

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1927

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER, 11 POINTS; LLANELLY, 6 POINTS

ANOTHER FINE PERFORMANCE BY THE CITY

WELSHMEN BEATEN AFTER LEADING BY SIX POINTS

For their match with Llanelly at Kingsholm, Gloucester made one change in the team which defeated Swansea last week. Howell could not play, and Millington came in at outside half and Townsend, of the A team, took the full back position. Llanelly brought a strong side, though Watryn Thomas, the new Welsh "cap," stood down forward in view of next Saturday's International match. There was a good attendance when the teams lined out as follows :

GLOUCESTER

BACK : L. Townsend.

THREE-QUARTERS : R. N. Loveridge, E. H. Hughes, J. Stephens, and S. R. Crowther.

HALF-BACKS : R. Milliner and T. Millington.

FORWARDS : A. Rea, F. J. Seabrook, G. McIlwaine, M. Short, L. E. Saxby, J. Hemming, G. Foulkes, and E. Comley.

LLANELLY

BACK : E. Thomas.

THREE-QUARTERS : E. Finch, A. Jenkins, Jones Davies, and W. J. Davies.

HALF-BACKS : H. Williams and D. John.

FORWARDS : Ivor Jones, E. Griffiths, A. Parker, F. Harries, H. Morris, B. Evans, L. Baxter, and I. Jones.

Referee : Mr. J. Southby (Bristol).

THE GAME

Gloucester won the toss, and Llanelly started the game, Milliner replying with a nice touch-finder. At the first set scrum the visitors were penalised for feet up, and Millington gained some 30 yards with a good kick to touch. A breakaway by the Llanelly front was checked at the centre, where play hovered for a short period. A wild pass by Williams was missed by John, and Gloucester had a good opening, but McIlwaine picked up instead of dribbling and was collared.

Clever kicking by the Welshmen brought play to midfield, where Millington broke through and punted past Thomas. An exciting race for possession ended in favour of a visitor, but he was tackled, and Llanelly were desperately pressed. Gloucester were nearly over from a line-out, and the City made another big bid for a score, but were unable to cross.

For off-side Llanelly were penalised a little later, and Millington made a splendid attempt to land a goal. The ball went just outside the upright. Finch gathered and attempted a punt out, but the kick was charged down by Crowther, the ball rebounding over the dead ball line.

Following the drop out Llanelly showed smartness behind, and Jones Davies with a powerful kick sent to the right wing, where Finch just missed taking the ball. Opening out Llanelly were dangerous, but the passing broke down, and the City forwards dribbled away. Llanelly were awarded a mark, and from 45 yards out JOHN dropped a lovely goal, thus giving the Welshmen first score.

Gloucester restarted and the home front shone with good footwork. A penalty kick to Llanelly did not avail them much, and Gloucester receiving from a scrum, there was a series of exchanges which left the ball with Loveridge. The right wing was pressed by Jenkins, and was forced to punt, the ball going to touch close to the line. The City worked desperately to effect a score, but only a minor resulted.

On the drop out, failure to field by Townsend saw him tackled in possession. He was robbed of the ball and Harries started a forward movement which Gloucester made feeble attempts to check. The result was that BAXTER picked up and dashed over with a try. Jenkins failed to convert, but Llanely were six points up – a lucky lead on the play.

Gloucester restarted, and play was keen and interesting at the centre. Both sides opened out at every opportunity, and some clever work was exhibited. The City backs once came away nicely, with interpassing, and the Llanely end was visited. From a scrum just inside the Welshmen's half Milliner secured and fed Millington, who cut through. Clever interpassing between the latter and McILWAINE completely beat the defence, and the Cambridge forward went over near the posts with a fine try. Millington added the goal points, and Gloucester had reduced their opponents' lead to one point.

The game on the resumption saw Llanely in the ascendancy with some tricky back play. Once Williams went through beautifully and worked out a fine opening, but a forward transfer to Finch lost a certain try. Gloucester, with sound work, relieved from a dangerous position, and further progress was made with handling. Jenkins, however, got across and effected a fine tackle of Loveridge.

McIlwaine, with some fine work, gave Gloucester the upper hand, and later Hughes came into the picture with a grand run. Being closely pressed from behind he effected a short punt but the ball went against Thomas and rebounded. Gloucester were pulled up when well away, but directly after Llanely were penalised for off-side. The place was taken from the 45 yards mark, and with a lovely shot MILLINGTON landed a goal amidst tremendous enthusiasm. This score gave Gloucester the lead and on the play the City deserved it.

Resuming, the football was very fast. The Gloucester forwards displayed good dribbling powers, and the backs made headway with good combination. From a cross-kick by Crowther Jenkins marked, but his kick did not make much ground.

Neat work by Hughes and smart handling looked likely to secure an opening, but Stephens was smothered in trying to come back inside. Gloucester held the advantage to the interval.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER 2 goals (1p)

LLANELLY 1 goal (m) 1 try

The game had provided some capital football, with Gloucester doing the more attacking though not getting the best of luck when within scoring distance. Gloucester restarted, and after an exchange of kicks Loveridge found touch in the home 25. The City forwards assumed the aggressive, and a wide throw-out sent the ball to Crowther, but the wing was quickly pulled down.

For an illegal tackle Llanelly were penalised, but Millington failed to raise the ball, and a visitor fielding punted to Townsend, who got in a good return to touch. Clever combination between Hughes and Loveridge on the left kept Gloucester on the attack, but later there was a slip, and Llanelly cleared from the danger zone.

