

THE CITIZEN
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1912

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. NEATH.

WELSHMEN BEATEN AT KINGSHOLM.

CLEVER SCORES BY LEWIS AND HAMBLIN.

GLOUCESTER FORWARDS' WEAKNESS.

Neath, who were not seen at Kingsholm last season, fulfilled the first of the two engagements with the city at Kingsholm to-day. Gloucester were still short of Hudson and Holford, but Washbourne was able to re-appear. There were two changes in the Neath team, "Shon" Evans being a prominent absentee. The weather was fine, and the ground, in the absence of rain, was on the hard side. The teams lined out as follow : —

GLOUCESTER.	POSITIONS.	NEATH.
C. Cook	Backs	Glyn Gethin
F. Webb	Three-Quarter	H. Richards
L. Hamblin	Backs	T. Burnell
A. Lewis	"	J. Griffiths
W. Washbourne	"	Trevor John
W. Dix	Half-Backs	T. Davies
W. Hall	"	Edgar Thomas
W. Johns	Forwards	F. David
G. Vears	"	Glyn Stephens
N. Hayes	"	T. C. Lloyd
S. Smart	"	W. Davies
S. Millard	"	F. Perrett
J. Meadows	"	T. T. Jenkins
W. Dovey	"	W. Hopkins
F. Pegler	"	E. Davies

Referee : Mr. J. H. Miles.

THE GAME.

Gloucester had to face the sun, but there was no return to Vears' kick-off, and play opened at the centre. Neath heeled from the first scrum, and a visitor kicked down, but there was a good reply, and matters remained even. When the City got the ball back Dix missed, but the Welshmen failed to take advantage. Neath, however, did better in the next minute, for a sharp bit of passing left the ball with John, who cross-kicked over the line. Cook, however, fielded and conceded a minor.

On the drop-out the City forwards made headway, and Dix robbing the opposing halves gained a good slice of ground. T. Davies recovered immediately with a smart effort, and the Gloucester 25 was reached. Heeling nicely, Dix got the ball away cleverly, and Hall and Lewis in turn handled. Hamblin was next in possession, and he cut through beautifully to the full-back. He beat Gethin, but in pulling up to do so he was collared from behind, and though he got rid of the ball it was captured by an opponent.

Good kicking by Neath took play to the centre, where some fast play was witnessed. Hall was prominent in checking the opposing forces with a clever screw kick to touch. Neath quickly worked out, and T. Davies opened out with a clever reverse pass. Thomas, however, punted instead of handing to his three-quarters, and the ball went straight to touch. A neat passing bout by the Gloucester backs promised well, but Lewis could not accept Washbourne's pass back inside.

From a penalty Gloucester worked down, and Hamblin cross-kicking there seemed just a chance of a score, but Gethin saved by making his mark. The resultant kick brought relief, and Neath transferred play to midfield. Here the Gloucester halves opened out in brilliant style, and Hamblin giving Griffiths the "dummy" got right up the field.

Transfers followed to Lewis and Washbourne, and there was a return from the wing man to Lewis, who was pulled down on the verge of the line. A scrum followed five yards out, and Neath kicked out of danger. Gloucester, however, returned to the attack, but could not get an opening, though forcing a couple of minors.

Resuming, Gloucester gained a footing in their opponents' half, but a round of passing, well carried out by the Neath backs, saw Richards punt down, Cook marking. Gloucester worked out a few yards, but good kicking sent the Welshmen back, Hamblin clearing well under difficulties.

A flying kick by Dix gained his side some twenty yards, and Hamblin further improved. Dovey, with a splendid dash, looked a likely scorer, but he was tackled from behind and lost the ball.

From the ensuing scrum Dix tried to work his way over, but being unsuccessful he threw the ball out to Lewis, who with a left foot drop obtained a lovely goal.

On the restart Neath showed up with some fine forward play, and a Gloucester kick being charged down the City lines were placed in danger. For an infringement Gloucester were penalised, but Gethin's shot went wide of the posts to Hamblin, who cleared nicely.

Neath were holding the advantage forward despite sterling play by Johns, Vears, and Meadows, and play was confined to the home half. Hall eventually broke away and gave a neat pass to Washbourne, but the latter's return transfer was spoiled. Neath worked back to the home 25, where T. Davies was penalised for off-side.

Soon afterwards half-time was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester	1 goal (d)
Neath	Nil

Neath restarted, Hall replying with a beautiful kick to touch well inside the visitors' half. Neath broke away from the line-out and punted to Cook, who claimed a mark, but it was not allowed, and he was promptly upset.

Scrum followed near the centre, but eventually the ball came out on the Gloucester side to Hamblin, who collided with Lewis and fell to the ground. The Neath forwards were on the ball in a moment, but the situation was saved. Splendid kicking by Cook gave Gloucester an advantage, and a good movement was checked in the nick of time by the visitors. The City still pressed, and Hall gathering in the open started the backs moving. Hamblin darted through splendidly, and feinting to pass slipped Gethin and went over the line with a grand try. The place-kick failed.

Neath dropped out, Hamblin taking the ball well and returning to touch. Near the centre Dovey got away with a smart bit of footwork which caused trouble. The other forwards combining Meadows picked up and tried to put Hayes in, but the pass was forward. Ten yards from the line Thomas broke away and passed to Griffiths, John later punting high. Gloucester, however, checked when matters looked dangerous.

Neath next got in an attack on the right, but Richards was well collared and forced to pass forward. Gloucester, by strong forward work, reached midfield, and from a mark Cook punted high. Gethin was collared by Dovey and Pegler, and Gloucester had a chance, but the Neath forwards rushed back and saved.

