

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, MARCH 30, 1908

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S VICTORY OVER NEWPORT

WELSH PRESS COMMENTS

Quite apart from the fact that Newport were beaten, the game was rather disappointing, remarks "Dromio" in the Newport "Argus." In the first half, when the scores were equal, the play was very dull, and lacking in brilliant and finished incidents. In the second half it was rather more lively, but, still, the character of the play was very far below what might have been expected.

Perhaps the fact that the weather was very warm had some effect on the players. Gloucester showed more dash and resolution than Newport, and, I think, also had rather the better of the luck. Several times they got away dangerously with forward rushes, after the ball had been knocked forward, and certainly they were very hard to beat when once they got moving.

On the Gloucester side, the forwards played a dashing game in the loose, but were not quite so good as Newport in the pack. Gent was not as good as Vile in working the scrum, and the outside half had no special distinction, though he fed his three-quarters better than Francis did, and on the one occasion when Gloucester scored from passing, the ball was got away very smartly by the outside half and left centre. Welshman, at full-back, played best in the second half, and did well on the whole.

It is a matter for great regret that Newport have suffered another defeat, but they did not deserve to win on the play, and consequently nothing more can be said. It was a poor game on the whole, and Newport certainly did not quite do justice to themselves.

Apart from the merits and demerits of Saturday's encounter, there was one pathetic feature of the meeting (remarks the "Western Mail."). That old and vivacious three-quarter, known not only to the 'Cestrians, but to the Rugby world, as "Whacker" Smith, had intended to make the engagement his exit from the game. "Whacker" had done eleven seasons for Gloucester. He made his entry against Newport in 1897, and he was anxious to finish in a battle (and a win) against the same club. But misfortune ruled otherwise. He was badly crooked whilst playing against Cheltenham on the previous Saturday, and had to be content with a seat inside the ropes and watch his comrades beat the Usksiders by six points.

Both teams were much below their old-time form. It had been hoped that Newport would go on in the improvement which they showed when they drew level with Cardiff on the Cardiff Arms Park on March 7. But the team was sadly out of joint on Saturday. The Uskside forwards did excellently well. At least, they were as good as the Gloucester pack. In the early stages they were a good deal better.

Burt, at full-back, was successful in the matter of excellent fielding and touch-finding. Why, however, he did not cut off F. Smith, the Gloucester left wing, who, by a one man sprint, scored the first try, needs some explanation. He cannot well be held to blame for allowing Hudson to score the second try, as he had a long way to go to outflank that attack, and Hudson, as most people know, is a slippery man when fairly off.

On the Gloucester side the forwards had a lot of sterling help from Berry, who is built on sturdy lines, and he broke away in this game very cleverly. In the opening bouts Gloucester were very slack in tackling, and if Newport had really pressed their attack home for all they were worth they might have crossed with a try or two. As the game progressed the 'Cestrians put more grit into their work, and sometimes their vigour was very pronounced. But there was very little clean, masterful work. Gloucester won because they were able to turn to the more clever advantage the opportunities which came to them.

Hudson's try was got by his dashing in and intercepting a long pass which Stanley Williams apparently intended to send over to Melville Baker on the other wing.

GLOUCESTER A BEATEN AT NEWPORT

After winning 17 matches in succession, Gloucester A suffered defeat at Newport on Saturday by 9 points to nil, after a keenly-contested game. In the first half (remarks the Newport "Argus") the City Seconds, with the wind in their favour, attacked for most of the time, and brought off some nice rounds of passing, through smart work by Dix and Arthur, but their efforts were not finished enough to bring about a score, and also the defence of the Newport men was good.

In the second half Newport played up much better, and with the forwards heeling more often the backs were afforded chances which they took advantage of. For Gloucester, Butler, at full-back, was safe, kicking finely; while Hall and Cook were the best of their backs, and Dix and Arthur brought off some really smart work at half, and worried the Newport men continually with their untiring efforts.

All their forwards did finely, and taking the game all through, they, as a pack, had slightly the better of the argument. It was the Newport backs who were superior, and they took better advantage of their opportunities.