

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22, 1910

FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER v. PONTYPOOL

Bright, though cold weather prevailed for the return match between these clubs at Kingsholm.

Friday night's severe frost had made the ground hard, and though the sun improved the conditions there was a lot of bone in the turf.

The visitors were inclined to the opinion that the ground was not fit, but the referee was in favour of the game being played, and the teams accordingly turned out.

Hudson and Barnes (both on the injured list) were absent from the City three-quarter line, and Pontypool lacked the services of J. Evans, Rees Thomas, and a couple of other forwards.

The teams were : –

Gloucester. – W. Egerton; W. Washbourne, W. Hall, J. Hamblin, and W. J. Vance; D. R. Gent and J. Stephens; G. Vears, W. Johns, H. Berry, D. Hollands, J. Wyburn, W. J. Pearce, G. Holford, and W. Nelmes.

Pontypool. – Morris Williams; W. J. Thomas, T. Browning, A. James, and H. Pritchard; S. Prosser and R. Lloyd; T. Carter, E. Stephens, T. Davies, E. Onions, E. Williams, G. Johns, Gus Carr, and F. Cook.

Referee : Mr. G. C. Rodway (Midlands).

THE GAME

Pontypool kicked off against the sun, and an exchange of kicks left the game at mid-field. The Welsh forwards rushed from a line out, but they were checked before going far. Gloucester replied finely, and carried play back to the centre. Here the City forwards heeled, and Gent, being unable to pick up, toed the ball to Stephens. The latter fielded grandly, and missing Hall threw out wide to Hamblin, who cut through, and timing a nice inside pass to Gent, the International raced home and scored in a good position. Egerton failed at goal.

Pontypool resumed, and the Gloucester backs were at once in possession. The movement was carried out smartly, but Vance failed to take from Hall, and a visitor kicked to touch at mid-field. From a high punt by Lloyd, Holford fielded beautifully, and got in a fine reply, for which he was heartily cheered.

A good rush by the Pontypool forwards tested Egerton, but in some loose play Wyburn secured and came away with a grand burst. He reached Williams, but trying to punt his kick was charged down. The same player, a minute later, was again in evidence, and being well backed up the Pontypool line was in danger. Johns, fielding on the run, looked a likely scorer, but he was checked a few yards outside. In a subsequent scramble, however, the ball was taken over the line, and Pearce credited with a try. No goal resulted.

On the re-start, Pontypool twice showed up with passing bouts, but the tackling was keen and nothing resulted. Well-judged kicking by Gloucester gained them a footing in the Welshmen's half, but the ground was lost by faulty handling. Mistakes in fielding by home players allowed Pontypool to get dangerous, and the City lines had a narrow escape.

A penalty against Pontypool gave Gloucester relief, and a combined rush by the forwards, in which Johns shone, took them well inside the Welshmen's half. Here some loose footwork looked promising for the City, but the forwards over-ran the ball.

Berry, by good following up, brought down Williams in possession, but the ball getting loose a visitor cleared well. The greasy state of the surface of the ground caused the players to make numerous mistakes in handling.

At length Johns opened out cleverly, and Hamblin and Washbourne made a praiseworthy effort to beat the defence, but were unsuccessful. For a time Pontypool were hard pressed, but they changed the venue with a loose rush, which took them to the Gloucester 25. A round of passing followed, and Gloucester neatly escaped.

From their line the City cleared by the aid of Berry, but the Welshmen returned. Centre play followed, and from a line-out Wyburn secured and dashed off at a good pace. He beat Williams nicely, and finished up a run more than half the length of the ground by scoring behind the posts. Egerton converted this time, and Gloucester were eleven points up.

Resuming, Gloucester at once showed up with a neat bit of combination. Hall finally punted down the field, and Washbourne getting up forced Williams to touch on the 25 line. Soon afterwards Hamblin took a drop for goal, but did not meet with success. The visitors pluckily kicked out, and Gloucester were again in the ascendant. Pontypool, however, gained relief by touching down.

Gloucester, on the drop-out, confined play to their opponents' half. Hollands was prominent with a lovely dribble to near the line, when he again picked up and dropped over, but was given off-side. The penalty enabled Pontypool to clear nicely, but Berry, with another fine bit of footwork, came back, experiencing hard lines in losing the ball when nearly clear. To the interval play was evenly contested.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester 1 goal, 2 tries
Pontypool Nil

Vears re-started, and Hollands gathering beautifully dashed through, only to be upset before going many yards. Off-side by the visitors gave the City a penalty, but little resulted by the kick, and operations settled in the Pontypool half. Gloucester made headway from a throw-out, getting very close before being checked. A pass out from the scrum to Hamblin saw the centre attempt to break through, but he was tackled and lost the ball. Pontypool, taking advantage, rushed to mid-field, when a knock-on stopped them. Then, seizing an opening, Hall dribbled through prettily, and Wyburn taking the ball over the line, Holford raced up and scored, Egerton goaling.

