

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1909

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. SWANSEA

HUDSON'S RETURN

CITY'S GREAT VICTORY AT KINGSHOLM

The annual fixture with Swansea is always regarded with great interest in Gloucester, and the famous All Whites were assured of a hearty welcome at Kingsholm to-day. The City have generally performed well against Swansea, and Gloucester can point to more wins at home over the men from St. Helen's than any of the other crack Welsh teams.

To-day's match had more than the ordinary interest to followers of Gloucester, for it marked the return to the field of the popular captain and International – A. Hudson. After assisting in a few games last year Hudson had to undergo a serious operation, and his career for the remainder of the season was cut short. The fear that it might finish him altogether as regards football, however, was happily removed, and Hudson duly appeared in accordance with his promise, to lead the team against Swansea.

The captain also had with him W. Johns, who was persuaded after all – to the delight of everyone – to turn out again. It was hoped that Maurice Neale would have joined the two Internationals at the same time, but the ex-Bristolian decided to postpone his reappearance for a week or two.

With Elliott on the injured list, Hudson took the centre position, and had for a partner on the wing J. M. Baldwin.

Other changes from the team defeated at Pontypool last week were Egerton for Cook at full-back, and Pearce forward for Hayward, the other player to stand down for Johns being Griffiths who is on the insurance as the result of an injury sustained at Pontypool.

Swansea were short of W. Trew, but footballers will be pleased to hear that the injury to the famous three-quarter is not so serious as was first reported, and it is expected he may after all be able to play again – probably next month.

The weather turned dull after a brilliant morning, but there was an excellent attendance. The teams lined out in the following order, Hudson getting an ovation on leading the home players :

Gloucester. – W. Egerton, back; F. Smith, W. Hall, A. Hudson (capt.), J. M. Baldwin, three-quarter backs; D. R. Gent, J. Stephens, half-backs; G. Vears, W. Johns, H. Berry, W. J. Pearce, D. Hollands, J. Wyburn, G. Holford, Lieut. Carleton, forwards.

Swansea. – J. Bancroft, back; P. Hopkins, W. Hayward, H. Toft, P. Shefford, three-quarter backs; R. M. Owen, R. Jones (capt.), half-backs; D. J. Thomas, G. Hayward, I. Morgan, W. Morgan, I. Williams, D. Davies, B. Davies, H. Hunt, forwards.

Referee : Mr. G. C. Rodway (Midland Counties).

THE GAME

Gloucester won the toss, and the City defended the Dean's Walk goal. For getting in front of the ball on the kick-off, Swansea were called back and a scrum was ordered at the centre. Gloucester got possession and heeled, and Gent, Stephens, and Hall handled, the latter punting to touch inside the Swansea half.

The City made further headway from a line-out, but off-side caused them to be penalised, and Swansea got back.

Breaking up a scrum the home forwards got off with a fine rush, and the Welshmen were hotly pressed. In the loose Johns picked up and threw out a lofty pass which Hall took and sent to Hudson, but the latter failed to field.

Gloucester were pressing strongly when a loose pass was collared by a Swansea man, but Hudson hit up his opponent finely. The City captain was again prominent with a deadly tackle of a visiting forward, which left the game well inside the Swansea half. Here the Gloucester half-backs opened out and the ball was handled smartly along the line. Smith tried hard to get away, but was checked in time. Gloucester again got the ball out, but Hall missed gathering, and Jones picking up ran clear. He was pressed, and then followed a series of sharp exchanges. A wide throw out at the finish, however, spoiled the effort.

Gloucester quickly changed the venue, and the centre was the scene of operations. Gent was conspicuous with a bit of smart relief work under pressure, and then ensued some wild kicking by Gloucester, which fortunately was recovered by Hall.

Taking advantage of a little laxity on the part of the home men, Jones put in a neat run and pass, but a knock-on ensued. A mark by Hudson saw the City captain find touch a couple of yards from the Swansea goal – a good position for the home team. Gent got the ball out nicely, but Hudson tried a drop at goal, which failed.

The drop out was well replied to and later a long kick down by Jones was smartly returned by Egerton. Near the centre Gloucester heeled, and Gent fed Stephens, who dropped the ball, but recovered. A timely pass to Hall saw the centre break through in grand style, and make a lovely opening. Hudson took the next pass and ran straight up to Bancroft. A try looked certain, but the captain sent a bad pass to Baldwin, and a glorious chance went astray. Hudson was tackled by Bancroft, when he got rid of the ball, and there was a slight delay while he recovered.

Resuming, Gloucester kept up the pressure, and in a desperate forward rush Hollands was only held up just outside. In the next minute Gent got the ball out to Hudson, who essayed a drop at goal. The ball hit the upright, and rebounding into play, Hall came along, and gathering nicely scrambled over near the posts amidst tremendous cheering. Egerton landed a neat goal.

