

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1913

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v. LLANELLY

THE CITY TEAM IN WALES

A FAST AND FIERCE GAME

Gloucester made the long journey to Llanelly to-day to play the first of the two fixtures with the famous Scarlets, and with a full side, with the exception of L. Hamblin (who was on duty at Newcastle as reserve for England), the City had visions of checking the long run of defeats sustained on Welsh territory.

Llanelly have not performed particularly well this season, but at Stradey Park they are always a difficult team to beat, and the Gloucester players knew only too well that to achieve their ambition they would have to be at their very best.

Gloucester. – C. Cook; F. Webb, A. Lewis, S. Sysum, and W. Washbourn; J. Baker and A. Hall; G. Halford (captain), S. Smart, N. Hayes, S. Millard, A. Saunders, J. F. Lawson, J. Meadows, and A. Cook.

Referee : Mr. D. B. Jones (Swansea).

THE GAME

After a tedious journey, with over five hours on the train, the visitors arrived at 2.45. This late arrival delayed the start until 3.25. Halford kicked off for Gloucester, and opening play was contested at the centre. Sysum early recovered a bad pass made by Hall by getting in a clever screw kick to touch. From the next scrum the City backs handled beautifully, but Webb's re-pass to Lewis, with a good opening, was ruled forward. Llanelly worked back with useful kicks and from one punt down Cook was forced to send straight to touch inside his own quarter.

A penalty to Gloucester removed play to mid-field, where Llanelly marked twice cleverly. Watts had a drop for goal once, but a good effort fell short. Sysum was instrumental in giving Gloucester a better position, and Hayes led a splendid rush, which G. Davies luckily checked with a flying kick. Gloucester pressed, but off-side lost a nice slice of ground.

By more clever kicking the Welshmen became dangerous, and Gloucester were lucky in sending the ball dead. Following the drop out Halford and Smart were prominent with good work, and there came a lovely bit of combination which left the ball with Webb. The right winger made a fine effort to cross, but failed a few yards outside.

Gloucester attacked strongly after this, but the ball once bounced awkwardly with a possible opening. The game was very fast, but Gloucester were doing splendidly in all phases. Lewis came into prominence with some smart kicking, and then Hall, from a pass by Baker, brought off a strong burst straight down the field. His pass, however, was not accepted with possibilities of a nice opening. Gloucester still had the better of exchanges, but the Llanelly defence was sound.

The Welsh forwards, with some sharp loose work, made headway, and fumbling by the City backs let the home team get very close. The City relieved temporarily, but were pressed again. From a scrum close in Hawkins gathered and scored a try, but the place kick failed.

Following up the drop out Halford tackled Hawkins, and in falling to the ground the latter fractured his collar bone and had to retire.

Resuming, Baker dribbled through, but made a mistake in trying to pick up, and knocked on. Two penalties to Llanelly enabled the home team to set up another attack, but an attempt at passing broke down, and Gloucester made a good relief.

The Llanelly forwards were playing a very dogged game, being very quick on the ball, and Gloucester had some difficulty in stemming their rushes. Meadows, with a good kick, sent Gloucester well beyond the centre, but Llanelly's forwards returned with an irresistible rush which was not stopped until Cook was reached. Ensuing play was keen, and the tackling on both sides being very close, nothing further, however, was done in the way of scoring.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Llanelly	1 try
Gloucester	Nil

Llanelly re-started, and early on there was a penalty to Gloucester, which Cook utilised well. The City forwards fed Baker, and Hall opened, but Sysum fumbled and allowed a home player to gather and kick right down to Cook. Gloucester, however, played up strongly and Hall put his side well down.

With grand loose work, the City front, with Halford, Lawson, and Smart leading, went right to the line, where A. Cook was nearly through. Later the ball was taken over the line, but Lawson was just beaten for the touch – very hard lines.

Gloucester maintained the pressure on the drop out, but eventually the home forwards got in a telling dribble half the length of the field, and J. Davis was only pulled down five yards outside. Immediately after, Davis just missed dropping a goal, the ball shaving the upright. The game went in favour of Llanelly now, but Saunders relieved with a strong run, but his pass was missed.

Sysum being at fault, Llanelly were dangerous soon after, and from a long wing kick a touch in goal was forced. Gloucester showed up well on the re-start, and reached their opponents' end, where Washbourn was unlucky in the run of the ball. Back Llanelly came with a superb forward dribble, the Gloucester backs being powerless to check. Cook eventually saved, but he was pulled down immediately, and Llanelly were very dangerous. A scrum followed right on the line, where Hall received and punted clear.

The game continued to be fiercely contested at a great pace. The Gloucester forwards could not get the ball much in the scrums, but eventually Baker, Hall, and Washbourn were seen to advantage. A terrific five minutes followed in which was some deadly tackling. C. Cook was injured in one melee and had to be carried off.

Resuming, Gloucester made desperate efforts to get on terms, but George Davies saved miraculously.

RESULT :

Llanelly 1 try (3 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS

One of the fastest and most fiercely contested games witnessed this season. The Llanelly forwards fairly won the game for their side, for though the Gloucester pack played a fine game they were beaten in the loose by the dashing work of the home pack. Behind, Gloucester did the prettier work, but they did not get the best of luck, and one or two good chances were spoiled at the critical moment.

In play perhaps Llanelly just about deserved to win, but there was precious little in it. For Gloucester, Lewis, Hall, and Webb did a lot of useful work, but the marking was so close as to prevent much in the way of combination. Cook was excellent at full back, and saved well under great pressure. Forward, Halford, Lawson, Smart, and Saunders were generally in the van, but all played well. Llanelly were greatly pleased with their triumph, narrow as the margin was.

