

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1920

FOOTBALL

GLO'STER TWELVE POINTS DOWN AT PONTYPOOL

WELSHMEN SCORE FOUR TRIES IN SECOND HALF

Gloucester were due at Pontypool this afternoon for the return fixture, the previous meeting at Kingsholm earlier in the season resulting in favour of the City by 2 goals (p) 2 tries (12 points) to 1 goal (p) (3 points). This game, it will be remembered, provided a wonderful finish, Gloucester scoring nine of their points in the last ten minutes.

Like all Welsh clubs, Pontypool are a very tough proposition at home, and this season the Monmouth club had the distinction of being the only team to share the honours of the game with the invincible Newport combination.

Gloucester had never proved successful at Pontypool, and though a good side made the journey to-day, there was not much confidence in the team's ability to pull through.

The only change from the original selection was J. Humphries for W. Dix at half-back, England's reserve deeming it necessary to give the shoulder he injured in the Somerset match a rest.

Pontypool had a strong fifteen out, the forwards, as usual, being a formidable lot, and regarded as capable of holding their own with the best pack in Wales.

Teams : –

GLOUCESTER

BACK : G. Welshman.

THREE-QUARTERS : F. Webb, A. Hudson, J. Brown, and N. Daniell.

HALF-BACKS : J. Humphries and T. Millington.

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

PONTYPOOL

BACK : F. Morgan.

THREE-QUARTERS : H. Thomas, Barrett, J. Kerr, and T. Probert.

HALF-BACKS : S. Coleman and G. Stacey.

FORWARDS : T. Davies (capt.), R. Thomas, W. Hodder, T. Rees, Dr. P. McGuinness, F. Phillips, J. Hayward, and J. Williams.

THE GAME

Gloucester kicked off, and broke away at the start, but a forward dribble by the homesters sent play to the visitors' line, where Gloucester heeled, and Millington again sent play to well inside the home half. Though Gloucester heeled at the scrummages, Millington gave his backs no chance, preferring to send the ball to touch, and by this means he gained considerable tracts of ground.

Good dribbling, however, carried play to the visitors' line, and Stacey had hard lines in not getting through. Humphries relieved with a good kick, and a moment later Welshman also found touch at great length.

As a result play went to the home line, where a number of scrums were formed, but Millington tried to get through, and when tackled punted on, but Barrett took the ball and passed to Stacey, who ran well and carried play to the other end of the field, where Pontypool had hard lines in not getting over.

Welshman gained a considerable amount of ground by free kicks, but Pontypool continued to press, thanks to the way in which Morgan, the Pontypool full back, found touch. Gloucester, however, put up a magnificent defence, repeatedly stopping Pontypool's forward rushes.

A series of scrimmages were forced on the line, but Humphries intercepted Coleman's pass to Stacey and kicked through to Morgan, who was tackled in possession and then when play was at the Pontypool 25, Gloucester were penalised and Pontypool gained temporary relief.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
GLOUCESTER NIL
PONTYPOOL NIL

Pontypool did better at the commencement of the second half, and Welshman was a couple of times called upon, but found touch with great length. The play was even and of a most exciting character. Thomas picked up and sent out to Stacey for him to score. Kerr failed to convert.

Immediately play went to the other end of the field, where the Gloucester forwards dribbled well, but failed to cross the Pontypool line.

By means of forward tactics Pontypool sent play back, and from a line-out near the line Tom Davies took the ball and went over, but Kerr failed to convert.

Pontypool, encouraged by the success, continued to attack, and when they heeled at a scrummage near the line the ball was handled by all the Pontypool quartette, and Thomas receiving scored another try for Pontypool.

Gloucester seemed a trifle worn down by the fast play, but nevertheless showed the determination of a winning team. Their forwards got away well, but found the Pontypool defence safe.

