

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1911

## RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v PENYGRAIG

CITY OPEN WELL

THE WELSHMEN BEATEN HANDSOMELY

After a week's delay owing to the unfitness of the ground, the season was opened at Kingsholm, when Gloucester received a visit from Penygraig, who came into the City club's list owing to the disbandment of Lydney.

The welcome rain on Wednesday did a lot of good to the ground, but the playing pitch was still very much on the hard side.

Gloucester had a good leaven of old players doing duty, but owing to the injury to C. Cook, and the absence of Barnes, Johns, and Pegler, places were found for H. Hancock (who last season assisted Northampton), W. Staunton (a promising local centre), and S. Smart (regarded as the coming forward).

Stanley Cook, who made a few appearances for Gloucester last season, but who unfortunately was injured and had to retire, accepted an invitation to play, and appeared centre to Hudson. The visitors were well represented.

The teams lined out in good time as follows :—

Gloucester : H. Hancock; A. Hudson (capt.), S. C. Cook, W. Staunton, and W. Washbourne; W. Dix and W. Hall; G. Vears, G. Holford, H. Berry, S. Smart, A. Lodge, N. Hayes, G. Griffiths, and E. Yates.

Penygraig : T. Bateman; J. Davies, D. W. Griffiths (captain), W. A. Tiley, and T. Davies; W. Blyth and I. Thomas; T. Perkins, D. James, E. Evans, Ben Thomas, P. Morgan, I. Isaacs, T. Cox, and C. Coombes.

Referee : Mr. J. Southby (Bristol).

## THE GAME

There was only a moderate attendance when Penygraig started, Gloucester having the powerful sun in their faces. Early on Yates opened out nicely from a line-out, and Cook kicked down the field, but the Welshmen saved. A mistake by J. Davies allowed Gloucester to get up, and Hudson punting forced a minor.

After the drop-out the City forwards heeled, and Dix fed Hall cleverly. The latter ran and punted, only to see a visitor make his mark. Immediately after Dix opened out again, and Hudson cut through from Hall's pass, but sent wide of Washbourne.

More neat passing by the Gloucester backs promised well, Staunton and Cook shining, but Washbourne just failed to get through. The visitors were pressed severely, but a case of mis-handling allowed the Welshmen to clear. Gloucester got back, Dix, Hall, Hudson, and Staunton handling cleverly. The recruit tried hard to break through, but was well tackled. Then for an infringement Penygraig were penalised, and Hancock taking a shot for goal covered the cross-bar with a lovely kick.

The Welshmen restarted, and following an exchange of kicks Dix sent the ball over the line for another minor. Resuming, Penygraig were again penalised for glaring off-side play at the scrum, but this time Hancock failed to kick a goal. Following a short spell of play at the centre the home halves opened out, and Hudson dashed through finely, sending to Staunton, who made headway, and threw to Washbourne. The wing man, however, was bored to touch outside.

A scrum ensued a minute later, and Dix getting the ball away to Hall, the latter wriggled past the opposition and scored the first try of the season amidst cheers. The place-kick failed.

On the re-start Dix worked the blind side of the scrum prettily, but passed forward to Hall. The latter immediately after brought off a clever run, but was legged when he appeared likely to get clear. Hudson, with a sharp dash, was next prominent, but the subsequent passing went astray, and a good effort was wasted.

By the aid of a rush Penygraig gained a footing in the home end, but Berry headed a dribble back. He cleverly sent the ball past the custodian, and Holford raced on and tackled the man who picked up. Gloucester got very near after this, and rushed over the line, but only a touchdown was recorded.

After the drop-out Griffiths got the ball away nicely from a line, but a subsequent transfer went right behind Staunton, and Penygraig, taking advantage, took the game to the City 25. Gloucester quickly worked out, and then came a beautiful round of passing instituted by Holford. It looked worlds on a try, for Staunton ran to the full-back before passing, but Washbourne dropped the ball. Gloucester continued to have most of the play, and were busily attacking.

Another possible chance was missed in the right corner, and when Hudson did cross, from a movement by Staunton, he was called back, the ball having previously gone to touch. Ensuing play was somewhat slack, the home team lacking that very finish to effect a score.

From a lovely run by Hall, Hudson was given a fine opening, but the captain had the ball knocked out of his hands when going straight for the posts. Penygraig came away after this, and profiting by some loose play by the home men got beyond the centre, when the interval was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester ..... 1 goal (p) 1 try  
Penygraig ..... Nil

Vears resumed for Gloucester, and there being no return the City at once secured a good position. Dix, after some neat footwork down touch, picked up and passed to Yates, who dodged to the line and then yielded to a colleague, but the ball was misfielded.

At the next scrum Penygraig were penalised, but from a favourable position Hancock missed the goal.

Gloucester continued on the aggressive, but the backs could not combine effectively. Eventually Dix and Hall cut out a fine opening for Hudson, who burst through, and running round scored in the far corner. The captain missed the goal kick.

