

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1925

## FOOTBALL

SWANSEA BEATEN BY A POINT

REMARKABLE SCORING IN A DELIGHTFUL OPEN GAME

AN EXCITING FINISH

Following a wet morning, the weather turned fine in Gloucester, and a large crowd attended at Kingsholm to welcome the City's old rivals, Swansea.

Gloucester were sadly weakened at three-quarter, where in addition to Hughes (injured at Oxford on Wednesday) Saxby had also to be replaced. The line was re-arranged, Sid Brown playing centre with G. Thomas, and the wing positions being filled by Thompson (late of Cheltenham) and Hopcroft. Hemmings, also damaged at Oxford, stood down from the forwards.

There were several changes in the Swansea team, two new half-backs appearing in A. L. Perkins and J. Jones.

Teams : –

### GLOUCESTER

BACK : T. Millington.

THREE-QUARTERS : R. C. Thompson, S. A. Brown, G. Thomas, and A. E. Hopcroft.

HALF-BACKS : Dr. G. C. C. Taylor and R. Milliner.

FORWARDS : A. T. Voyce (capt.), F. W. Ayliffe, J. Read, M. Short, S. Duberley, E. Triggs-Herbert, H. Roberts, and W. B. Scott.

## SWANSEA

BACK : D. B. Evans.

THREE-QUARTERS : J. E. Watkins (capt.), Roy James, B. Barter, and D. Burns.

HALF-BACKS : A. L. Perkins and J. Jones.

FORWARDS : W. Faull, J. H. John, T. Hopkins, T. Mabbett, A. Parker, Dai Parker, M. Rice, and T. Rees.

Referee : Mr. Fear (Somerset)

## THE GAME

The Swansea team looked very spick and span in their all white, and were accorded a good reception. Swansea won the toss, and Voyce's kick-off going to touch a scrum followed at the centre. Gloucester got the ball from the first scrum, but Brown passed forward to Thompson, and nothing resulted.

From the next pack Swansea got the ball, but Milliner intercepted cleverly and ran down with Taylor in attendance. The latter received a pass, but with a fine opening his transfer to Scott – a wide one – was missed, a glorious opportunity for a try being lost.

Gloucester attacked again immediately afterwards, and a forward was held up on the line. Milliner again got the ball out, and passing between the backs saw Hopcroft make a fine dash through, but he was held up just outside. Thus in less than five minutes Gloucester had just failed to score on three occasions – an exciting opening.

Swansea, with a loose dribble, broke away to beyond midfield, and later they attacked strongly, Gloucester saving in the nick of time. From a scrum close in the ball came back to Millington, who punted out to touch at the 25 line. Here Swansea were penalised, but touch was not found, and Watkins returned well to the open. Here Taylor received, and after giving the "dummy" to a couple of opponents served Brown, who raced down touch, but was finally hurled over the mark at the centre.

Midfield play followed until Milliner started his backs, Thomas making a clever run. His pass, however, was not accepted, and Swansea saved. Gloucester were on the move again from the next scrum, the ball being handled cleverly by Milliner, Taylor, Brown, Thomas and Hopcroft. The wing man dashed away, but confronting Evans he re-passed to Thomas, who sent on to Voyce, but the International failed to take with a splendid chance of a try.

Ensuing play was very fast, and the open character of the play greatly pleased the spectators. For off-side at the scrum Swansea were penalised, and from a favourable position MILLINGTON landed a neat goal, giving Gloucester three points.

Swansea restarted, but Milliner at once opened out. Little ground was gained, however. The Welshmen now displayed their skill at passing, and the ball went nicely across to the left wing, where Watkins burst away, though falling to a fine tackle by Millington. Swansea pressed hard, and Millington, being tackled near the line, was penalised for not playing the ball. E. Evans had a place for goal, but sent outside.

Exciting play followed in the home half, where Voyce, picking up from the loose, broke clear away to the full back, who effected a good tackle. The captain managed to let the ball go, but a knock-on ensued. Still, Gloucester kept up to the attack, and there was a praiseworthy movement on both wings, but without success.

Gradually Gloucester worked to a favourable position, and TAYLOR, receiving a nice pass, beat the defence in fine style and scored a try amidst rapturous applause. Millington converted with a good kick, and Gloucester were eight points up – a splendid performance and a well-deserved lead.

Parker's kick-off was a powerful one, the ball going dead. From the drop-out Swansea confined play for a couple of minutes to the home end, but two splendid touch-finders by Taylor took the game to well beyond the centre.