Ensuing play was well contested, both sides doing good work. Neath attempted to open out, but Lewis nipped in and interrupted, but failed to hold the ball with a grand opening. There was a stoppage owing to an injury to Thomas, but he was soon able to resume. The Welshmen opened out nicely, but the passing was mechanical, and only went straight across the ground. A penalty to the home team did not prove of much service, and Gethin made much more ground a minute later, finding touch inside the Gloucester 25 with a magnificent kick.

Unintentional off-side play by Gloucester again gave Neath a penalty, and later Thomas forced a minor with a kick over the line.

On the drop-out Neath tried passing, but fumbling took place, and Lewis snapping up the ball was well away. In trying to dodge Gethin he had to slow down, however, and was collared from behind. The ball rolled away, and Johns tried to dribble clear, but he was stopped.

Neath next shone in a smart effort, Richards showing up well, but the Gloucester defence was sound. Another attack on the right was beaten off, and then Hamblin was prominent with a capital bit of work. Following up a punt he collared his opponent, and Johns gathering the ball came across, but stumbled and fell as he was about to pass.

Some exchange kicking followed, and then Thomas put Neath on the attack with a good punt to touch. From the subsequent scrum the Welshmen got the ball out, and passing gave John a splendid chance, but he knocked on at the critical moment.

Neath, however, were not to be denied, for pegging away a try was credited to Richards after neat handling. Griffiths missed the goal-kick.

Restarting there was a spell of quiet play until Dix sent Hall on the move with a sharp dash. Hall made some yards, and then passed to Lewis, who fed Washbourne. The wing man went down the wing well, but being collared let the ball go to Hall, who punted high. Hayes was well up, but the ball was captured by a visitor, and a dangerous movement was checked.

Soon afterwards the end came.

RESULT :

Gloucester	1 goal (d) 1 try (7 points)
Neath	1 try (3 points)

REMARKS.

Gloucester had nothing much in hand to-day, due largely to the weakness of the forwards in the scrum. Neath repeatedly out-manœuvred the home pack for possession, and had the visiting backs possessed an attack equal to that of Cardiff or Newport I fancy there would have been a large adverse score against the City.

This failure in heeling has been prominent all season, and something will have to be done if Gloucester are to hold their own in the big engagements coming on. Even when the front row managed to hook the ball it did not come out cleanly, and at times one could see it being driven over to the opposing ranks. With a little intelligence this weakness ought to be overcome, and the sooner the better.

After this growl, one can write in terms of praise for the forwards in other departments. The work in the lines-out was satisfactory, and in the loose there was some bright and clever play, in which Hayes, Meadows, Johns, and Dovey were conspicuous. Smart was keen on the ball, and his fast following up might have been attended with better results had proper support been accorded.

The Neath front were a hard, dashing lot, giving nothing away in any particular. Their tackling was sure, and on occasions they passed better than the men in the rear. Stephens (the Welsh International) was always prominent, and Lloyd, David, and Tim Jenkins put in a tremendous amount of hard work.

Outside the scrum there was plenty of sparkling play, but had the Gloucester men been given the same number of chances that fell to the Welshmen I think their points would have reached double figures. Dix was considerably handicapped by the slow heeling for Davies was on top of him nearly every time the ball came out. On the whole Dix and Hall made the best use of their limited opportunities, the outside half timing his passes well and getting in several sharp runs.

At three-quarter Hamblin and Lewis were excellent in the centre, and the try and Lewis' dropped goal were the best items seen during the afternoon. Washbourne was still suffering from his injured ankle, and consequently could not do himself complete justice, but I liked the way he let the ball go back inside. With a bit of luck Gloucester might have added a try or two by these tactics.

Webb had a quiet afternoon and had no real chance of doing anything. Cook, at full-back, fielded perfectly, and though his kicks did not always gain touch there was little to complain about.

Neath had a couple of smart half-backs in Tit Davies and Thomas, but the passing in the third line was too mechanical to be effective. All the players kicked well, and Richards had plenty of pace on the right wing. Gethin kicked a fine length and was a sound custodian.

Scorers for Gloucester : A. Lewis, dropped goal; L. Hamblin, try; Hamblin failed at goal.

Next week : Devon Albion, away.

A BROKEN FIXTURE.

THE DISPUTE BETWEEN GLOUCESTER AND NEATH.

It will be remembered that last season Neath failed to keep their engagement with Gloucester at Kingsholm on the ground that, owing to the coal strike, the team could not make the journey.

The City Club, however, clearly proved that this was not the case, as, thanks to the kindness of the G.W.R. Company, it was arranged for a suitable return train to stop at Neath. Despite this fact, the fixture was not kept.

Financially Gloucester suffered severely, and the Club, through the County Union, brought the matter to the notice of the Welsh Union.

Many months have elapsed since the dispute took place, but this week the Welsh Executive moved in the matter, and on Saturday morning a telegram was received from Mr. Walter Rees, Secretary, stating the Welsh Union considered the dispute was one for amicable settlement, and suggested as both clubs were meeting at Gloucester a friendly settlement might be effected.

Accordingly, representatives of the two clubs met after the match at Kingsholm, and the Gloucester representatives submitted to the visitors the minimum sum they could accept as a settlement. The Neath officials could not definitely accept, but promised to bring the matter before their Committee and reply to Gloucester within seven days.

In the event of no settlement being arrived at the dispute will again go before the Welsh Union.

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