

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1919

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S FIRST HOME DEFEAT

LLANELLY WIN A GREAT GAME BY FOUR

In striking contrast to Boxing Day, the weather to-day was beautifully fine overhead, and with the Llanelly team as visitors there was a record crowd for the season at Kingsholm to welcome the famous Scarlets. The Welshmen brought up a large and enthusiastic following. Llanelly have had a most successful season so far, and rank next to Newport as the premier team in the Principality. In Albert Jenkins they possess one of the best centres in Wales, but several other players had greatly distinguished themselves, and the Scarlets were expected to be well represented in the National Fifteen this year. Both sides were representative to-day, the only change in the City team being N. Hayes for Lawson (forward). The following were the teams : –

## GLOUCESTER

BACK: G. Welshman.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. Webb, A. Lewis, A. Hudson, and W. Washbourn.

HALF-BACKS : W. Dix and L. Hamblin.

FORWARDS : G. Holford (captain), S. Smart, T. Voyce, A. Hall, F. Ayliffe, J. Harris, N. Hayes, and J. H. Webb.

## LLANELLY

BACK : Hugh Jones.

THREE-QUARTERS : Frank Evans, Bryn Evans, Albert Jenkins (captain), and Bryn Williams.

HALF-BACKS : S. Congdon and T. A. Jones.

FORWARDS : T. J. Bowen, Edgar Morgan, Bobbie Evans, George Morgan, Rev. J. Stephens, Joe Owen, D. J. Phillips, and Oliver Davies.

Referee : Mr. J. Southby (Bristol).

## THE GAME

The ground, though still on the soft side, with bare patches in front of the grand stand as the result of the previous day's struggle, had recovered wonderfully considering the amount of rain which had fallen. The Llanelly team received a hearty reception on entering the field – a tribute to the popularity of the side at Gloucester.

Holford started for Gloucester, and there being only a poor return, the City forwards were at once prominent with a good burst. Llanelly retaliated, and then a missed pass by Lewis allowed the visitors to dribble to the centre. Here Hudson gathered and put in a capital touch-finder to near the 25-line.

From the subsequent scrum Dix broke away on the short side and fed Webb, who brought off a superb dash. He side-stepped Jones and raced over the line, but here was a big disappointment when the touch judge held up his flag for Webb having gone over the mark. It was hard lines for Gloucester, for the effort deserved a score.

The Gloucester forwards heeling smartly, Dix and Hamblin opened out, but Hudson failed to take from Lewis, and Jenkins kicked down the field to Welshman, who returned, but failed to find touch. A kicking duel ended favourably for Llanelly, who gained a footing in the home half.

A high and long punt by Jenkins found Welshman severely tested, but he succeeded in getting in a nice clearance. Hudson brought off a good relief kick for the City, and this was well followed up. Jenkins, however, sent play back with good kicking, and the Gloucester half was the scene of operations.

Smart work by Dix, who beat Congdon nicely and opened out, saw Hudson punt to Hugh Jones, who was tackled directly he received. Gloucester, however, failed to make further progress, and centre play followed.

Play was well contested, but Llanelly were having the better of the exchanges. Gloucester made headway with a good burst, but the visitors, by timely punting, transferred play to the home 25. Here clever play by Congdon and Jones ended in a cross-kick, and Jenkins racing up fielded, and giving the "dummy" nicely ran over and behind the posts with a good try. The same player converted.

Gloucester restarted with vigour, and Dix, breaking away on the blind side, ran down touch and cross-kicked, but the visitors saved at the critical moment. A penalty to Gloucester gave Hamblin a chance to show his skill with a place-kick but a fine effort just missed, a touchdown resulting.

On the drop-out play was fast with good open work on both sides. Washbourn had hard lines in being legged when looking likely to clear, and then the Scarlets, with pretty passing, made a few yards before Hudson floored Bryn Evans with a hurricane tackle. From this point the Gloucester forwards got away with a magnificent rush, and a flying kick sent the ball well down the field. There was a hard race for possession, ending in B. Williams securing and punting to touch.

The visitors were very nippy behind, and utilised the short punt cleverly. Gloucester got the ball out several times, but little ground was made, though the ball went through several pairs of hands. Near the centre Dix opened out smartly, but Lewis dropped the ball, and a visitor kicked down the field. Jenkins gathered and passed to F. Evans, who outpaced Webb and put in a short punt over Welshman's head. Hall got back and appeared to have plenty of time to save, but he was beaten by Evans, who dribbled over the line and scored. Jenkins failed at goal.

On the resumption Hudson, following up a kick, tackled Hugh Jones in possession. Carrying the scrum, the City forwards, with brilliant footwork, looked likely to score, but Jones saved daringly. Llanelly staved off an other desperate attack a couple of minutes later, but Gloucester would not be denied.

Llanelly were swept aside in a fine loose rush, and Jones was smothered a few yards from the line. For lying on the ball he was penalised, and no-charge being allowed, Hamblin kicked a neat goal. This brought the score 8–3 in favour of Llanelly.

