

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1908

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. PONTYPOOL

CITY DEFEATED BY FOURTEEN POINTS

Gloucester paid their first visit to Pontypool for the return game with the ex-Monmouth League champions. The City were again without Hudson, but C. Smith and F. Welshman returned to the team.

In the first fixture Gloucester were returned winners by 1 goal to nil, but the game was spoiled owing to the dense fog which prevailed.

Pontypool turned out a strong fifteen, and on their own ground had great hopes of reversing the result of the first meeting of the teams.

Teams : —

Gloucester. — F. Welshman, back; F. Smith, G. Cook, H. Smith, and C. Smith, three-quarter backs; W. Dix, J. Stephens, half-backs; G. Vears (capt.), W. Johns, D. Hollands, H. Quixley, G. Holford, B. Parham, G. Griffiths, F. Pegler, forwards.

Pontypool. — Cliff Pritchard, back; Ponty Jones, Jack Jones, J. Evans, E. T. Morris, three-quarter backs; W. Thomas, S. Prosser, half-backs; W. H. Dowell, T. Barnfield, Rees Thomas, W. Watkins, E. Stephens, T. Carter, A. Ransford, H. Jarman, forwards.

THE GAME

Rain had fallen heavily at intervals during the morning, and it was blowing half a hurricane just before the teams fielded.

Vears kicked off down the gradient, and at the first scrummage, Pontypool were penalised for off-side play at half. No advantage was gained by the kick, Jack Jones punting to touch on three occasions lengthily.

Twice Pontypool tried passing, but each time the three-quarters failed to hold the slippery ball. Ponty Jones, however, kicked to touch at Gloucester's 25, and Thomas, the Pontypool half, raced right up to Welshman, who robbed him of the ball and kicked to the open, for Cliff Pritchard to kick to touch.

Gloucester went back to the centre with a rush, and Pontypool again made an unsuccessful attempt to handle. The Pontypool backs tried passing when in their own territory, but Welshman saved well. The speedy Pontypool backs tried the kick and rush game with good results, and then came a typical round of the best Welsh passing by the Pontypool quartet. The halves gave them the ball, and after Jack Jones had made a brilliant opening Jack Evans scored an unconverted try.

Gloucester played up better after this, their forwards, headed by Vears, rushing to the Pontypool 25. The home team drove them back through a good kick by their left wing, and Welshman only getting in a poor reply, play settled at the centre. Here Pontypool tried passing, but "Whacker" Smith intercepted, only to lose the ball when faced by Pritchard.

Just before half-time Pontypool rushed to the Gloucester line, and after clever play at half, Rees Thomas, who was winging, scored Pontypool's second unconverted try.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Pontypool 2 tries
Gloucester Nil

Tom Barnfield re-started for Pontypool, and it was not long before Gloucester were forced to defend within a few yards of the line. Thomas, the Pontypool half, was held up on the line by "Whacker" Smith.

Dowell made a fine run for Pontypool, he also being tackled near the line. Parham relieved with a clever burst for Gloucester, which carried play to the centre, where Pritchard marked and returned. The Gloucester forwards heeled smartly from a scrummage, and when F. Smith received he made a fine run along touch, but was well tackled by Pritchard.

Gloucester were now almost continually on the attack, and Stephens made a gallant attempt to go through, but was well tackled. Then the Gloucester quartette tried passing but the centres could not hold the slippery ball, and a fine dribble by the Pontypool forwards carried play back to midfield.

Again Gloucester went to the attack, but Pontypool drove them back by good passing. Jack Jones failed to hold, or else Pontypool would have probably scored twice. Pontypool attempted further passing but first "Whacker" Smith and then Dix intercepted and saved the situation. Pontypool, however, went back to the line, and Shiglo Thomas getting the ball dodged over with a good try, which Morris failed to convert.

This further success greatly encouraged the homesters. Their forwards played with splendid determination, and combined effectively with the backs, and it was only sheer bad luck that prevented them scoring through Prosser and Jack Jones. Pontypool kept up the attack, and after Dix had been penalised for off-side Pontypool rushed right to the Gloucester line, where Welshman saved well.

Gloucester subsequently conceded a minor and thanks to good kicking by Welshman, Gloucester went on the attack again. With play on the Pontypool line the home forwards heeled, and the ball went out to Jack Jones, who went through with a terrific burst. He raced right up to Welshman, and then passed to Morris, who ran along fifty yards and scored, for Jack Jones to convert.

RESULT :

Pontypool 14 points
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS

Our Pontypool correspondent says : –

The defeat of Gloucester by such a large score caused surprise, but on the run of the play Pontypool deserved to win by an even larger score. They were infinitely the superior side at all points, with the exception of full-back, where Welshman played a fine game.

