

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY JANUARY 2, 1926

FOOTBALL

SWANSEA'S REVENGE

GLOUCESTER BEATEN AT ST. HELENS BY 11 PTS. TO 3

CITY PUT UP A SPLENDID GAME

Though minus the services of A. T. Voyce and Doctor Taylor, Gloucester took a very good side to Swansea to-day for the return match with the Welshmen, and the City had hopes of putting up a good contest. The vacancy at half-back was filled by G. McIlwaine, the Cambridge Freshman, and G. Foulkes came in in place of Voyce. Last season, on a waterlogged ground, Gloucester were unluckily beaten by six points to three. Swansea fielded a strong team, including Rowe Harding and Bruce Barter at three-quarter, who are regarded as probables for Wales against England.

GLOUCESTER

BACK : S. Williams.

THREE-QUARTERS : L. Abbey, T. Millington, E. H. Hughes, and R. C. Thompson.

HALF-BACKS : R. Milliner and G. McIlwaine.

FORWARDS : F. W. Ayliffe, M. Short, J. Hemmings, E. Triggs-Herbert, H. Roberts, F. J. Seabrook, S. Duberley, and G. Foulkes.

SWANSEA

BACK : D. B. Evans.

THREE-QUARTERS : J. E. Watkins (capt.), Roy Jones, Bruce Barter, and Rowe Harding.

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

FORWARDS : D. Parker, A. Parker, J. H. John, D. R. Jenkins, M. Rice, Tom Rees, W. Faull, and T. Mabbett.

Referee : Mr. Jack Wetter (Newport)

THE GAME

Brilliant sunshine prevailed when the match started twenty minutes late, before about 4,000. Swansea kicked off, and were forced back by Williams with a smart return to touch. In a loose rush by the Gloucester forwards Roy Jones was forced to kick into touch. Fumbling by the Swansea left wing allowed Gloucester to keep on the attack. This was sustained with great dash, Millington and Ayliffe being prominent. In some loose play the ball was taken up to the Swansea line, where Roy Jones touched down in the nick of time, with Short on top of him.

Millington made ground again by short punts. Gloucester's play on the sodden ground was so far very effective, and there was a desperate maul on the Swansea line, which ended in the City being penalised for off-side. Thompson failed in an effort to drop at goal. Roberts gathered smartly in a line-out and passed to McIlwaine, who was brought down after a plucky dash.

After nearly ten minutes in their opponents' half Gloucester had to meet a Swansea burst, which took the ball into the City's half, but Williams sent the home team back with a capital touch kick with the left foot. Gloucester had been having the best of matters at the scrum, but Perkins at last got out a clever pass to J. Jones. The ball, however, was again fumbled by Barter.

Swansea made their first dangerous attack after Evans had found touch from a penalty. The ball was taken by J. Jones in a line-out, and he passed to Roy Jones, who twice sold the "dummy" before passing to Watkins, the winger, who was rushed into touch by Williams near the flag.

A penalty to Gloucester brought slight relief, but fine passing by the home threes again gave them the advantage. Roy Jones got round Williams and threw out to WATKINS, who had a clear course to score the first try. Roy Jones failed to convert.

From a good position Gloucester made a determined attack from the kick off, forwards and threes taking a hand in the passing, till Hughes knocked on. Milliner appealed unsuccessfully against a glaring case of obstruction by Jenkins. The Gloucester forwards played splendidly in the loose, and Swansea were again pressed to their own 25.

There was a great duel between Milliner and Perkins, and the latter got the ball out more cleanly from the scrum. Harding made several flying efforts to get through the Gloucester defence, but was well looked after by Thompson. Milliner effectively tackled Perkins when the latter was slow in passing.

Hughes next raised excitement by intercepting a pass on the Swansea right wing. He made a lot of ground before Barter pulled him down. Another long kick to touch by Williams kept Swansea well in their own half. Most danger came from Swansea's left wing, where Harding was enterprising.

HALF-TIME :

SWANSEA 1 try
GLOUCESTER Nil

Gloucester hardly deserved to be behind at the interval, for if they lacked the sureness in handling as displayed by the home threes, the City's forward work, especially in the loose, was splendid, and enabled the visitors to do most of the pressing.

Shortly after the resumption Williams failed to pick up the ball properly on his own line, and a try looked almost certain for Swansea till Thompson came with a great rush and conceded a minor. The tackling on both sides was very keen and well-judged.

The Swansea passing developed some recklessness, and ultimately Williams forced them back into their own half. Both sides were penalised in turn for off-side, and Millington unsuccessfully tried a long kick at goal.

Swansea were kept hard on the defensive, but they got the ball better away from the scrums. Williams was again tackled in possession, and a raid by the Swansea left wing was terminated by Thompson's great tackle of Harding, who was brought down a few feet from the line.

Duberley set off on a long dribble till D. Parker got up and made a splendid recovery. Gloucester's best round of passing so far came when Milliner set Millington in motion. The centre transferred to Hughes, but the latter was quickly tackled, and Swansea were once more attacking.

The forwards on both sides displayed remarkably accurate work on the holding ground, and a brilliant burst by the visiting eight saw Gloucester get the equalising try, HUGHES being adjudged to have touched down in a crowd of players. Millington's effort to convert just failed.

With the scores level there was a terrific struggle, Swansea making desperate attempts to overcome the City's defence. J. Jones just missed with a drop at goal. Swansea put on the utmost pressure, and took advantage of every move to gain a yard or two of ground, even claiming a mark from the shortest kicks. They obtained success at last. From a mix-up on the home left wing the ball was passed across all the threes to WATKINS, who went over in the corner. Dai Parker failed to convert.

