

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1912

FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. PONTYPOOL.

CITY BEATEN AT HOME.

PONTYPOOL'S FIRST VICTORY AT KINGSHOLM.

(By W.B.)

Though Pontypool now lack the assistance of brilliant players of the calibre of the Brothers Jack and Ponty Jones, J. H. Evans, and Prosser behind the scrum, the Monmouthshire Club can still field a powerful forward contingent, and this season the Poolians have worthily sustained their reputation in this department. The visitors had a good side out this afternoon, and a close game was expected. Gloucester turned out as selected, W. Hall re-appearing after three weeks' absence. The weather was fine, and there was a good attendance. Teams : —

GLOUCESTER.	POSITIONS.	PONTYPOOL.
C. Cook	Backs.	W. Vallis
A. Hudson (capt.)	Three-Quarter	A. Robbins
A. Lewis	Backs	T. Robbins
L. Hamblin	"	Ben Evans
W. Washbourne	"	H. Watkins
W. Dix	Half-Backs	R. Lloyd
W. Hall	"	Tuan Jones
G. Vears	Forwards	W. Butcher
H. Berry	"	G. Carr
N. Hayes	"	F. Andrews
A. Saunders	"	T. Davies
S. Millard	"	F. Talbot
W. Dovey	"	E. Stephens
J. Meadows	"	A. Hockey
A. Cook	"	S. Oliver

Referee : Mr. J. Ford (Bristol,).

THE GAME.

Pontypool kicked off from the Dean's Walk goal, Hall sending to touch at the centre with a nice kick. Play hovered at midfield for a few minutes, until a lucky flying kick by Lloyd sent the ball out of play near the home 25. A punt by Hudson sent the game back, and Vallis being at fault a scrum followed in the visitors' half. Gloucester heeling, Hall put in a short punt, from which Vallis marked, but off-side by the Welsh forwards spoiled any advantage that might have accrued.

Gloucester continued to get the ball, and Hall passed out wide to Washbourne on the right, but nothing resulted. The City outside half a little later attempted to open out on the opposite wing, but an opponent captured the long pass. Hudson, however, intercepted a subsequent transfer and checked. For off-side by Lloyd, Gloucester were awarded a penalty, and from a place a few yards from the centre Cook landed a lovely goal amidst cheers.

Pontypool re-started, and secured a good position with a timely kick to touch. Jones was twice set going by Lloyd, but he was upset and lost the ball. The visitors, however, kept up the attack, Hamblin shining with a good clearance. From some loose play Lloyd gathered and passed to Evans, who from a nice position dropped a clever goal.

Vears resumed, a visitor making a mark from the kick-off. Pontypool soon worked down, and Watkins, with a clever dodgy run caused trouble, the home tackling being very weak. The City forwards worked out a bit, but the visiting forwards came back with smart footwork, and Gloucester were placed on the defensive.

A penalty gained relief, but it was only for a short period, Gloucester being beaten back by the cleverness of Lloyd, who was exceedingly smart at the scrum. Pontypool were now getting the ball nearly every time, and the Gloucester defenders were kept busily employed. Dix improved the situation with a useful bit of footwork after Tuan Jones had misfielded, but T. Robbins checked at the centre.

Meadows and Berry opening out from a line, the ball got to Hamblin, who passed behind Hudson, and a visitor kicked down to Cook, who just had time to send straight to touch. A good effort by Hayes gained Gloucester ground, but Vallis was very safe at back.

At length the City heeled, and passing took place between the halves, Hamblin, and Lewis. The latter, however, was well tackled by Jones, and his pass went astray. Another movement failed at Lewis, but luckily a visitor knocked on with practically an open field with the exception of Cook.

Ensuing play was scrambling, the work by both teams lacking the desired finish. Twice in quick succession Gloucester got the ball back, but little headway was made. Then a wild pass by Hall looked dangerous until Hamblin very cleverly gathered and punted well to touch.

Centre play followed, and Pontypool opening out the backs passed smartly. Evans' pass, however, was snapped up by Hudson, who dashed ahead, and beating Vallis scored a good try. Cook kicked a fine goal, and Gloucester secured a four points' lead.

On the re-start, Pontypool gained a footing in the home half, but a nice bit of combination between Dix, Hall, and Washbourne changed the venue. The ground was lost through Hall next failing to take a transfer from Dix.