The Pontypool forwards simply swamped the Gloucester pack with the result that the Gloucester backs had no chance whatever. “Whacker” Smith and Dix were responsible for good defensive play, while Vears and Hollands were the best of a poor front.

GLOUCESTER A v. GORDON LEAGUE

CITY SECONDS BIG WIN

Played at Kingsholm before a small crowd. The Seconds had one or two reserves doing duty behind, W. Hall and Wotton being allowed permission to assist the West End in their Cup match with Whitecroft. The League had a very scratch side doing duty.

Gloucester A. – E. J. Butler, back; J. Beard, W. Egerton, C. Cook, and J. M. Baldwin, three-quarter backs; F. Arthur and B. Norman, half-backs; A. Hawker, J. Wyburn, W. Blackford, W. Berry, H. Wixey, S. Hayward, A. White, and F. Westbury, forwards.

Gordon League. – H. Barnard, back; G. Veale, O. Stephens, F. Brint, and W. Washbourn, three-quarter backs; D. Grant and S. Lucas, half-backs; R. Norman, F. Welshman, A. Foulkes, A. Holford, E. Gardner, W. Langford, G. Austin, and J. Welshman, forwards.

Wretched conditions prevailed, a gale of wind blowing and heavy rain falling when the game commenced. The League had the strong wind behind them, and by good rushing at once took play to the home end.

The Seconds relieved with clever passing, but Cook tried to do too much and was tackled by Barnard with a clear run in for Baldwin. The rain came down in torrents now and rendered the ground in a terrible state.

The League pressed through the aid of kicking, the wind carrying the ball over the line. Gloucester quickly worked out, and a forward burst took them half the length of the ground, and over the line, where Wyburn was credited with a try. Hayward added the extra points.

Following the restart, Beard made a dashing run down touch and passed inside to Westbury, who made further headway. Later the Seconds' backs took part in some clever passing, which ended in Cook scoring easily. Hayward failed with the kick at goal.

Resuming, Arthur was prominent with some smart work, and Hawker put in some good kicks which kept play in the League half. The visitors rushed back, only to see Arthur and Baldwin combine in a good effort. The latter made a praiseworthy attempt to beat the defence, but was pulled down by the full back.

Ensuing play was scrambling and in favour of Gloucester, whose forwards were much too good for their opponents. A dribble by Beard took the Seconds close to the line, and a forward, picking up, was only held up outside. From the ensuing scrum Norman got the ball away, and after a series of exchanges Baldwin raced over in the corner. Hayward was unsuccessful with his shot at goal, though the direction was good.

On the drop-out there was a spell of even play. The Seconds, however, got on the attack again and, from a punt by Egerton, Beard raced up and dribbled past Barnard, scoring easily. No goal resulted.

The game continued to go in favour of Gloucester, and Baldwin, receiving from Cook, got clear, but the slippery ball went clean out of his hands. The interval was then called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester A 1 goal, 3 tries
Gordon League Nil

The League restarted, but with the wind in their favour the Seconds were soon busy in their opponents' 25. The greasy state of the turf and ball handicapped the players considerably, and play at times was very amusing. A smart movement by Egerton put the Seconds in a good position, and Beard went over the line with a try, which remained unconverted.

Then in quick succession Hawker and Beard added further tries, the former after a strong burst clean through the opposition. Hayward goaled in each instance.

After these reverses the League paid a brief visit to the Gloucester end, but they were quickly driven out. The League opposition was very weak, and had the conditions been favourable Gloucester would have piled up an even larger score.

Hawker was conspicuous for some strong runs, from one of which the Seconds only just failed to score. At length Beard was given another chance, and with a clever swerve beat the defence and notched a capital try. Hayward missed the goal.

Gloucester pressed continuously to the other end, and Cook crossed twice, neither try being converted.

RESULT :

Gloucester A 4 goals, 7 tries (41 points)
Gordon League Nil

REMARKS

The Seconds materially added to their aggregate points to-day, but with a dry ground and ball the big score of 41 points would have been considerably augmented.

Despite the unfavourable conditions prevailing, the A teamers gave a bright display, and opened out the game at every possible opportunity.

The League were overwhelmed forward, where Hawker, Berry, and Wyburn were in splendid form, and behind the scrum the League were hopelessly out of it.

Arthur was very clever in feeding his three-quarters, and the men behind him did their work well, some very smart running and passing being witnessed. In the second half, Butler had a very easy task, and to keep himself warm he got up amongst the three-quarters.

JC