The Gloucester forwards were getting the ball back nicely, and Milliner was quick and smart in his service. From a passing bout Thompson was fed by Brown, and the left-winger brought off a strong dash, but was unable to clear the defence. The ball rolled loose and was sent over the line, Taylor just failing to gain the touch.

Swansea showed good kicking powers behind, and the forwards with capital footwork gained a lot of ground. Being pressed, Milliner sent back to Millington, who cleared from a dangerous position with a neat left-foot kick to touch. Later Brown effected a nice clearance from behind his own goal.

Play was in the Gloucester 25, when Milliner picked up and passed to Voyce. The captain tried a cross-kick, but it did not carry far, and BARTER made his mark in front of the City goal. He took a place-kick and successfully covered the cross-bar, giving his side three points.

Gloucester re-started strongly, and there was some excellent play on both sides. Gloucester had a bit the better of the exchanges, and Brown shone in a clever effort which gave Gloucester territorial advantage. From passing, Thompson was set going, and after travelling twenty yards he punted to Evans. Voyce followed up at great speed and charged the full-back just at the moment he kicked. The ball went to TAYLOR, who manœuvred for position and dropped a lovely goal.

There was no slackening off on the resumption, and Swansea, playing up with great resolution, set up a hot attack. Milliner, who was showing capital form, did great work in defence, but close on the interval Perkins shot out a pass to BARTER, who dashed through and, though tackled, got the ball down between the posts. From the easy place the same player converted, and the interval arrived with the score 12–8 in Gloucester's favour.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER ..... 3 goals (1d, 1p)  
SWANSEA .....2 goals (1m)

It had been a fine game in the first half, with some extraordinary scoring in the matter of goals. Gloucester had deserved their four points lead, though credit must be given the Welshmen for some capital football. Parker's restart went to Millington near the goal line, but with a lovely left foot punt the City custodian found touch at the centre flag. Some faulty play by Gloucester led to Swansea making ground, but from a kick by Watkins Hopcroft gathered and passing to Voyce the visitors' half was reached. Taylor was prominent with some splendid kicking, which kept Gloucester in the ascendancy, but a breakdown in passing lost the advantage.

A splendid loose rush by the City forwards promised well, a visitor being forced to kick towards his own goal. Brown and Milliner did good work for Gloucester with useful kicks, but just now play became a bit scrappy, and there was not that control over the ball witnessed in the earlier stages of the game.

A big rush by the Swansea front sent the ball to Millington, who gathered beautifully but had to succumb to numbers. Thompson made ground with a short run and punt, and then Taylor forced a minor with a big punt over the line. There was more big kicking on either side, and later Voyce forced another touchdown. Ensuing play was strenuously contested, but Swansea marked the Gloucester backs very closely, and nothing like an opening could be secured.

By dint of close forward work Swansea pressed Gloucester back, and the City was forced to defend. Voyce was collared in possession, but punted out to DAI PARKER, who made his mark. Taking a shot for goal the Welsh International landed a fine goal, bringing his side to within a point of the home side.

Play was continued with increased vigour, and the struggle forward was intense. Gloucester, assisted by two penalty kicks, gained the upper hand for a time, but Swansea came back with nice passing, Watkins finally punting, but Millington gathered and put in a short kick. Brown came along and dribbled ahead and to the centre, where a Swansea man with a flying kick sent to touch – a lucky escape.

Gloucester made a big effort on the left, but were stopped, and Evans checked the forwards daringly when closely pressed. It was hard, keen football, but the Gloucester backs did not make the use of their chances they might have done.

Near the centre the Swansea front broke away in a body, but they were successfully stopped. A smart combination between Taylor and Voyce gained some 30 yards, and the forwards combining well the Swansea defence had a warm time. Gloucester continued on the attack, and Millington joined in one movement to try and get through, but without avail.

In quick time Swansea rushed to the other end where the struggle waged furiously. Opening out the Gloucester backs passed finely, and Hopcroft, after shaking off an opponent, had a great dash for the line. He, however, was cut off, and then followed a series of exchanges, but Swansea saved right on the line.

From the ensuing scrum Gloucester got the ball out, and after a series of exchanges the ball was left with BROWN, who sprinting hard scored a fine try. Millington missed the goal points.