On the re-start Johns showed up with a great dash and pass to Wyburn, who went on and dropped the ball. The City forwards took up the movement, and Pontypool had a very hot time.

Stephens, receiving from Gent, Hall was served, and he cut through and passed to Vance, but the wing man missed.

Gloucester kept up the pressure, and next Hall, when going well, slipped and fell. Pontypool eased the pressure slightly, but Gloucester came back with a grand bit of play. Johns, Wyburn, and another shone in this, and the City appeared to have a try in view, but Pontypool saved right on the line.

Gloucester missed a couple of possible openings after this, and then Pontypool had a better share of the game, getting inside the home half for the first time. From a scrum Gent beat Lloyd cleverly, and gathering on the run ran and passed to Stephens. Hall was next in possession, but could not quite get over. A pass to Hamblin, however, enabled the latter to run over behind the posts. No goal resulted. Hall was injured in falling to the ground, and had to be carried off the field. Pearce came out to three-quarter when play was continued.

Gloucester had the better of the exchanges, and from one desperate rush they came near scoring. Pontypool, by the aid of a couple of frees, gained relief, and then Hall returned to the field. Pearce showed up with a nice run, going through smartly, but his pass was not taken.

Playing up strongly, Pontypool attacked, but Gloucester, with a round of passing, got back. Hall, however, did not give Vance a chance. From this point Pontypool got well down, and from a line-out T. Davies crossed in the corner, but Williams failed at goal.

There was some keen work by both teams on the re-start, but play was very even. Gloucester once or twice opened out cleverly, Stephens being able to take the ball at any angle. The third line, however, could not finish off his good work.

A smart movement by Berry, Johns, and Vears looked promising, but the former sent a bad pass to Holford, and a possible score went astray.

Pontypool, playing up keenly, set up an attack on the home lines, but only a minor resulted.

Gloucester prevented a return to the drop-out, and soon after Hall brought off an exceedingly pretty run, finally succumbing to numbers.

Before the end Pontypool tried hard to ease the decisiveness of their defeat, but to no purpose, and the end arrived with Gloucester substantial winners.

RESULT :

Gloucester 2 goals, 3 tries (19 points)

Pontypool 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

The City took ample revenge for their defeat at Pontypool early in the season. The Welshmen were a thoroughly beaten side, especially at half-back, where Gent and Stephens gave a wonderful display on the treacherous ground. Had Gloucester's third line been up to standard there is little doubt the score would have been appreciably augmented.

The Pontypool forwards had the advantage in weight in the scrums, but at no point could they hold the City eight, who were brilliant at times. In the lines out and loose Gloucester were especially noticeable, and the whole of the players shone at intervals.

Johns, perhaps, was the most prominent, the International doing fine work in the open, but Holford, Berry, Wyburn, Pearce, and Vears were all good. Wyburn's try from near half way was an eye-opener, and on two other occasions the same player displayed remarkable facility in clearing opponents.

In the scrums the City had the greater share of the ball, and, as already indicated, Gent and Stephens were great. The latter opened up the game beautifully, but a feature of his play was the manner in which he took all sorts of transfers and gathered the ball from the ground on the run.

With two second teamers at three-quarter Gloucester were rather weakened, but Hamblin by no means did badly. He started well, and the first try came as the result of a smart break through on his part. Hamblin's chief weakness appears to be inability to keep on his feet, and a tendency to break inwards instead of passing out to his wing man.

Hall did a lot of clever kicking and made some neat openings, but he failed to feed Vance to the best advantage, and the City right wing again had practically an idle afternoon in attack. Egerton played a much better game than on Thursday, his kicking showing improvement.

Carr, Stephens, and Onions were prominent in the Pontypool pack. The whole eight worked hard, but they did not possess the pace and cleverness of the home men.

Lloyd and Prosser, at half, performed creditably, but they were not in the picture to the same extent as the Gloucester pair. In the third line Browning and Thomas were the more serviceable, the latter displaying praiseworthy dash. Williams kicked a fine length at full-back, and in other departments shaped well.

OLD BOYS v. GLOUCESTER A

Owing to the hardness of the ground, this match, to have been played at Sandhurst, was abandoned.

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