Restarting, the play was keener than ever, both sides working very strenuously. The forwards were well matched in the loose, and some fine work was witnessed. Gloucester quite held their own in general play, but the visitors had the superior finish.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

GLOUCESTER ..... 1 goal (p)

LLANELLY ..... 1 goal, 1 try

Llanelly had the better of the exchange kicking following the restart, and play opened in the Gloucester half. A penalty to the City brought the game to the centre, where the Welshmen indulged in a series of exchanges, but the tackling was sound. A punt and follow-up by Jenkins put Llanelly on the attack, and the home defence had a warm time. Scrums followed in close proximity to the Gloucester line, but at length Dix beat Congdon and enabled his forwards, with Hudson, to reach more favourable quarters.

A smart move by Jones and B. Williams gave the Welshmen the advantage again, and operations were waged in the home half. Heeling by the City forwards saw Dix swing out the ball to Hamblin, who sent to Lewis. The latter's pass to Hudson, however, was snapped up by Frank Evans, who had a clear field with the exception of Welshman. The latter tried hard to leg his man, but failed, and Evans ran round near the posts for Jenkins to convert the try. This was an opportunist try, and very cleverly carried out.

Gloucester restarted in fine style in response to the shouts of the crowd, and the game became very exciting. Halford led a good rush, and later Dix fed Hamblin cleverly, but the latter was brought down.

In some loose play a forward crossed the ball to the left, and Hugh Jones failing to gather, Washbourn, who had followed up, smartly gained possession and scored a try. Hamblin failed at the goal-kick.

Llanelly dropped out, and now followed more exciting play. Getting the ball out, Hudson took a difficult pass and transferred to Lewis, who cut through and re-passed to Hudson. The latter dashed away, shaking off a would-be tackler, but when on the verge of the line he was pounced upon from behind and in falling to the ground lost the ball. There was a scramble, Gloucester making tremendous efforts to cross, but they were not rewarded.

A loose rush by the Welshmen brought them out to more favourable quarters, where the forwards contested every inch of ground. Dix, on the short side of the scrum, fed Washbourn, who ran and punted, but with a fine opening the forwards knocked on. Gloucester kept up the pressure, and the game was easily the most exciting seen on the ground for a long time.

Llanelly defended strongly under a severe test, but Gloucester were playing with great vim now. The forwards, with a great effort, went along, and then in some loose play the ball was picked up and thrown to the backs.

Hudson and Lewis in turn handled, and the final transfer went to Webb, who took the ball when fully in his stride and with a supreme effort went over in the right corner amidst great enthusiasm. The goal-kick, by Hamblin, was a failure, and the record now read : Llanelly 13; Gloucester, 9.

Gloucester returned finely on the drop-out, and quickly the City backs were in the picture. Hudson was the first to shine with a strong burst, and then a pass to Washbourn enabled the latter to bring off a fine run; but with the goal-line in sight Holford knocked on, and a glorious opportunity was lost.

Gloucester continued to hold the upper hand, and the Llanelly lines were frequently in danger, but the defence was sound. The Llanelly full back was injured in one melee on the line, and had to retire. For a minute or two the City appeared certain to add to their score, but good opportunities were not taken advantage of.

Eventually loose footwork enabled Llanelly to clear to the centre, and then from a long kick over the line Welshman conceded a minor. The closing stages were hotly contested in the home half, but there was no further scoring.

#### RESULT :

LLANELLY ..... 2 goals, 1 try (13 pts.)  
GLOUCESTER ..... 1 goal (p), 2 tries (9 pts.)

#### REMARKS

A great game, and one thoroughly enjoyed by the big holiday crowd. On the run of the play Llanelly just about deserved their triumph, for they possessed that bit of extra pace, smartness and finish behind the scrummage necessary to decide the issue with two sides so equally matched.

The City, with the chances they had in the second half, ought to have pulled the game round, for at one period – and for a good spell, too – they had the Welshmen well beaten. The two tries scored by Washbourn and Webb were particularly smart efforts, and Hudson twice had hard lines in not beating the defence. All three of Llanelly's tries had an element of luck about them; but it served to show what clever opportunists these players from the Principality are.

Forward, the struggle was keen and vigorous, but on the whole contested in a true sporting spirit. The Gloucester pack did finely in all phases. In the tight they had more than a fair share of the ball, and the footwork was characterised with cleverness and resource. Holford was particularly energetic as leader, and he had fine backers in Ayliffe, Smart, Voyce, and Webb.

At half-back, Dix again gave a wonderfully effective display. Again and again he beat his opponent, and with ordinary luck some of his openings on the short side of the scrum would have materialised. Hamblin opened out with judgment, and the threes ought to have done better.

In the first half, however, there were too many mistakes in handling, the fault being chiefly at centre. Later in the game the players made great efforts to retrieve the situation, but the task proved just too much for them. Washbourn played his best game of the season. He was on his toes all the time, and rendered excellent all-round service. Webb scored his try in capital style, but he found Evans a bit too fast for him.

All the Llanelly backs were very nippy, and Albert Jenkins displayed skill and judgment of a high order. Bryn Evans was not so showy, but did good work at times, and the wings were quite first-class. As a quartette the Welshmen handled better than the home men, and were more thrusting in their attacking efforts. Good tackling, however, kept the movements well in hand.

Both full backs performed with great credit. Welshman was under great pressure at times, but he made no serious mistake, and kicked well all through. Jones was also a great asset to Llanelly.

The victory was received with great enthusiasm by the Scarlets' supporters, and the team's mascot was waved aloft as they left the ground.