

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1929

GLOUCESTER FLATTER ONLY TO DECEIVE

CITY LOSE AFTER FIRST HALF LEAD

SWANSEA'S BRILLIANT RECOVERY

VISITORS WELL SERVED BY FORWARDS

Gloucester paid their last visit to Wales this season when they opposed Swansea in the return match at St. Helen's. The early start prevented McCanlis and Seabrook making the journey, but with these two exceptions the selected City team was the same as defeated Newport so handsomely at Kingsholm last week. Cuffe, however, dropped out of the side, the three vacancies being filled by Glyn Thomas, Foulkes, and Comley respectively.

In the first game last November, Swansea triumphed by 8 points to nil, Gloucester giving a disappointing display. The City had never won at St. Helens, but in previous matches in Wales this season the visitors had done remarkably well, drawing with Newport, and losing narrowly to Cardiff and Llanelli.

Severe frost in the early part of the week made it doubtful if the fixture would be played, but inquiry at Swansea yesterday elicited the fact that if the conditions were favourable the match was certain.

Teams :

GLOUCESTER

BACK : H. Boughton.

THREE-QUARTERS : Roy James, J. Stephens, Glyn Thomas, and L. Abbey.

HALF-BACKS : A. J. Tomlinson and F. Benbow.

FORWARDS : J. Davies, A. Carpenter, J. Hemming, G. Foulkes, F. Wadley, E. Comley, A. Rea, and A. Webb.

SWANSEA

BACK : Eldryd Jones.

THREE-QUARTERS : D. P. Manley, J. E. Bowen, C. Davey, and Denver Rees.

HALF-BACKS : W. Thomas and Roy Jones.

FORWARDS : W. Clement, T. Day, W. Davies, J. H. John, D. Parker, W. Richards, Wateyn Thomas, and D. Troy.

THE GAME

There were two further changes in the Gloucester team, A. Rea and A. Webb taking the places of Saxby and Hiam. The City captain is suffering with a septic wound in the leg and also a cut eye. The weather was gloriously fine and the ground in splendid condition.

There was a very hard stretch in front of the grand stand, but the playing pitch was marked ten yards nearer the open field, and the frozen turf was thus cleared. The kick-off did not take place until 3.30, when Swansea started the game before 5,000 spectators.

Boughton ran round and passed to James instead of punting, and the acting captain put the City well down with a good kick. The City forwards opened with a strong rush, and Davies upset E. Jones in fine style.

Playing well together, Gloucester confined the game to their opponents' half, and grand tackling successfully prevented the Swansea backs doing any damage. Opening out cleverly with a reverse pass in the loose, Parker set his threes going, and clever inter-passing saw Bowen break through, but a forward transfer was given with a likely opening.

Davies dribbled back brilliantly for Gloucester, and keen play followed at mid-field. The Gloucester forwards carried several scrums in splendid style, Davies again being prominent.

Swansea resorted to open play, but the passing breaking down James nipped in and kicked down to Jones. The latter fumbled close to the line, and when he gathered he foolishly passed. The ball was snapped up by FOULKES, who dropped over the line for a try. Boughton failed at goal, but Gloucester had opened the scoring, and this was very encouraging.

Resuming, Gloucester showed up with some dashing work, Stephens and James being prominent on the left wing. Swansea still continued to monopolise the ball in the scrums, and the forwards heeled well, but the backs were sadly at fault in their handling.

Foulkes, Benbow and James shone in some good passing. The Gloucester forwards, following up some smothering tackles by the City backs, dribbled through and up to Jones. Foulkes took the ball nicely, but was collared a few yards out. The ball, however, was rushed over and Swansea had a lucky escape.

Immediately after James dropped for goal but missed. Gloucester kept up the pressure and from a bout of passing James made a splendid dash but just failed to get through. Swansea eased the pressure with good kicking, but the City worked back, and a fine opening by Benbow was spoiled through Stephens slipping on the greasy turf.

A long punt to touch gave Swansea a footing in the visitors' half, but Gloucester worked back, Abbey distinguishing himself with a splendid run which gained 30 yards. Gloucester again attacked, Thomas forcing a minor with a kick over the line.

The Gloucester forwards continued to play magnificently and some quick, sharp passing only just failed in a corner try – very hard lines. Gloucester set up a vigorous offensive and HEMMING scored after a splendid effort by Abbey. Boughton failed with a fine shot at conversion.

HALF-TIME :

GLOUCESTER 2 tries
SWANSEA Nil

Gloucester's display in the first half fully deserved their six points lead. Except for occasional bursts, Swansea had been outplayed, the City forwards giving another splendid exhibition. The backs, too, were on their mettle, and the tackling and marking were quite equal to that shown against Newport the previous week. For a quarter of an hour before the interval Gloucester were wholly in their opponents' 35, and with a bit of luck the City would have scored two more tries.

Swansea, with the sun at their backs, restarted in vigorous fashion, but Boughton pulled them up beautifully. The Welshmen twice got the ball out, but were erratic and the movements were soon checked.

The Gloucester forwards were prominent in a combined rush which promised well, but they were stopped in time. Fast and exciting play followed, the Gloucester marking being very deadly. Loose kicking gave Swansea an opening, and later from handling REES was given possession. He ran hard for the corner, and though apparently thrown into touch in goal a try was awarded. Parker failed with the goal kick. The subsequent play was keenly contested, with Swansea showing improved form.

The home backs handled better and they made several sharp attacks. A touch kick by Jones close in put Gloucester in a dangerous position, and Thomas feinting to pass dived for the line, being held up and prevented from putting the ball down.

The City were hard pressed now and the defence hotly challenged. It held out for a time, but eventually Thomas got the ball away from a scrum, and MANLEY receiving dashed over in the corner with a try. No goal resulted, but the teams were now level.

On the resumption, the struggle forward was desperate and the collaring terrific. Benbow with clever footwork took the ball to Jones, who returned with a nice punt. Then the Swansea backs were off again but Abbey put a check to the movement and later gained ground with a long punt.

After a spell of even play, Manley sent close to the Gloucester line with a well judged punt and the City were in danger again. There was a sharp attack on the right, but the passing went astray. Loose kicking sent the ball close to the City line, but a knock-on ensued with a certain try in view.

The visiting forwards, with dashing work, brought much needed relief, but Gloucester were driven back and forced to defend.

An opening by Thomas left the ball with REES, and the right wing, sprinting hard, beat Boughton and scored wide out. Parker missed the goal posts, but Swansea had gained the lead for the first time in the match.

The Welshmen certainly merited their points in this half, for they were a different side altogether from the first half.

The game was finely contested to the end, but there was no further scoring.

RESULT :

SWANSEA3 tries (9 points)

GLOUCESTER2 tries (6 points)

REMARKS

Beaten again, but Gloucester put up a glorious fight and deserved to have at least made a draw. It was a remarkable game, the City having all the play in the first half, when they should have crossed with a bigger lead than six points.

Swansea did most of the attacking after the interval, when their backs were seen to advantage, but there was a distinct doubt about their first try.

The Gloucester forwards gave another great display, especially in the loose, where they held the Welshmen continually beaten. Davies was in fine form, and Hemming, Wadley and Foulkes were often prominent. Behind there was no weak spot, and tackling being a prominent feature.

JC