The last five minutes produced some of the best football seen during the game. A lovely bout of passing by the home backs put Hopcroft in possession, and the Second teamer went all out for a score. In attempting to swerve past Evans, however, he slipped and fell to the ground, and the opportunity was lost.

Gloucester immediately after made another big attempt to beat the defence on the left, Voyce being conspicuous in the effort, but again the City were balked at the crucial moment.

Swansea made a supreme effort to pull off the game, and came near to doing it. After easing the pressure the Welshmen reached midfield, where Perkins initiated a round of passing.

The exchanges were cleverly carried on and WATKINS, the last to receive, went all out for the line. Faced by Millington he swerved past the full back and finished a splendid movement by scoring in a good position. The kick at goal was vital, for a successful shot meant victory for Swansea by a point. Dai Parker took the kick, but failed badly. Gloucester restarted, but the end came immediately.

#### RESULT :

GLOUCESTER .... 3 goals (1d 1p) 1 try (15 points)

SWANSEA ..... 3 goals (1m 1p) 1 try (14 points)

#### REMARKS

What a game and what a finish! Not for several years has there been such an exciting conclusion to a match at Kingsholm, the nearest approach being when Gloucester snatched victory over Devonport Services with a try, converted, obtained right on time.

Gloucester won by a point to-day after some remarkable scoring, and it would have been hard luck indeed for the City to have suffered defeat, for whilst giving Swansea every credit for their splendid effort – and that last score by Watkins equalled anything in the way of combination seen during the contest – the trend of play was more in favour of the home side.

Except for a bad patch in the second half, when the forwards were mainly engaged, and the backs were inclined to be faulty in their handling, the game furnished some fine football. From the start Gloucester, despite the disorganisation at three-quarter, made play delightfully open and attractive, and in the first ten minutes should have scored at least twice.

Swansea, if not up to the old standard, formed a likely combination, and though the game was continually going against them they never gave up trying. And they had their due reward in the way of several dangerous attacks, culminating in that closing try which only just failed to give the Welshmen a surprise win.

It was a fine struggle forward, with the rival packs well matched in the loose, and Gloucester the more adaptable in controlling the ball in the scrums. In no match at home this season have the Gloucester front equalled their performance in the scrums this afternoon, and the result was a greatly improved display by Milliner. With the ball coming out with something like regularity Milliner was on his mettle, and though his transfers occasionally lacked direction, he got the ball away wonderfully well, and deceived the opposition more than once with the reverse pass. In many other ways Milliner rendered excellent service, and his all-round play this afternoon was as good as anything he has done for Gloucester.

Admirably served as he was Taylor, too, gave a fine show, and he initiated attacks with a variety and skill which frequently had the opposition guessing. And he went through on his own splendidly on occasions; that first try of his was a real beauty. Added to this work his splendid kicking, Taylor was invaluable to the side.

The Gloucester three-quarters accomplished some really excellent work, and they were equal in all respects, as an attacking force, to the Swansea quartette. In the first half especially, and again in the closing quarter, the combination was well-nigh perfect, and only a bit of bad luck robbed players of well-deserved tries. In the centre Brown and Thomas performed creditably, and Hopcroft and Thompson on the wings displayed dash and determination in going for the line. Neither were rewarded with tries, but it was not for the want of trying. Thompson created a very favourable impression by his general work, and he should do well with Gloucester. He has a safe pair of hands, is quick, and resourceful, and does not lack pluck. Hopcroft played his best game for the seniors, and this should afford him every encouragement to do even better.

The Gloucester forwards were in fine fettle in all phases, though opposed to a resolute set of scrummagers well led by the Welsh International, Dai Parker. The City captain, as usual, did splendid work in the open, and Triggs-Herbert, Short, Duberley, and Ayliffe dribbled with great effect.

It was attack and counter-attack in this department, and on both sides the work reached a high standard. For the most part the tackling was very safe, and very little was given away. Besides Dai Parker, John, Mabbett, and Rees were distinguished for Swansea, and the eight as a whole formed a very sound combination.

Behind the scrum the Welshmen showed flashes of brilliance, with Watkins the outstanding player. The visiting captain was always a danger when on the move, and besides possessing speed he has a deceptive swerve.

Baxter was the best of the two centres, and the half-backs, though not reaching the standard set by Milliner and Taylor, were a useful pair. Evans, at full back, was a great success, scarcely making a mistake, and Millington also gave a splendid exhibition for Gloucester.

Visitors to Kingsholm this afternoon had full value for their money.

Next week : Devonport Services, at home.