Immediately on resuming Gloucester were again penalised, but Cook replied well to Bancroft's kick. Swansea, however, were doing better behind now, and brilliant passing nearly ended in a score. Gloucester eased the pressure with good work in the loose, but the visitors were badly beaten in the scrums.

Lewis conceded a minor from a kick over the line, and on the drop-out Gloucester reached the centre with fine forward play. Back Swansea came with clever passing and inter-passing, but the situation was saved. Millard now came back, but Gloucester were being well beaten now. Heeling nicely the Swansea halves got the ball repeatedly, but there was an absence of sting in the attack. Just before the end, after a movement had broken down, the ball was sent across to Bryn Lewis, who just got the ball down in the corner. Bancroft kicked a fine goal.

RESULT :

Swansea 3 goals (1p), 1 try (16 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS.

Swansea deserved their victory, but the margin against the City was anything but an adequate reflex of the play. It was the tamest game I remember between the teams, for though the Swansea backs occasionally displayed brilliance they were far removed from the standard set up by the All Whites.

Gloucester played a hard, resolute game forward, and in all phases, except heeling, were fully equal to their opponents. Johns, Hayes, and Smart were extra in the loose, the International playing one of his finest games.

At half Dix was below his best, even allowing for the fact that his forwards were beaten in the scrums. Hall did some beautiful kicking, but there was no attempt to open out, and I don't think the Gloucester backs had one single round of passing. Their tackling was good on the whole, and Lewis and Hamblin kicked well.

Cook, except for the serious mistake which gave Swansea their second try, played a sound game. He compared favourably with Bancroft. The home backs were uneven, the best being Davies and Thomas.

GLOUCESTER A v. WHITECROFT.

These teams met at Kingsholm in fine weather before a small attendance of spectators. The teams were : –

Gloucester A. – F. W. Hayward; A. H. Adams, W. Staunton, W. Wilkes, and C. Mumford; J. Humphries and A. Cummings; A. Cook, E. Yates, E. Osborne, W. Parham, F. Russell, J. Goddard, F. Bayliss, and J. Cromwell.

Whitecroft : – F. Vedmore; H. Trafford, J. Griffin, G. James, and A. James; H. Lawrence and F. Morgan, sen.; J. Baker, L. Kear, G. Holford, C. Phipps, F. James, F. Fletcher, W. Rudge, and H. Berry.

Referee : Mr. F. T. Lawrence (Cheltenham).

The visitors started a quarter of an hour late. The opening exchanges were all in Gloucester's favour, the forwards getting the best of matters in the scrum. Once or twice Gloucester tried passing, Wilkes and Adams being prominent in turn, but the movements did not get very far.

Hayward put his side in a useful attacking position with a good kick to touch, and Gloucester pressed hotly, but two frees to the visitors gained them some relief.

The Gloucester forwards were better in the loose, but there was too much wild kicking. A penalty to Gloucester gave the home team a chance, and Hayward landed a capital goal from well outside the 25 mark.

Gloucester quickly returned to the attack, and a foolish kick by a Whitecroft three-quarter put the ball right into Bayliss' hands. He beat a couple of men cleverly and scored a good try, which Hayward majorised with a capital kick.

Whitecroft showed to better advantage after this, but Wilkes sent them back with a good kick, and Gloucester were very soon on the Whitecroft line again. Here, however, the visitors broke away in great form, and going strongly from a line-out their forwards were nearly over, Hayward saving. Gloucester rushed back to the other end, and from a free Hayward very nearly landed another goal.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 2 goals (1p)
Whitecroft Nil

On resuming Mumford went into the scrum and Cook came out on the wing. Gloucester at once took up a position in the visitors' 25, but a Whitecroft forward came right through cleverly and punted to touch in the Gloucester 25. A free was awarded to the visitors, and A. James landed a good goal.

Gloucester returned to the attack, but the handling was poor, the ball being thrown about wildly. There was one good movement which looked promising, but Wilkes held a bit too long. A minute later Gloucester got going well, and Staunton and Cook beating the full-back, the former was credited with a try in the corner. Hayward failed with the kick.

Whitecroft pressed for a bit after this, but Cook relieved, and in tackling him the visiting back was laid out for a minute or two, but was able to resume. Whitecroft returned to the attack strongly, and after a sharp rally near the home line, A. James dropped a neat goal.

The Whitecroft back being collared in possession, Gloucester pressed hard, and Adams was very nearly over. The visitors, however, relieved, and the centre was the venue at the end.

RESULT :

Gloucester A ... 2 goals (1p), 1 try (11 pts.)
Whitecroft 2 goals (1d 1p) (7 pts.)

JC