The game continued in the home half, where Hall, in saving, was badly kicked on the ground by Carr. The City half-back appeared badly hurt, and there were loud shouts from the spectators to send the visitor off, but the referee did nothing. Immediately after Dix was knocked out in a tackle by Lloyd, and then the interval was sounded.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 2 goals (1p)
Pontypool 1 goal (d)

Vears re-started, and there being a poor response play opened in the visitors' half. From a pass by Lloyd, Jones punted up the field, only to see Cook return with interest. A reverse pass by Dix to the centre of the field was captured by an opponent, who kicked to Cook, but again the City full-back found touch beautifully.

Well inside the Pontypool quarter Hamblin broke away cleverly, and feinting to pass cut inside, but he was just touched by the toes and brought down. Lloyd and Jones, with neat work, brought relief, Hall being tackled in possession. From the subsequent scrum Dix was penalised for off-side, though the ball was well outside. Talbot had a shot for goal, but his kick was charged down. Pontypool, however, secured an attacking position, and in some loose play A. Robbins picked up and dropped a goal, which placed the teams on a level.

Powerful forward work, and a good kick by Lloyd gave Pontypool an advantage on the resumption, but only a minor resulted. Gloucester, on the drop-out, rushed to the other end, where the visiting backs brought off a nice round of passing. A. Robbins' transfer, however, was not taken. Then Lloyd tried a drop at goal, but Hamblin ran out, and with Washbourne completely changed the scene of operations.

Gloucester struggled hard now to gain the lead again, but they were met by a strenuous defence. Cook, making a mark from a high punt, returned well, but Vallis fielded nicely and sent to touch at the centre. Pontypool, with a big rush, looked dangerous, but they were kept out. A smart movement initiated by Lloyd looked promising, but right on the line Robbins lost the ball from a re-pass. A scrum followed five yards out, and Jones passing to Evans, the latter dropped the third goal for the side – an unusual performance.

Gloucester resumed, and there was a spell of even play at midfield. The visiting three-quarters shone in a round of exchanges which gained some ground, but for the next few minutes it was a tussle between the forwards. Dix twice got round and stopped Lloyd, and then the City forwards burst away in a good rush, Tuan Jones saving on the 25 line.

Gradually the visitors worked out, and in turn took up the attack. A pretty bit of work between Hall, Hudson, and Lewis brought the City out, but they were quickly beaten back, the visitors using the touch-line well. An intercepted pass by Robbins looked to give the Welshmen a chance, but Gloucester managed to save, Hall marking from a short punt. To the end Pontypool held their advantage.

RESULT :

Pontypool 3 goals (d) (12 points)
Gloucester 2 goals (1p) (8 points)

REMARKS.

Gloucester were beaten on their merits to-day, for though the Welshmen owed their success to goals from the field – they were all very smart efforts – the visitors all through played the more convincing football. In the first place the Pontypool forwards held a decided advantage in weight, and they used it to the full in the tight and loose. At periods the City pack got the ball out smartly, but for the most part they were out-manceuvred in the scrums, though I must say Lloyd often got the better of the referee in putting the ball in.

So satisfied were the Welshmen as to their superiority in the pack that in the second half they were content to play seven men, Hockey being had out to help the backs. The Gloucester front were by no means seen at their best, and in one particular – tackling – the display at times was terribly weak. In the loose there was not that dash and cohesion usually associated with the players, and I also noticed a lack of control and judgment at critical moments. There was no particular star in the pack to-day, Hayes, Vears, and Saunders perhaps being the most conspicuous. The Welshmen were a powerful, heavy lot all round, with flashes of cleverness in the open which kept the City fully awake.

Behind, Lloyd and Tuan Jones were exceedingly smart, and with more opportunities they outshone Dix and Hall. Lloyd was particularly active at the scrum, and varied his tactics with consummate judgment. Jones was a strong runner, kicked well, and fed his threes with skill.

The Gloucester pair accomplished a lot of sound work, but it was not their day out.

At three-quarter Gloucester were seldom able to get going, and when they were put in possession things were muddled up badly at times. Hamblin was the more prominent for the simple reason that the ball generally went his way.

The visiting threes passed very prettily at times, and they were all adepts at kicking. Robbins, the old Bream player, rendered useful service when he came into the centre position, and Evans missed little. The wings were not greatly distinguished.

Both full-backs did well, and there was little to choose between the men.

Scorers for Gloucester : Hudson, try ; C. Cook converted and kicked a penalty goal.

I hear Lieut. Carleton, who has been ordered to Egypt next month, is anxious to have another game for the City before he leaves England. He would be useful against the Watsonians or Leicester. Stanley Cook, A. C. L. Clarke, and K. H. Soutar, I understand, are also available during the holidays if wanted.

JC