Immediately after the drop-out the Gloucester backs shone in some pretty exchanges, but Washbourne just failed to get through.

The City kept up a hot pressure, and Dix feeding Hall, the latter gave to Staunton who, with a determined run, beat the opposition and scored near the posts. Hall landed the goal points.

Griffiths replied to the restart with a good touch-finder, and Penygraig were again confined to their half. The visitors punted out, but Hancock returned well, and then followed some scrappy play.

From a clever cross-kick by Staunton, Gloucester had a clear opening in front of the posts, but Griffiths knocked on in trying to gather, and a fine chance was lost.

A free to the Welshmen enabled them to gain some 20 yards, but Hudson recovered the ground with a strong dash. A risky pass by the captain a minute later enabled Penygraig to reach the home 25, where Staunton broke away finely and passed to Berry. The latter gave to Dix, who being pressed sent to Washbourne, who had an unopposed run over. Hudson took the kick at goal in front of the posts, but sent under the bar.

Despite the adverse score against them, Penygraig played up pluckily, but their backs were only of moderate class. Getting the ball from the half-backs, Washbourne threw out wide to Hudson, who going strongly crossed in the corner. Hall missed the goal points.

Gloucester were soon attacking again through Hudson, and after W. Hall had just missed, the captain notched his third try. Holford this time took the place-kick, but another failure was recorded.

Gloucester were now doing pretty well as they liked, and some good work was shown. Inside the 25 mark Hall was given possession by Dix, and the outside half manœuvring for position dropped a beautiful goal with his left foot.

Some good kicking by Bateman on the restart gave Penygraig a footing in the home quarters, but the Welshmen were never dangerous.

Berry, Holford, and Vears showed up prominently in subsequent play, and Gloucester gradually gained the upper hand. Dix, getting away on his own, reached the full-back before being upset, but some useful touch-kicking by the visitors gained relief.

Gloucester attacked again, but were beaten off, and nothing further resulted.

#### RESULT :

Gloucester ... 3 goals (1d 1p) 5 tries (27 pts.)  
Penygraig ..... Nil

#### REMARKS

A very satisfactory opening indeed, despite the moderate opposition. Penygraig had a bustling lot of forwards, and a good full back, but the team as a whole were a bit out of their class. The backs especially were wholly lacking in the finer points of the game, and the few attacks attempted failed dismally.

Gloucester's form all round was decidedly encouraging, and the team should train on into a very strong combination. It was only to be expected in the first game that mistakes would be made, but when the players are better together we ought to see some fine football. The errors committed to-day can easily be rectified with a little more finish in handling.

With only one newcomer in the pack it was fully expected the forwards would do well, and the men under Gordon Vears' leadership did not disappoint. They were splendid in the open, used their feet well, and were fast on the ball. The vice-captain kept the players at it all through, and he himself set an example for hard work. Holford and Berry showed no falling away for brilliance in the open, and Yates, Hayes and Griffiths used their opportunities to good advantage. The recruit (Smart) is a capital worker and very fast, and his initial display fully bore out opinions formed as to his ability.

With regard to the half-backs, Dix and W. Hall combined as if they had been playing together all summer. Dix had a worrier opposite him, and one who was continually off-side, but the Gloucester scrum half continually out-manceuvred his opponent and got the ball away with precision. Hall gave evidence of fully retaining the brilliant form which gained him so much prominence last season. He initiated attacking movements with splendid judgment, and going on his own occasionally brought off several fine runs. His dropped goal was a beauty, and showed his cleverness and resource.

Dealing with the three-quarters, it was pleasing to see Stanley Cook back in the line, and showing most promising form; whilst Staunton's first display with the Seniors was most encouraging. Cook has plenty of dash, a nice pace, and can handle well, and if he can play regularly Gloucester need worry no further as to a centre for Hudson. Staunton is only a youngster, but the ex-Tredworth lad has plenty of confidence, and he clearly showed to-day he has the knowledge of what is required of a centre.

Penygraig was not much of a test for the Second teamer, but judged on to-day's showing Staunton is certainly a player to be persevered with. Hudson got plenty of work to do, and the captain exhibited a keenness and dash which promise well for the future. He made a good start with three tries, and several strong runs he contributed greatly pleased the crowd. Washbourne was not greatly distinguished, but he made two or three good attempts to score.

All round the three-quarter work was very praiseworthy, and with greater efficiency, which should come with more practice, the line ought to do well.

Hancock deputised creditably for C. Cook, who I understand will not be fit until the London Welsh match. Bateman did well as custodian for Penygraig, but the other backs were of moderate class.

Scorers for Gloucester : Hudson 3 tries, Hall, Staunton, Washbourne 1 each; Hall dropped goal; Hancock penalty goal.

Next week : Devon Albion, at Kingsholm – a big task, but the City will be ready for their powerful opponents.

JC