

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1919

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S FIRST DEFEAT

RECORD LEFT AT SWANSEA

WELSHMEN TOO GOOD

Gloucester took an unbeaten record to Swansea to-day. Would it be retained? That was a question which greatly agitated the minds of followers of the City, and accounted for the more than ordinary interest centred in the struggle at St. Helen's.

Gloucester's record in matches at Swansea was not such as to encourage sanguine anticipations of victory, but there were grounds for hope in the fact that a really strong side – the original selection – made the journey, and that Swansea had performed none too well this season. A fortnight ago Cardiff were unluckily beaten by a dropped goal to nil, and last week Llanelly gained their first victory at St. Helen's for 23 years – results which certainly suggested that Gloucester, if at their best, had an outside chance at least.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER.

BACK : L. Hamblin.

THREE-QUARTERS : S. A. Brown, A. Hudson, Alec Lewis, and F. Webb.

HALF-BACKS : W. Dix and A. Hall.

FORWARDS ; G. Holford (capt.), S. Smart, F. W. Ayliffe, W. Davis, T. Voyce, J. Harris, J. F. Lawson, and J. H. Webb.

SWANSEA.

BACK : Joe Rees.

THREE-QUARTERS : W. Bowen, F. Grey, J. Flynn, and T. R. Thomas.

HALF-BACKS : B. Beynon and C. Roberts.

FORWARDS : T. Parker, B. Parker, E. Williams, T. Morgan, L. Rees, S. Parker, D. Jones, and A. E. Jenkins.

Referee : Mr. Freethy (Welsh Union).

THE GAME

Rain had fallen steadily for two days, but the weather improved at noon, and the conditions when the teams fielded were good.

There were 3,000 spectators when Tom Morgan started for Swansea, Gloucester playing against the wind. Hamblin saved well at the outset, and Gloucester heeled from the ensuing scrummage, but Webb failed to take his pass. Within five minutes of the start Beynon made an opening, from which Flynn scored an unconverted try.

Swansea continued to attack, thanks mainly to Beynon, but Hamblin sent them back to the centre with a fine touch-finder. Bowen made a fine opening and a forward rush which followed resulted in a minor being forced.

The Swansea forwards were doing well in the rushes, and Lewis stopped them on one occasion when they looked like breaking through. Dix afterwards got the ball away to Hudson, but after the latter had found touch Beynon broke through, and if Grey had taken his pass a score would have resulted.

More Swansea passing broke down when Thomas was pulled down by Webb. Swansea were having most of the play but the passing broke down continually. A forward rush, headed by Jenkins, led to Gloucester being penalised, Joe Rees making an abortive attempt at goal. Swansea nearly scored a moment later, Bowen being tackled when attempting to give the "dummy."

More pressure by the Welshmen led to Beynon dropping a fine goal. Gloucester then had more of the play, but Hall was hustled off the ball. Hamblin failing to find touch, a scrum was ordered in the visitors' half. Gloucester tried passing, but Joe Rees stopped their career by punting well up the field. The Citizens made further progress through Dix and Hall, and after a kick by Hamblin, Lewis made a strong burst, to which Beynon replied by finding touch.

When pressing Swansea were awarded a free kick, and Beynon improved the position by a strong burst up the centre. Gloucester were dangerous through Hall, but just when they looked like scoring the Swansea forwards dribbled away to the centre. Bowen went off with an injury to the arm, and a moment later there was a delay when Beynon was being attended to.

Gloucester made progress when Beynon missed a pass, but Joe Rees kicked back to the centre, where Hamblin made an abortive shot for goal. Play continued to favour Swansea, but the Welshmen could not open out the game, and when the interval came Gloucester were putting up a determined forward struggle at the centre.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Swansea 1 goal (d) 1 try (7 points)

Gloucester Nil

Resuming with the wind Swansea made headway through Grey, but the Gloucester forwards used their feet well, and presently Smart found touch inside the home half. The Welshmen then got down to the line, and Hamblin nearly let them in by kicking across, Thomas only just failing to get the ball.

Swansea were still playing a man short, Bowen having been taken off with a damaged shoulder, but in spite of this they pressed. Tom Parker crossed with a try, which Flynn converted.

Swansea got the ball from the scrum repeatedly, but once Dix cleverly intercepted and enabled his side to get into a favourable position, at which point Gloucester were given a free kick, to which Joe Rees replied well to touch.

Gloucester were giving the ball plenty of air, and Dix and Hall tried repeatedly to get their three-quarters on the move, but the visiting backs were not so clever as their opponents, whose play was a big improvement on the previous week.

Swansea had withdrawn Tom Williams from the forwards to fill the vacancy at centre three-quarter. Lewis was applauded for a clever clearance, and Hall and Hudson started some passing, only to see Brown out of position to take his pass. Another chance for Gloucester to gain relief broke down when Hudson failed to hold a pass.

Gloucester scored a moment later through Smart, who crossed after a movement which covered half the length of the field. The try was converted by Hamblin.

The Gloucester forwards hereabouts did well in rushes but they were generally beaten for possession. One of the best runs of the match was made by Brown, who brought Gloucester much needed relief. The position was improve by Lewis, and Grey had to make a mark close up to the line. Swansea gained relief through a free kick, and then the end came.

