

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20, 1926

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. LLANELLY

WELSH CLUB COMPLETES DOUBLE

FIVE POINTS AHEAD IN A STRENUOUS GAME

Dull but fine weather prevailed for the meeting of Gloucester and Llanelly at Kingsholm. The Welsh club brought over 2,000 spectators, and when the crowd were assembling they made things merry, one of their enthusiasts climbing to the top of one of the goal posts and affixing a "sospan" near the flag.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : R. C. Thompson.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. R. Crowther, R. N. Loveridge, A. Hopcroft, and L. Abbey.

HALF-BACKS : G. Thomas and S. H. Collins (Old Blues).

FORWARDS : H. Roberts, S. Duberley, E. Triggs-Herbert (captain), G. McIlwaine, G. Foulkes, H. Pitt, G. Shaw, and J. Merry.

LLANELLY

BACK : S. Hay.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. Finch, A. Jenkins, T. Evans, and Idris Thomas.

HALF-BACKS : A. John and D. John.

FORWARDS : Ivor Jones, E. Griffiths, Y. Jones, E. Phillips, F. Harries, Bobbie Evans, R. Thomas, and Edgar Evans.

Referee : Mr. J. Southby (Bristol).

THE GAME

A. Hall did not turn out for Gloucester, J. Merry taking his place; while S. Hay figured at full-back for the visitors vice Cliff Ward, Idris Thomas coming into the three-quarter line.

Gloucester kicked off, and a dribble by the forwards took them to the Llanelly 25. From a scrum Collins could not get the ball out cleanly, and an interchange of kicks between Thompson and Hay ended in the latter getting the touch. A scrum was formed almost on the Llanelly line, from which Gloucester appeared to get the touch down, but the referee ordered another scrum. A maul followed, and ROBERTS got over for the first try amongst a bunch of players. Hopcroft failed with the kick.

Triggs-Herbert and McIlwaine were conspicuous in some thrusting work which put Gloucester into an attacking position. Desperate efforts were made by the Llanelly right wing to throw off the pressure, but Collins was operating smartly at scrum half and gave nothing away. At last Llanelly got to the half-way line as the result of two penalty kicks. Play had been mostly with the forwards, any attempts to open up by handling being promptly smothered. Abbey's speed was a good factor on two occasions, but a knock-on unfortunately spoiled one good opening which came his way.

Llanelly were hard pressed for a time, and matters looked worse for them when they were penalised in their own 25 for a scrum infringement. Hopcroft's attempt to kick a goal was not successful, a similar fate befalling an effort to drop a goal which Thomas made when he was well placed.

After a brief visit to the Gloucester half the Welshmen were quickly forced back by a great rush on the part of the home forwards, and Albert Jenkins only saved the situation by kicking over the dead-ball line. Another penalty against Llanelly for off-side at the scrum gave HOPCROFT a good opportunity of kicking a goal, and he accepted it.

The Welshmen were now six points behind, and they looked like having a bigger leeway to make up when Thomas started a passing movement. Loveridge, however, was caught in possession, and a rush by the visitors ended in Harries kicking ahead for PHILLIPS to cross. This was a gift try, and would never have been scored had the Gloucester backs shown the same determination as their forwards had done. Albert Jenkins made a good but unsuccessful attempt to convert.

The Gloucester forwards were the backbone of the team so far, their attacks by means of loose play causing Llanelly the maximum of trouble.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER 1 goal (p), 1 try
LLANELLY 1 try

Gloucester were deserving of their lead at half-time, for, even although the play was mostly forward, the City eight had shown great superiority over the visitors. Even exchanges ruled at the start of the second half until a penalty enabled the City to get a footing in the visitors' half. Two good touch-finders by Thomas kept the position favourable for the City. Thompson showed much improved form with his kicking.

Albert Jenkins bravely tried to kick a penalty goal from his own side of half-way, but the ball dropped short, while Finch made a desperate effort to drop a goal from the touch-line. Llanelly's pressure got its reward when ALBERT JENKINS kicked a fine penalty goal from near the half-way line.

With the teams level on points a great struggle ensued, and the best movement of the game came when Collins got the ball smartly away from a scrum near the Llanelly line. The scrum half passed to Thomas, who sent out a long transfer to Loveridge. The latter served Crowther, who found his way baulked, but he cut through cleverly and was only brought down near the posts. Two of the visitors were injured in attempting to stop Crowther, but they soon recovered.

A spell of attacking by Llanelly kept the home defence at full stretch, but A. John made a tactical error when he tried to drop a goal instead of continuing a handling movement with the Llanelly left wing unmarked. A great bout of passing by the visiting threes was rendered futile by Albert Jenkins trying to give the "dummy" and being well tackled.

Although the play did not reach the standard of the first half, the crowd of 6,000 had plenty of excitement. Idris Thomas finished off a clever movement by touching down near the flag, but the referee adjudged that a forward pass had been previously made, and, to the great disappointment of the Llanelly players and their supporters, no score was allowed.

A minute or two afterwards the ball was rolling about behind the home goal-line, and eluded all efforts by the home players and visitors alike to touch it down until IDRIS THOMAS got to it just as it was going into touch-in-goal. He was credited with a try, and Albert Jenkins converted.

RESULT :

LLANELLY 2 goals (1p), 1 try (11 pts.)
GLO'STER 1 goal (p), 1 try (6 pts.)

REMARKS

Llanelly can shake hands with themselves that on the two occasions they have met Gloucester this season the City have been without a large proportion of their regular players. This enabled the Welsh club to complete the double to-day over Gloucester.

If the present Llanelly fifteen form a sample of the much-vaunted improvement in Welsh Rugby football then sportsmen will have to strain their eyesight in attempting to look for it. There was some good forward play in the first half but the second period was little else than a scramble.

One would have thought that with all their power in the back division Llanelly would have utilised it to the limit but the visiting threes showed only one good handling movement of class and even that was overshadowed by the effort which nearly put Crowther over in the second half. Thompson was not a success at full-back especially in his efforts to gather a rolling ball, while Collins did not get the best of opportunity at scrum-half owing to the frequent infringements by the Llanelly players.

Llanelly have also something to learn in sportsmanship. They kicked the ball out in childish, petty spirit when Idris Thomas's first score was disallowed and their attitude of disappointment was so plainly exhibited that an onlooker might have been pardoned for thinking they were the victims of a gross injustice. The referee's task in this match was not one to be envied in view of the disposition of the visitors to object to most of the decisions given against them, but Mr. Southby was firm all the time.

JC