In some loose play a visitor secured and raced away, punting past Townsend. The latter, however, got back and saved by getting the ball to touch. A great dribble by the home forwards was spoiled by off-side, and after this Llanelly got close, forcing two minors with fruitless drops at goal.

Gloucester played up strongly on the drop-out, the forwards breaking up quickly and checking the visitors' backs. Milliner broke away cleverly from a scrum, and Hughes and Stephens with inter-passing secured a splendid opening. The forwards were in perfect alignment, but Rea dropped his pass with the defence apparently beaten.

In subsequent play the exchanges became too vigorous, and the tactics of some of the Llanelly players caused the referee to administer a caution. Two penalties fell in quick succession to the City, and with the kicks the home team gained a footing in the visitors' half. Just now the play was very close and chiefly with the forwards.

The City pack made one big burst, but could not quite clear the defence, and W. Davies cleared with a useful punt. Townsend, however, returned well to touch. Llanelly made headway with a sharp rush, but when the backs attempted passing it broke down, and Stephens kicked through. Jenkins, however, was in position and made a clever mark.

Off-side by City players gave the Welshmen a good slice of ground, and later Jenkins had a long shot from another free, but failed. Good work by Millington completely changed the position of play, and Gloucester set up a desperate attack. The line was crossed, but there had been some infringement, and the ball was called back.

Gloucester, however, continued to play grandly, and the forwards, with dashing work, went very close. The ball eventually came out to the left, where STEPHENS gathered and dashed over with a try. Millington failed to convert.

Llanelly went off with a bang on the re-start, and for a time the Welshmen held the upper hand. Ivor Jones had a shot for goal from a penalty, but missed.

Subsequent play was somewhat scrambling, and there were no set attacks for some time. A move by Williams set his centres going for Llanelly, but the passing broke down. Gloucester replied with a splendid combined movement, but off-side was given with the forwards well placed. Llanelly sent back, but McIlwaine came through brilliantly, only to see a forward pass spoil a good chance.

Play to the end was desperately contested, but Gloucester had the game safe, and the end came with the City well-deserved winners.

RESULT :

GLOUCESTER 2 goals (1p) 1 try (11 pts.)

LLANELLY 1 goal (m) 1 try (6 pts.)

REMARKS

Against an opposition far stronger in all departments than Swansea the previous week, Gloucester accomplished another fine performance this afternoon. It was keen, hard football, but play suffered in the second half owing to the too vigorous tactics of the Welshmen, some of whom appeared to lose their heads at times after Gloucester took the lead. The referee had to caution more than one player, but his firm handling kept the game free from anything really serious.

Gloucester won, and deservedly so, on the day's play. Those early reverses would have upset some combinations, but the City team never relaxed their efforts, and in point of actual attacking the Kingsholm men were often the more dangerous. There was a lot of bright, open football displayed by both sides, but there was a long period in the second half when the forwards monopolised the ball, and there was a "rough house" now and again, which was not creditable to teams of such standing.

The Gloucester forwards distinguished themselves with another fine all-round display, with McIlwaine a brilliant forager. The Cambridge player had a hand in most of the attacking movements, and that bit of combination between him and Millington which led to Gloucester's opening score was one of the prettiest bits of work witnessed during the afternoon.

A feature of the play of the home front was the quick breaking up from the scrums, and the close marking of the opposing backs, but in most departments the Kingsholm men were seen to great advantage. The loose footwork was again highly meritorious, and Llanelly on more than one occasion were lucky in escaping disaster.

The Gloucester players had a better idea of combined attack this afternoon, and it was pleasing to see the men get into position across the field. Only a faulty transfer on two occasions missed almost certain tries. All the men did well again to-day, with Seabrook, Saxby, Hemming and Comley, in addition to McIlwaine, perhaps the more noticeable.

Behind the scrum Milliner and Millington had a capital understanding, and as a pair were more successful than Williams and John on the visitors' side. Milliner, besides his plucky defensive work, accomplished a lot of good things in attack, and Millington was the mastermind in all the successful aggressive movements on the part of the City.

At three-quarter Gloucester showed a better appreciation of organised attack, and the inter-passing was very cleverly done if not rewarded with tangible results. Hughes and Loveridge had the most to do, and did their work well, but Stephens was strong on the run, and was quick to seize that opening in the second half which placed his side in practically a safe position. Crowther played a very useful game, and with a little more room might have got through once or twice.

Llanelly played their best football in the first half. The forwards fell off somewhat after the change of ends, when they preferred to keep the ball close. Ivor Jones, Baxter and Evans were hard workers, and dribbled well at times, but the heeling was not up to the Scarlets' standard.

The half-backs, too, lost in effectiveness, Dai John being a source of weakness at outside half. The three-quarters displayed nippiness on occasions, but it was rarely the line got moving with the old-time accuracy. Jenkins was best seen in defence, and he kept a sharp look-out on the Gloucester wings when danger threatened. Finch was not often served, and Davies, on the other wing, had few chances. Ivor Thomas was safe at full-back, and Townsend deputised creditably for Gloucester, though his inability to kick with the right foot handicapped him occasionally.

With reference to Llanelly's first score, it was generally assumed the referee had awarded a penalty, but I understand Mr. Southby gave a mark to John, who dropped the goal.

Next week : Gloucester v. Leicester, away; Gloucester A v. Hereford, at Kingsholm.

GLOUCESTER A v. WAGON WORKS

This match, which should have been played on the Work's Sports' Ground at Tuffley, was cancelled owing to the death of Len Jones, an old Wagon Works player. He had been ill for some time, and died at the Royal Infirmary.

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