RESULT :

SWANSEA 2 goals (1d) 1 try (12 points)

GLOUCESTER 1 goal (5 points)

REMARKS

Our Swansea correspondent telegraphs : –

For the bulk of the time Swansea were the aggressors. The Welshmen showed greater cleverness behind, but Gloucester gave the ball plenty of air, with the result that the play was bright and interesting.

The Swansea forwards improved greatly upon their form of the previous week, but the outstanding player on the winning side was undoubtedly Beynon.

Gloucester were best served by Dix, Hamblin, and Hall, but Hudson was often in the picture.

The forwards in the second half were especially good in the open. The try gained by the visitors was the result of T. R. Thomas failing to take a pass. Brown intercepted and gave to Smart, who ran in right behind the posts.

A minute before the end Gloucester might have pierced the defence, but Hudson at the critical moment failed to hold the ball.

GLOUCESTER A v. WAGON WORKS

DULL AND SCRAPPY GAME

WORKS WIN BY THREE POINTS

There was a strong "local derby" interest in the meeting of the City Seconds and the Wagon Works at Kingsholm this afternoon, and with both teams out to win there was every prospect of a keen struggle.

Gloucester A. : F. W. Hayward; N. Daniell, F. Bloxsome (capt.), T. Millington, and H. Ashmead; J. Humphries and F. E. M. Clarke; F. Mansell, W. Nelmes, A. Wright, A. Hawker, W. Comely, R. Cridland, A. Merrett, and another.

Wagon Works : C. Cook; B. Mace, H. Cook, W. Washbourn, and A. Pugh; J. Beard and A. C. Cook; E. Curtis (capt.), W. Dovey, W. Allen, L. Taylor, A. Comely, H. Hook, F. Cresswell, and J. Lee.

Referee : Mr. Babbage.

Play opened in favour of the Works, who early got in a strong attack, but Hayward cleared nicely to touch. The Seconds' forwards, using their feet well, carried to beyond the half-way, where C. Cook gathered and found touch with a clever kick. A fine penalty kick by the same player gave the Works a good attacking position, but a flying kick brought relief.

Further penalties to the Works were taken full advantage of, and fumbling by the Seconds allowed the visitors to get very close. From a short line-out Mace secured and threw himself over the mark for a try, though there was some doubt as to the legality of the point. The place-kick failed.

Resuming, the Works soon set up another attack by the aid of a forward burst, but they were checked at the quarter flag. A useful loose dribble by the Seconds brought much-needed relief, but play as a whole was very scrappy.

The Seconds were very weak in the scrum, and seldom got the ball. Eventually Bloxsome picked up in the loose and passed out wide, but Pugh snapped up the ball, and raced away. He cleared Hayward, but the latter stuck to his opponent, and making a dive for his legs just managed to bring him down. Pugh, however, got on his feet again and tried hard to cross, but he was safely held, and the situation was saved.

A smart punt and follow up eased the pressure for the Seconds, and later Clarke put in a sharp dash, which further improved matters. Then for the first time the Seconds got the ball out, and Millington tried to break away, but failed. Fielding a punt by C. Cook, Clarke gathered finely on the run, and looked likely to go through, but succumbed to numbers.

Mistakes by the Seconds lost them their position, but the Works' stay at the home end was short-lived. A loose rush by the home forwards severely tested the Works' defence, but there was no finish to the movement. The A team were now having more of the play, but the form of both sides, especially behind the scrum, was very poor.

A capital touch-finder by Hayward gave the Seconds a footing in the Works 25, and from the ensuing line out the ball was rushed over the line, and Daniell was credited with a try. Hayward missed the goal points, though the attempt was well directed.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A 1 try
Wagon Works 1 try

Even play followed the restart for a time, but the Seconds gradually worked their way to the visitors' half, being helped by one or two nice touch kicks. Then H. Cook slipped and fell in fielding a punt, and passing back to his brother the full back kicked straight across the field. There was a splendid opening for Daniell, but he misjudged the bounce of the ball and knocked on.

The Works' forwards gained some 20 yards with a capital touch-finder, but later the ball was kicked into the open and Daniell dashing up gathered neatly and was off at full pace. He looked likely to just beat C. Cook, but the old City custodian judged his tackle splendidly and brought his man down in fine style. After this Hayward had two shots for goal, from a mark and penalty respectively, but was each time a long way out with his kicks.

Subsequent play was wholly confined to the forwards, and though there was an occasional smart bit of footwork the game generally was lacking in interest. And so the game continued, with absolutely no redeeming feature.

The Works at length set up an attack, and in a general scramble on the line they were awarded a try, as to the legitimacy of which, however, there was considerable doubt. The place kick failed.

RESULT :

Wagon Works 2 tries (6 points)
Gloucester A 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

A dull, scrappy, and uninteresting game and devoid of a solitary feature. The Works were adjudged the winners, but not on merit. All three tries scored were of the flukiest description, and it is a question if either was a good point[*sic*]. If to-day's display represented the best of both teams, then local football is at a very poor standard indeed.

JC