

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1908

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. PONTYPOOL

CITY AGAIN DISAPPOINTING AT HOME

WIN BY A GOAL KICK

Pontypool, to-day's visitors at Kingsholm, had only once previously appeared at Gloucester, and on that occasion a dense fog completely spoiled the game.

Gloucester were still short of Neale and Elliott, and the Welshmen were without Ponty and Jack Jones, and Jarman.

The weather was fine, but the attendance at the start was only moderate. An excursion from Pontypool brought about 100 spectators.

The kick-off was delayed a quarter of an hour owing to the late arrival of some of the home players.

The teams were : —

Gloucester. — F. Welshman, back; F. Smith, H. Berry, W. Hall, A. Hudson (capt.), threequarter-backs; D. R. Gent, J. Stephens, half-backs; W. Johns, D. Hollands, B. Parham, G. Vears, R. Craddock, G. Griffiths, G. Holford, J. Wyburn, forwards.

Pontypool. — M. H. Williams, back; C. B. Cornhill, E. A. Parkhouse, W. J. Thomas, G. Hirst, three-quarter backs; S. Prosser, R. Lloyd, half-backs; Rees Thomas, E. Williams, A. Russell, T. Carter, E. Stephens, B. Uzzell, J. Davies, G. Carr, forwards.

Referee : Rev. D. T. Jones.

THE GAME

Vears kicked off for Gloucester, and the City forwards getting up Parham secured and put in a short punt, but a visitor rushed the ball to touch. Pontypool were penalised at the first scrum, and Welshman kicked high. The Gloucester men got under the ball, but a knock-on ensued and a scrummage was ordered. The Welshmen wheeled but lost the ball, and Berry gathering he burst through and passed to Hollands, who knocked on with a good opening. Another penalty fell to the City, and Welshman had a shot for goal, but the ball went wide of the posts.

The visitors cleared nicely from a dangerous position, and later a penalty gave them a good slice of ground. In some close scrimmaging Pontypool fairly pushed the City men off the ball, but Berry saved by kicking to touch. A grand break away by the Pontypool front gave the City men considerable trouble. Berry failed to field, and it was only a lucky kick to touch that checked the movement.

Gloucester sent to mid-field, where the visiting halves started a bout of passing. The ball was handled smartly and went right across to Cornhill on the left, who punted. The ball went over the line, but Welshman just got up in time to touch down – a lucky escape.

Gloucester re-started, but the City were immediately beaten for possession in the scrum. Lloyd and Prosser got the ball away beautifully, but Cornhill knocked on with a fairly good opening. Hudson was prominent with some clever kicks, but Pontypool were doing better forward and continually heeling.

In some loose play Berry eventually picked up and burst through, passing to Hall, who lost the ball just as he was clearing an opponent. A nice touch-kick by Prosser put Pontypool well inside the Gloucester half, where some exciting play ended in Hudson gaining ground with a good kick under difficulties. Pontypool rushed back, and the visitors attacked strongly. A long kick went to Welshman, who failed to take at the first attempt, but recovered and found touch with a lovely kick.

Soon afterwards the Pontypool backs were set going, and only a smothering tackle by Hudson prevented a score. More pretty passing by the Pontypool backs looked promising. Cornhill, after racing down the wing, cleverly cross-kicked, and Prosser fielded on the run. He was, however, pounced upon by Gent just as he was looking dangerous.

Gloucester could not get out of their 25, and Lloyd getting possession from a scrum handed out to Prosser, who sent to Parkhouse. The latter cut right inside the Gloucester centres, and though tackled by Welshman he fell over the line and was credited with a try near the posts. The place-kick by Williams failed. Prosser had to retire at this stage with an injured shoulder and Carr came out of the pack to half-back.

With a man short the visitors still held the advantage, and the game continued in the Gloucester half. The City half-backs opened out, but Hall failed to take. Later Hudson was stopped in a great effort to break through at the centre. Cornhill, from a pass by Carr, put in a clever run down the touch-line, which placed Gloucester on the defensive. The same player, with another fine effort, ran right across the ground, the efforts of the home men to bring him down being painfully weak.

