

THE CITIZEN

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1906

YESTERDAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. LONDON WELSH

CITY WIN AN INTERESTING GAME

There was a good crowd present when, at 2.55, Davis kicked off for the Welsh, Stephens returning to touch at mid-field. The visitors were early awarded a penalty, but gained little ground. From the first scrum Gloucester heeled, and Gent quickly set Stephens moving, but Hudson knocked on F. Smith's pass.

A minute later Hudson was again at fault, but subsequently Stephens, gathering neatly from the ground, passed wide to F. Smith, who took the ball cleverly and punted over the line, but the ball was kicked dead. The drop-out was well returned, and Gloucester were soon on the attack. Following a lovely opening by Stephens the Gloucester backs handled prettily, and Butler opened the scoring with a nice try. Romans failed to convert, though the attempt was a good one.

Resuming, play was at once taken to the Welsh lines, Hubert Smith finding touch a few yards outside. After Gent and Stephens had unsuccessfully tried to work the blind side of the scrum, the Welshmen cleared with a good punt, and Butler having a kick charged down the visitors made further headway.

Heeling by the Welsh forwards saw Rowlands try to break through, but he was upset by Stephens, and the ball getting loose the Gloucester half kicked to touch. The visitors confined play to the home end for a few minutes, but F. Smith at length broke away with a beautiful run to the full back, who pushed him to touch.

Hawker, with a big punt, sent play close to the Welsh line, and the ball coming out to the Gloucester backs a score appeared imminent. H. Smith, however, essayed a drop at goal, but failed to raise the ball.

The Welsh relieved from a line-out, Davis dribbling well, but Hudson ran the ball to touch. Centre play followed until Gent opened out nicely, but Hudson failed to take from Stephens with H. Smith and Butler in waiting.

The Welsh replied with some exchanges, but F. Smith intercepted, only to lose the ball again. Gent next came away with a lovely run to the full back, when he put in a short punt, the ball rolling to touch.

Carrying a scrum, the City forwards rushed to Saunders, who saved right under his goal. The Welsh cleared from a dangerous position, and Jenkins, sneaking a Gloucester transfer, ran down to Romans and passed. Hudson, however, effected a good tackle from behind.

Butler changed the venue with a run and kick, but Rowlands sent the game back to the home half with a clever bit of work. Gloucester came away through combined work by Gent and Stephens, Butler spoiling the movement by knocking on.

With a strong forward burst the Welsh got dangerous, and Gloucester were penalised for an infringement in the scrum. Davis tried for goal, but failed, and Hudson punted out. Saunders returned, and there was some scrambling play in the home quarter.

From a flying kick by Davis the ball rebounded off a Gloucester man into the open, and Hawker and H. Smith took it past Saunders. Another kick sent the ball over the line, and H. Smith was credited with a try, which Romans failed to goal.

HALF TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 2 tries
London Welsh Nil

Gloucester restarted, and opening play favoured the Welshmen, a judicious kick by Rowlands placing the visitors in a good position. From a scrum close in the Welshmen got the ball out, and there was a possibility of a score, but F. Smith jumped for the ball and knocked it out of an opponent's hands.

The visitors were doing especially well in heeling just now, and their backs were often in possession, but except for a minor conceded from a fruitless drop at goal nothing resulted. Gloucester worked out of danger with a loose rush, H. Smith taking the ball well beyond the centre. The movement was continued, and Hudson being given possession he fed Butler. The latter dropped for goal – a wretched attempt – but Saunders fumbling he was collared on the line.

From the succeeding scrum the ball came out on the Welsh side, and Gent, slipping round, robbed Saunders and scored near the posts. Romans added the extra points.

There was a capital reply to the restart, and Gloucester obtained a footing in their opponents' half. A penalty, however, to the visitors enabled Davis (who had changed places with Jenkins) to find touch in the Gloucester end with a lovely kick. The same player was to the fore again with more fine kicking, which kept play in the home end.

A smart move by F. Smith, who, following up his kick, collared Saunders beautifully, led to Gloucester setting up a sharp attack, but off-side lost an almost certain try. By the aid of the resultant kick the Welshmen removed play to more favourable quarters, and Rowlands further improved matters.

The Gloucester forwards heeled now, but Stephens, in trying to cut through, was upset. The Welshmen still confined operations to the home 25, but at length Gent started Stephens moving, and a nice pass to Hudson enabled the latter to punt down. Racing hard, F. Smith fielded the ball beautifully in the air at full speed, and making rings round the full back, completed a great run by scoring a try. Romans failed at goal.

The Welshmen dropped out, but Gloucester were soon on the aggressive. Taking advantage of an opponent's wild pass, H. Smith came through and picked up. Running well, he beat the defence in fine style and score behind the posts. Romans, however, missed the easy place. A visitor by some means had been injured just previously, and left the field, but subsequently returned.

Despite the score against them the Welshmen played up vigorously, and owing to a misunderstanding between Romans and Hudson as to who should field the ball, they got very close to the line. Watkins made a determined effort to score on the right wing, but he was pushed to touch. However, a try came a minute later, Davis scoring near the posts after some neat exchanges. The same player converted.

Play to the end was well contested, but there was no further scoring.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal, 4 tries (17 points)
London Welsh 1 goal (5 points)

REMARKS

It was only after great pressure that the Welsh consented to play a serious game, and it was agreed there should be no heavy tackling. Once the players got warm they forgot the hardness of the ground, and the game was keenly contested throughout.

Gloucester owed their victory to cleverness behind the scrum, where Gent, Stephens, H. Smith, and F. Smith were repeatedly in evidence. The latter's try was a beautiful effort, and deservedly applauded, whilst H. Smith's second try was another capital performance.

The Welshmen beat the home forwards badly in the scrums, but the three-quarter line made poor use of the opening made by Rowlands (outside half), who had an efficient partner in Thomas (Cardiff).

"Davis," a well-known Welsh International did excellent service for the visitors both at forward and three-quarter, but none of the other players were greatly distinguished.

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