Gloucester had re-arranged their defence, McIlwaine replacing Hemmings in the pack, Hemmings partnering Abbey, and Millington going on as stand-off. It was Gloucester's turn to put on pressure, and they were nearly in after strenuous play near the Swansea line, Roy Jones making a lucky recovery.

The City were sent back by a fine kick to touch by Evans, who had throughout displayed great steadiness. More speedy work by Watkins took play into the visitors' 25, where Williams and Millington were twice forced to kick into touch, and no time to spare to do it in.

Evans tried another drop at goal, the ball hitting the wrong side of the post, but a little later a magnificent kick by him from midfield found touch near the corner.

Swansea were now on top, and fumbling on the part of the Gloucester defence gave J. JONES a try which Barter converted. Then the final whistle blew.

RESULT :

SWANSEA 1 goal 2 tries (11 points)

GLOUCESTER 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

Up to the last ten minutes Gloucester were quite worthy of a draw, but Swansea pulled out all their reserve in the concluding stages, and bore the City defence down by sheer force. Swansea's second try was the most brilliant score of the match, Watkins running 30 yards after the ball travelled right across the field.

The Swansea backs always impressed with their handling and Perkins' work at the base of the scrum set up many attacks. There was nothing to choose between the two sets of forwards, and it was behind that the home team ultimately exercised their supremacy.

Millington was inclined to do too much when he had the ball and in face of keen marking shown by his opponent his tactics did not succeed. Williams was very good in touch-finding, but he was inclined to wait too often for the bounce of the ball, with the result that the eager home forwards often hustled him.

There was only one good passing movement amongst the Gloucester threes. Evans was splendid at full-back for Swansea, who were also well-served by Watkins, Perkins, and J. Jones.

GLOUCESTER A AVENGE A DEFEAT

BERRY HILL WELL BEATEN AT KINGSHOLM

SECONDS' BACKS IN GOOD FORM

Gloucester A were opposed by Berry Hill at Kingsholm to-day. The visitors were regarded as one of the best teams in the Forest this season, their record showing victories over Cinderford and Bream amongst others, and a draw with Lydney.

The teams were : —

Gloucester A. — G. Thomas; S. Crowther, A. Hopcroft, L. Gough, and R. Gladwin; S. Collins and F. Gladwin; A. Rea, G. Shaw, H. Pitt, F. Sturge, L. Franklin, N. Fearis, A. Danks, and J. Pinkney.

Berry Hill. — J. Powell; S. Short, B. Short, T. Howell, and S. Fisher; H. Morgan and C. Wilson; G. Lodge, W. Cooper, F. Cooper, H. Aston, K. Salmon, R. Hawkins, G. Jones, and L. Madley.

The ground was in a sodden condition when G. Lodge kicked off for Berry Hill, but there was quite a fair crowd assembled. The first feature was a fine passing run by the Gloucester threes. The ball was heeled from a loose scrum, and Hopcroft cut through well, but the pass to Gladwin went astray. A few minutes later, however, Gloucester went ahead after another excellent combined run. This time the ball travelled across from left to right, and Crowther, beating the full back with his swerve, touched down for Hopcroft to convert.

Exciting open play followed, in which G. Thomas generally did well at full-back for Gloucester. Both packs played really well, and with great keenness, but the Berry Hill men gradually got the better of matters both in the loose and in the tight. Following one fierce rush, play hovered on the Gloucester line for about five minutes, before Gough and Gladwin broke away on the left.

Gloucester then kept play in the visitors' half, and L. Franklin got over from a line-out for Hopcroft to convert with another good kick.

Half-time :

Gloucester A 2 goals

Berry Hill Nil

Gloucester A were rather lucky to lead at the interval by 10 points. They had had slightly the better of play on the whole, but Berry Hill would almost certainly have done better had their backs tried more passing and less kicking. Both teams had given an excellent exhibition in the circumstances, which were all against good football.

The Gloucester backs continued to show good form, Hopcroft being particularly prominent, but Berry Hill were the first to score, S. Short going over after a loose dribble in which he had once over-run the ball. C. Wilson failed with the kick, and Gloucester still led by seven points. Berry Hill were a man short in the scrum, as T. Howell, who had been injured in the first half, was still off, and L. Madley was at left centre. In spite of this handicap they continued to give the Gloucester defence a gruelling time. Once the threes got going well, and only a bad pass to S. Fisher on the wing spoiled the movement.

In the last quarter of an hour Gloucester A reasserted themselves, and play was mostly in the Berry Hill half. An excellent passing run in which Hopcroft again did the spade work eventually brought a further score, Gladwin going over in the corner for a try, which went unconverted. A minute later Gloucester went ahead again, Gough, Hopcroft and Crowther taking part in the best passing of the day. This time, with Crowther running round to touch down nearly behind the posts. Hopcroft added the major points, to bring up the score to 18 points. There was no further scoring, and Gloucester A thus handsomely avenged the defeat sustained at Berry Hill earlier in the season.

Result :

Gloucester A 3 goals 1 try (18 points)

Berry Hill 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

Territorially, Berry Hill had very nearly as much of the play as the home team, and from that point the score does not perhaps fairly represent the game. On the other hand the City Seconds were altogether the more convincing side outside the scrum, and every point was well worked for and deserved.

A. Hopcroft and R. Gladwin were the outstanding players, while G. Thomas did everything he was called upon to do neatly and well.

The Berry Hill backs were too prone to kick where passing would in all probability have been more effective. Still, all things considered, the game was one of the best seen in a Seconds' match at Kingsholm this season.

JC