GLOUCESTER A v. CHEPSTOW St. MARY'S

DEFEAT OF THE VISITORS.

There was only a small "gate" at Kingsholm when these two teams met for their first encounter of the season on Saturday, in dull weather.

The sides lined out as follows : –

Gloucester. – E. Ruck; T. Powell, E. Brookes, W. Wilkes, and F. Bloxsome (capt.); W. Wotton and T. Burns; W. Parham, J. Harris, C. Mumford, W. Dovey, L. Smith, F. Ayliffe, E. Osborne, and A. Hudson.

Chepstow St. Mary's. – L. Marmont; Matthews, A. Watkins, T. Hobbs, and B. Jones; J. Kirton and F. Hill; Dorrington, Murphy, Proctor, Lewis, B. White, G. Jones, H. Jones, and A. White.

Referee : Mr. F. Abbey.

Chepstow started, and after an exchange of kicks their forwards rushed to the home line, where they were pulled up for an infringement. Gloucester worked out of danger, and scrambling play ensued near the centre. Then Powell broke away, and running strongly, transferred to Wilkes, who in turn gave a nice pass to Brookes with a lovely opening. The latter, however, fumbled, and practically a certain score was lost.

Chepstow from the next scrum came back again with a strong forward burst, and they were again only pulled up just in time. Burns and Harris retaliated with a dribble and run to the centre, but they could make little headway further, and the Seconds were again sent back inside their own 25. F. Hill obtained possession from a scrum and threw out wide, but the pass was not accepted, and Brookes kicked down, the ball going to touch near the centre.

At this juncture Ruck, in stopping a rush, sustained a kick on the leg and had to leave the field, Hudson taking the full-back position. The old International shortly afterwards misfielded a punt, and the Chepstow forwards following up, things looked dangerous, but Wilkes raced back and saved cleverly.

From a forward rush Powell fielded the ball, and in attempting to screw-kick to touch punted back towards his own line. The ball, however, fortunately went into touch before a visitor could reach it.

Matthews was later prominent with a good save for the visitors, and then the Seconds indulged in a passing bout, Bloxsome, however, being neatly tackled by B. Jones. Then St. Mary's again returned to the attack, and Hudson effected a couple of punts to touch when hard pressed.

Dovey broke away and carried the ball with him beyond half-way before passing to Powell, who fumbled. At this juncture Ruck, who was limping badly, returned to the field. Gloucester rushed to the Chepstow line, but in the scramble a visitor successfully touched down.

The homesters subsequently indulged in passing, Hudson being prominent, but nothing tangible resulted. Just before the interval Ruck made a good attempt to land a penalty from the touch-line.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A Nil
Chepstow St. Mary's Nil

Immediately after the restart a Gloucester man when tackled passed to the wing, but Matthews intercepted, and racing hard punted over the full-back's head. He beat Ruck, but three Gloucester men got back and the four went over the line in a bunch, a minor resulting. The Seconds were a minute later again forced to touch down, and Chepstow, who were playing a strong game, continued to keep up the pressure. Wilkes, Hudson, and Bloxsome took part in a nice round of passing, which was stopped through the wing man accidentally stepping into touch.

Then from near his own 25 Wilkes broke away, and gave an awkward pass to Bloxsome, which the latter took cleverly, but could not quite clear the opposition. Wilkes a moment later sent a bad pass to Powell when the latter was well placed.

The Seconds were now playing a better game, and Powell, who had twice gained ground with nice runs, was only pulled down within a yard of the line. Gloucester did not maintain their position for long, Chepstow by the aid of a mis-kick by Bloxsome getting right to the other end. They made good use of their position, for the ball was kicked over the line, and Wilkes failing to pick up, D. Jones dropped on it for a well-deserved try. The goal kick failed.

A minute later the visitors were nearly over again, but then the homesters started passing near their own 25, and the ball going out to Hudson, who was playing amongst the backs, he cut right through, and outpacing the opposition, and beating the back, scored a lovely try. The kick failed.

On the restart, the seconds attacked hotly, and not to be denied L. Smith gathered in the loose and dropped over with a try. The kick again just failed.

A Chepstow player was here sent off the field for continually barracking the referee. Only a couple of minutes more had gone when in a forward rush Dovey notched Gloucester's third try, which also went unconverted.

Hudson was next prominent with a pretty run and pass to Wilkes, but the latter was pulled down a short distance from the line.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 3 tries (9 points)
Chepstow St. Mary's 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

For quite three-parts of the game Chepstow were the superior team, and during that period they should have scored more than the one solitary try they obtained. Gloucester, however, deserved their victory, if only in compensation for the excellent form they showed during the last twenty minutes. They were then all over the opposition, Hudson's brilliant try being seemingly the signal for a series of hot attacks which were kept up right to the end.

The Chepstow pack were a very warm eight, and it was evidently upon them that the visitors relied to wear down the opposition, for they very rarely let the ball out to their backs. The Gloucester forwards heeled better than their opponents, and consequently the backs had more chances of attack, but they appeared sadly out of form except, as stated above, in the closing stages, when the passing was finished and accurate.

Ayliffe, Dovey, Harris, and Smith were the most prominent among the home front, the two former being especially good in the loose, while Hudson, who for the greater part of the game played amongst the backs, Brookes taking his place in front, Burns, and Bloxsome were the soundest amongst the outsides. Ruck was considerably handicapped by his injury at back, and his vis-a-vis was superior.