Strong forward play gave the Welshmen a good position again, and Hirst, following up his kick, charged down Welshman's reply. The ball, however, rebounded over the line and went dead. Hirst, on receiving from the drop out, tried to make his mark, but he was charged by Craddock and received an injury to his eye, which caused him to leave the field. Thus the visitors were reduced to 13 men, yet Gloucester could claim no advantage. In fact, the Pontypool six were beating the home forwards in all departments.

Once or twice the home front heeled, but the backs shaped indifferently and generally lost ground. Scrambling play ensued, in which Pontypool came out best, but a clever kick by Gent changed the venue.

Near midfield, after one or two mistakes, Berry secured and passed to Stephens. The ball got out quickly to Hudson by way of Hall, and the International putting on full pace rounded Williams and notched a very fine try. Welshman converted, and gave the City the lead.

There was a good response to the re-start, when Hirst returned, and a little later Prosser came back. Thus the teams were equal again. Gloucester played up strongly, but their efforts to beat the defence were not attended with success. Pontypool heeled twice in quick succession, and Lloyd clearing Gent handed out smartly to Parkinson. The latter fed Cornhill, who was nicely thrown to touch by Welshman.

Immediately after the visitors' backs were on the go again, Parkhouse being only tackled in time by Berry, The ball, however, getting loose it was rushed over the line, and Davies credited with a corner try. The place kick failed.

Thus Pontypool regained the lead, and on their play to this point they deserved it. Soon afterwards the interval was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Pontypool 2 tries
Gloucester 1 goal

Pontypool re-started, and after an exchange of kicks Welshman sent to touch at mid-field with a beautiful kick. Centre play followed, ending in more kicking. Williams, fumbling Hudson's return, Johns kicked clear, a fine opening presenting itself. Hirst, however, came along, and with a lucky flying kick sent the ball to touch-in-goal – a fortunate escape.

A scrum was ordered five yards out, and Berry getting possession he tried a drop at goal, but only a minor resulted. Griffiths responded to the drop-out to well inside the Pontypool half, where a Gloucester forward broke away from a line-out. A series of exchanges ensued, but Parham's transfer was a bad one. In some subsequent loose play Hall dribbled through and kicked across, but a visitor again saved with a fluky flying kick. Carr was hereabouts laid out, and had to be carried off.

Resuming, Gloucester attacked through clever work by Stephens. Berry ran strongly and passed to Hall, who whipped out a sharp transfer to Hudson. There was not much of an opening, but the City captain with a determined effort beat Williams and scored a fine try. Welshman failed at goal.

On resuming, neat play by Stephens put Hudson in possession, but the captain lost the ball just as he was going through. In the next minute Stephens opened out again, but Berry held on too long, and was floored by Parkhouse.

Carr now resumed amidst cheers, and was at once prominent. A loose forward rush by Pontypool gained them 20 yards, but Gent recovered with a timely punt to touch. At the centre Gent and Stephens got the ball away prettily to Hudson, who cut through brilliantly. Three men, however, closed round him as he neared the full-back, and he was collared. Hudson managed to pass back, but Johns could not take the ball and a visitor kicked down the field.

Welshman was applauded for couple of fine clearance kicks when hard pressed, but later both he and other players missed finding touch. Pontypool worked into the home half by useful kicks, but Johns, from a line-out, broke away in fine style. He beat the full-back, but being pressed from behind he essayed a pass, which was unfortunately missed, and a grand effort went unrewarded.

Mistakes in fielding by Stephens and another Gloucester player gave the visitors an advantage, but the City eventually cleared. Welshman, recovering after failing to field from a kick, forced a minor, and later this performance was repeated.

Williams, the Pontypool custodian, was at fault a little later, and this allowed Gloucester to get right up to their opponents' line. The City had a good chance of increasing their score, but mistakes accrued at the critical moment.

Gloucester continued to have the better of the exchanges, and Gent, receiving in the loose, dropped for goal. The ball hit the upright and rebounded into the arms of Holford. A try seemed certain, but a mess was made of it and nothing resulted.

Pontypool kicked out of danger, but Hudson replied to Cornhill, who slipped the International and put in a beautiful run, being finally pulled over by Stephens at the centre. Several players got mixed up, and blows were exchanged between Griffiths and an opponent. The referee intervened and the rival players shook hands.