Swansea restarted, and play was very fast. Hudson stopped some passing by the visitors, and Gent gathering he put in a left foot punt which found touch well inside the Swansea 25. The City working strongly came near scoring again, Hudson just failing to hold a pass when going at full pace for the line. Then in quick succession Swansea conceded two minors.

On the restart the game was furiously contested, but Gloucester were holding the advantage, especially forward. In some loose play Stephens secured and passed to Hollands, who ran down touch and cross-kicked. There was a fine opening, but Toft got to the ball first and relieved in the nick of time. After this Swansea, thanks to a fine kick by Bancroft, gained the home end. Hudson being collared, let the ball go, which was captured by a visitor who kicked to the line. Hall, however, got back and touched down.

Following the drop-out Jones made a pretty run for Swansea, but his pass went yards behind him, and Gloucester easily cleared. Hopkins next brought off a sharp dash which caused the home defence trouble, but the situation was saved by Johns. For off-side by Gent the All Whites were awarded a penalty in a good position, but Bancroft, to the delight of the crowd, failed to land a goal.

Penalties followed soon afterwards to either side for infringements, as a result of which Swansea gained a footing in the home 25. The City quickly removed play with a grand burst, Swansea being fairly rushed off the ball. The Welshmen retaliated, but in trying to pass they lost ground. A lucky flying kick gave the Welshmen a good position close to the home line, and the visitors worked desperately to effect a score.

A clever ruse by Owen and Jones from a throw out nearly did the trick, a knock-on spoiling the effort. From the next scrum Owen and Jones, with a perfect bit of combined play, enabled the latter to beat the defence and score a good try, which Bancroft goaled. Soon after the restart the interval was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester 1 goal

Swansea 1 goal

Vears resumed, and a visitor knocking on in receiving a scrum followed inside the Swansea half. Gloucester got the ball out, but Stephens failing to pick up he turned the ball to the wing but nothing resulted.

A high punt by a Swansea forward was well followed up, and Gloucester were robbed of the ball. Egerton, however, fielded, and got in his kick to W. Hayward, who made a mark near about the 25 line. Bancroft had a shot for goal, but again kicked wide of the posts, to the relief of the spectators.

On the drop-out, Holford broke away finely from a line-out, and he was well backed up, the result of a strong effort enabling the City to reach the centre. Swansea worked back with a loose rush, Pearce stopping them by dropping on the ball in fearless style.

A lot of loose play followed, ending in Hayward kicking to touch near the home line. The City cleared from this dangerous position, but Owen, opening out, passed to Shefford, who threw to Toft. The latter missed the ball, and Hall dribbled back down touch, being foiled by Toft when getting clear. Some attention now had to be paid by the ambulance men to Pearce, but the Old Boy was able to continue.

On the restart Gent, beating Jones and Owen, got away in smart style and cross-kicked, the ball falling amongst a bunch of men. A Swansea man took a flying kick, to which a Gloucester player replied, and the ball finally went across to Smith on the right wing.

The little Gloucestrian slipped Toft cleverly, and made a dash for the line, but he was overwhelmed by Bancroft and another about a dozen yards from touch. A Swansea player was now knocked out, but he soon recovered.

Gloucester at this point were well in side their opponents 25, but they lost the position through Hopkins intercepting a long pass by Stephens and having a clear field. Had the Swansea man gone straight on he would have had a certain try, but he hesitated and passed, and his confrere was upset ten yards from the goal line – a narrow escape for Gloucester.

An anxious time ensued during the next few minutes for Gloucester, the Welshmen trying hard to score. Gent eased the pressure with a very clever effort, but the Swansea forwards returned, and the City were kept on the defensive. Owen receiving from the scrum, ran round the blind side and fed Hayward, who cross-kicked over the line, a minor resulting.

Soon after the restart, the Gloucester backs indulged in some neat exchanges, and Smith got well off down touch until pulled over by Hopkins. Swansea, who were short of Hunt (forward) worked back a little way, but the City three-quarters were set going again. Hall punted down the field, where Toft secured, but he passed back to Bancroft, who found touch. Hall, in being tackled, received a kick on the wrist, which caused a slight delay.

Resuming, the Gloucester forwards broke away from a line-out in grand style. Hopkins failed to stem the rush, and Stephens picking up there was a capital opening on the left. The half-back, however, stumbled, and threw forward.

Ensuing play was close and keenly contested, neither side being able to gain an advantage. Hollands, from out of the loose, dashed through and passed to Berry, who hit off an opponent, but transferred too slowly to allow of the movement being continued. In the last ten minutes the play was vigorously fought out, Gloucester lasting grandly.

Swansea stuck well to the rivals, but the City held a slight advantage. Gradually Gloucester made headway, Gent putting in some particularly fine work. From a scrum near the Swansea 25 the ball came out on the Gloucester side, and Gent feeding Stephens, the latter judged a nice transfer to Hall, who went away with Hudson on his left. Facing Hayward, the centre yielded to Hudson, who dashed off with only Bancroft to beat. The Swansea custodian met the City captain, but with a tremendous effort Hudson beat his man and got the ball down in the corner with a glorious try. Great cheering greeted the point, which was unconverted.