At this stage there were several injuries, due to the keen way in which both teams played, and Hodder, the Pontypool forward had to leave the field temporarily. Play, however, rested in the visitors' half, though Gloucester had the advantage in the scrimmages.

After the Pontypool forwards had dribbled down the field Rees Thomas picked up and passed to Kerr, who sent out to Barrett, for him to score. Probert failed with the kick.

RESULT :

PONTYPOOL 4 tries (12 points)
GLOUCESTER Nil

REMARKS

Our Pontypool correspondent telegraphs : –

Never have the Pontypool spectators this season been entertained to such a fast and keen game than by Gloucester to-day, and though at the start the visitors easily held their own, at the end of the game they were outclassed on account of the fact that the City were feeling the effects of the pace. Play was chiefly forward, and Gloucester were unfortunate several times in not scoring.

GLOUCESTER A v. STROUD ATHLETIC

SURPRISE DEFEAT FOR CITY SECONDS

Gloucester A. : F. Ashmeade; F. Hayward, L. Hamblin, T. Burns, and J. Phelps; J. Mobley and B. Cook; Richardson, Wright, Bayliss, Turner, Bridges, Merrett, Curtis, and Griffiths.

Stroud Athletic : G. Bingham; Hudson Powell, W. Jones, J. Gibbins, and J. Stockwell; C. Wathern and Cratchley; Wathern, Sessions, Wheatley, Thomas, Brown, Perry, Smith, and Patten.

Gloucester A kicked off and loose play at the centre gave the visiting forwards a chance of picking up, of which they took full advantage, Thomas racing along the line, eluding the home defence and grounding behind the posts for Cratchley to goal.

Encouraged by this success so soon after the start the visitors attacked strongly, and Ashmeade found it necessary to concede a minor. The A team managed to work down to Stroud territory, but the visiting pack were getting the better of the scrums, and although the halves did not open the game up the back division by good touch-finding were able to keep the Seconds confined to their half.

Gloucester were penalised in a position from which Bingham tried to kick a goal, but his effort was fruitless. Again the visitors pressed to the Gloucester line, but after a few minutes of danger the homesters worked away and carried the game up into the Stroud 25. The Gloucester men were quite off their game, however, and the visitors quickly had them back again. In the course of some loose play in front of goal, Watkins picked up and dropped a fine goal.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Stroud Athletic 2 goals (1d)
Gloucester A Nil

On the resumption the Athletic again pressed hard, and play settled down in the Gloucester half. A kick by Hamblin from a penalty carried the Seconds into the Stroud 25, and from a resulting scrum the home threes got going. The ball travelled along the line, but the wing man was pulled down just in time. Again the ball came out, and another pretty bout of passing was pulled up for a forward pass.

There was a keen struggle right on the visitors' line, but they managed to work clear for a few moments. Gloucester returned to the attack, however, and struggled hard to reduce the lead, but although Hamblin with good touch-finders kept his team in a good position, the defence was splendid.

The Seconds were getting the better of the game, but they could not get past the Stroud back division. After a bout of in and out play at centre the homesters again handled well, but could not bring off a score.

Towards the close Gloucester lost several chances through faulty handling, and Ashmeade had a chance of dropping a goal, but his effort was poor.

RESULT :

Stroud Athletic 2 goals (1d) (9 pts.)
Gloucester A Nil

REMARKS

Stroud Athletic brought over quite a good team, but Gloucester A had to make several important changes at the last moment, and consequently fielded a weak side. The home team were outclassed, but had they seized their chances in the second half they might easily have reduced the adverse margin. They were apathetic in the initial half, the forwards failing to get the ball out, and the threes putting up a weak defence. Later, however, they woke up, and then they had the best of the game territorially, but their attacks lacked sting.

Lionel Hamblin played a good game, and his touch-finding was extremely useful. Bingham played well at back for the Athletic, and Watkins proved an energetic scrum half. The Stroud three were keen in attack and safe in defence, but they might well have handled more frequently.