Resuming, Gent was instrumental in putting Gloucester to the Pontypool line, where a City forward was hurt and another stoppage ensued. Immediately on the restart Gloucester had a possible chance on the left wing, but Smith was well tackled by Hirst. On the other wing Hall and Hudson tried to pierce the defence, but without success.

Ensuing play was scrambling, in which the City lost a splendid opening through over-running the ball. The game to the end was vigorously contested, but nothing further was done.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal, 1 try (8 points)

Pontypool 2 tries (6 points)

REMARKS

Gloucester were returned winners, but one is again forced to admit that the City were lucky to do so. On the run of the play, especially in the first half, Pontypool were clearly the superior side, and though the home team improved in the second half, they never really got the measure of their opponents.

To Hudson Gloucester were mainly indebted for their victory, and the captain's two tries stood out among the features of the game. In justice to the visitors, however, it should be said they were short of two men when their first point was registered against them, and Carr was off the field when Hudson scored his second try.

The game at times developed into a regular scramble, and there were numerous mistakes in handling. Pontypool were represented by a sturdy pack, and occasionally they completely over-ran the home eight. In the scrums the City were repeatedly beaten for possession, even when opposed to only six of the visitors.

There must be something radically wrong somewhere to account for this, and changes will have to be made. There is not sufficient vim displayed by some of the players, and laxity in following up was plainly noticeable to-day. Vears set the men an excellent example, but oftentimes he was poorly supported.

Johns individually performed brilliantly, and Holford and Griffiths were prominent for good work. Still the work of the pack as a whole was disappointing, and unless a distinct improvement is forthcoming, Gloucester cannot hope to hold their own in the big matches.

For Pontypool, every man of whom was a keen and resolute worker and full of dash, the veteran Carr, Rees Thomas, and Davies were ever to the fore. The men, without being particularly clever, never gave much away, and they were quick to make the most of any slips – and they were many – on the part of their opponents.

Outside the scrum the Welshmen were a smart set, and in the first half the backs passed beautifully at times. Lloyd was as sharp as a needle at the scrum, and he and Prosser made a particularly lively pair. Gent, handicapped by having to operate behind beaten forwards, was placed at a disadvantage, and there was some excuse for his passes going astray. Stephens did capitally with limited opportunities.

Pontypool were without their two crack three-quarters (the Brothers Jones), but the quartette doing duty on this occasion well maintained the reputation of the club. The wing men – Cornhill and Hirst – were very nippy, the former especially, and Parkhouse was a source of continued danger in the centre.

Gloucester were by no means happy in combination, the passing being slow and ill-timed, and mistakes often occurring. Berry worked hard and successfully up to a point, but his efforts generally ended weakly, his pass either going astray or he held on too long.

Frank Smith was not up to the form he showed at Cinderford, and Hall has done better. Hudson easily stood out above his colleagues, and the captain put in a tremendous amount of work. His two tries have already been referred to.

A word as to the tackling, and forwards and backs are alike concerned. Repeatedly opponents were missed through the old fault of going high. One would have thought the men had been told sufficiently about this weakness but apparently they cannot rid themselves of the habit.

At full-back Welshman and Williams were both seen to advantage. The former was often called upon, but he rarely failed to get himself out of difficulty.

There were quite a large number of players laid out during the game, and the feeling at times was too keen. The exhibition of fisticuffs was especially to be condemned, and it was fortunate the referee took a lenient view of the incident.

GLOUCESTER A v. NAUNTON PARK

CITY SECONDS PILE ON POINTS

Played on the Naunton Park Ground. Gloucester kicked off, playing up the slope. Play started dangerous for Naunton, Gloucester keeping close to the home line and from a scrum securing a try, which was majorised.

The game was of a good character, and from ensuing play Pegler scored behind the posts. Gloucester were soon after credited with a further try, to which the points were added.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 3 goals 2 tries
Naunton Park Nil

In the second half play kept in the home territory, and from a scrum near the line a drop goal was added to Gloucester's score. Soon after Baldwin got another try, the kick going over.

RESULT :
Gloucester A ... 5 goals (1d) 2 tries (30 pts.)
Naunton Park Nil

JC