Swansea restarted, but the end was near. In a scramble Holford and Davies, the Swansea giant, came to blows, but were separated, the referee getting the men to shake hands. Immediately after the end came, and the crowd surged over the field and hailed Gloucester's triumph with resounding cheers.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal 1 try (8 points)
Swansea 1 goal (5 points)

REMARKS

A great and glorious victory, fully deserved and thoroughly merited. Once more the City team have risen to the occasion – as we had every confidence they would – and their splendid efforts were rewarded by a triumph which in every way deserves to rank among the club's best achievements. It was a fitting result on Hudson's re-appearance, and the captain must be a happy man seeing he did so much towards securing the points which led to the downfall of the famous All Whites.

The game was splendidly contested, and not until the closing stages – and after Gloucester had scored their second try – did anything unpleasant take place. The two men concerned apparently lost control of themselves in the heat of the moment, and perhaps there was some excuse, for the excitement at the time was at a high pitch. Fortunately the referee took a lenient view of the incident and refrained from sending the men off.

Gloucester can honestly be hailed as the better team to-day. In the first half the City held a decided advantage, and the occasions the Swansea line was in danger could not be counted on the one hand. All said, the All Whites were very lucky in changing over with honours even.

In the second half Swansea certainly improved, and for one period they were clearly top-dog, and this with a man short in the scrum. At no time, however, did the Welshmen shine conspicuously in combined movements, and a few chances went astray owing to faulty handling. Gloucester came strongly again in the last quarter of an hour, and Hudson's great try – one of his best – was a fitting finale to the great occasion.

As a whole the Gloucester team can be complimented on a very fine achievement. The forwards were opposed to a hefty pack – Ben Davies turns the scale at something like 16 stone, and there were two or three others who were on the heavy side – but the City eight never flinched at the task set them. They were out for the occasion, so to speak, and at all points they more than held their opponents.

In the scrums the City front exceeded expectations, the men getting possession and heeling smartly on frequent occasions. In the loose, lines up, and general play, too, the home forwards were great, every man doing grandly. It is not an occasion to individualise when all shone, and in the general commendation all can take their share. Swansea did not give in without a great struggle, and the All Whites had some splendid workers in their ranks, of whom I. Morgan, Hayward, and Davies were perhaps the more noticeable.

In Owen and Jones Swansea possess a pair of half-backs second to none, but to-day the Internationals held no advantage over Gent and Stephens. Gent, himself a Swansea boy, always shows up well against his countrymen, and on this occasion he surpassed himself. Both in attack and defence Gent performed remarkably well, and he had an able partner in Stephens, who was as keen and sprightly as ever.

Chief interest at three-quarter was, of course, centred in Hudson. It was the captain's first serious game, and anxiety was felt in some quarters as to whether he would be able to stand the hard knocks natural in such a contest. the International, however, soon allayed all fears, and his great effort at the finish clearly proved that he has lost none of his dash.

Hudson did great things in tackling in the first half, and he had a lot to do with the bottling up of the Swansea passing. In attack he spoiled one certain try through failure to get the ball to Baldwin, but he made up for this mistake afterwards. Hudson's presence seemed to back up the whole of the back division, and very little was given away.

Hall was very nippy, and he made two or three nice runs and kicked well. His tackling, too, was above board. Frank Smith and Baldwin, on the respective wings, were fully equal to the occasion, and made the best use of their opportunities.

The City backs got in some nice passing bouts, and on the whole shaped better than the visitors, for whom Hopkins was the pick. He, however, threw away a certain try in the second half, when after running half the length of the field, he eased up and passed.

At full back Bancroft played a delightful game, and Egerton came through his first big trial with great credit. Both kicked a good length, and the occasions when the ball was mis-fielded were very few. Judging by Egerton's display to-day, Gloucester will not lose much by Cook's migration to Abertillery.

A boy named Mann, of Suffolk-street, was forced over the ropes during the excitement of Hudson scoring his try, and was trampled on by the crowd. The ambulance men attended and discovered that he had his leg broken.

GLOUCESTER A v. MORELAND'S
SECONDS SCRATCH THE MATCH
EIGHT PLAYERS CRY OFF

Gloucester A should have met Moreland's at Hempsted to-day, but on Friday evening the Seconds' captain was left with only seven men, the eight other selected players (six backs and two forwards) having cried off for various reasons.

The Gloucester Club, by arrangement with the local teams, have the call on any of their players, but to fill so many vacancies almost at the last moment would have disorganised the locals – a position hardly warranted. The City therefore reluctantly decided to scratch the game with Moreland's.

We understand a letter was sent to Moreland's officials regretting the unfortunate position and explaining matters. The suggestion of a Gloucester Committeeman that complimentary tickets be sent to Moreland's players to witness the Swansea match was, we believe, carried out.

JC