

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1911

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v SWANSEA

WELSHMEN BEATEN AT KINGSHOLM

A DESPERATE GAME

The famous All Whites made their annual appearance to-day at Kingsholm, where, by-the-bye, they had not been on the winning side since 1905-6, when Gloucester were beaten by a try to nil. The previous season Swansea also triumphed by a similar margin. In the last four matches the City won 8-3; drew, nothing scored; won 9-5; and won 13-6. With this encouraging record, therefore, Gloucester entered the contest with plenty of confidence, despite the fact that Willie Hall and J. Hamblin were both unable to play owing to injuries.

During the week C. Cook and Dix were also doubtful, but were fortunately able to turn out. In place of W. Hall at outside half, Gloucester had the services of his namesake, A. Hall (Cinderford), the Forest Club gladly giving permission.

It was a happy coincidence that Cinderford were represented in the game, seeing that the match was set apart for a collection on behalf of the widow and six children of the late Alfred Teague, the well-known Cinderford and County player.

Forward, P. Symonds, who has been playing well for the Seconds and Gloucester Old Boys, made his debut for the premiers in a first-class match. Swansea were below strength – the absentees including Trew, Haydn Evans, Hayward, and Goff.

The afternoon was beautifully fine, and there was a large attendance when the teams took the field as follows : –

Gloucester. – C. Cook, back; A. Hudson, W. Staunton, L. Hamblin, W. Washbourne, three-quarter backs; W. Dix, A. Hall, half-backs; G. Vears, G. Holford, H. Berry, F. Pegler, J. Meadows, S. Smart, A. Lodge, P. Symonds, forwards.

Swansea. – J. Bancroft, back; T. Williams, H. Lewis, W. Waters, F. Holbrook, three-quarter backs; R. M. Owen, W. J. Lewis, half-backs; D. J. Thomas, Ivor Morgan, –. Hollingdale, T. Morgan, Rev. A. Davies, E. Smith, H. Moulton, Ike Williams, forwards.

Referee : Mr. J. H. Miles

THE GAME

Vears kicked off, Gloucester having the sun in their faces. The return was charged down, and play settled at the centre. Swansea heeled from the first two scrums, but little ground was gained, Cook marking from a high punt and returning well.

Gloucester getting the ball, Dix and Hall opened out. Hamblin cut through smartly and sent out a wide pass to Hudson, but the transfer was forward. From the next scrum Hall took a high pass from Dix and brought off a strong bust, but eventually succumbed to numbers.

Morgan changed the venue with a smart bit of footwork, but Pegler, securing from a line-out, punted across, Bancroft relieving in the nick of time. A combined rush by the Swansea front took them past the centre, and the position was further improved by neat kicking.

Gloucester worked out a bit and Dix started passing, but Staunton dropped the ball. Owen picked up and some neat exchanges followed, but the situation was saved. Swansea were in a good attacking position, and taking advantage of some loose passing the visitors got very dangerous. The Welshmen attacked strongly by smart passing, and the City had all their work cut out to defend.

Cook was pressed once right on the line, and his kick being charged down things looked ominous. The City custodian, however, managed to get in a flying kick to touch. Immediately after Owen broke away on the blind side and served Waters nicely, but Hudson and Cook pushed the visitor to touch just outside. Then from a kick over the line Gloucester conceded a minor.

Gloucester dropped out, the ball bouncing into touch beyond the centre. Bancroft saved well from a forward burst, and then a kick down the field went to Cook, who replied with a lovely touch-finder. Swansea continued to get the ball in the scrum, and Lewis, with short punts, gave the Welshmen the advantage territorially.

The Gloucester forwards at length heeled, and Hamblin punted hard, only to see Bancroft return to touch. Swansea made headway by the aid of Holbrook, and the City were again placed on the defensive. Morgan was twice dangerous in open movements, and then from a flying kick over the line the Welshmen just failed to score.

Swansea continued to play smart football, and the City were kept busily defending. Several times the visitors got very close, but the defence held out. From one desperate attack Gloucester cleared, Hamblin kicking and sending to touch at the centre. Here, Holford got off with a fine dribble, taking the ball past Bancroft. Holbrook, however, got back and saved the situation. From the next kick Cook marked and had a shot for goal, but the ball was charged down. Gloucester were away immediately after, Smart and Holford shining in a grand burst.

A visitor picked up and threw back, but the ball went astray, and Holford gathering he threw out wide to Hudson, who raced on and scored a fine try. Cook failed at goal. As Hudson scored Howell Lewis, with no one near him, slipped down and injured his ankle, necessitating his leaving the field. When the game was resumed Morgan came out to centre three-quarter, but as he had been acting as rover previously, he was not missed in the pack.

Hamblin replied to the drop-out, and play was hotly contested in the Swansea half. A splendid forward rush by the City was checked, and an attack by the backs was also warded off. Gloucester, however, continued in the ascendancy, and from a kick by Hudson, the ball struck a Swansea man who was lying on the ground, and put all the City forwards on-side. Bancroft, as a consequence, was hotly pressed, but he managed to get the ball to touch. Gloucester kept pegging away, and Owen getting off-side Cook had an easy shot for goal, but he sent wide of the posts, and Holbrook touched down.

Swansea re-started, and centre play followed. Hudson missed a pass from Staunton, and Swansea kicked to Cook, who recovered a slight mistake in gathering and found touch with a nice punt. Hall, from a pass by Dix, broke away and fed his three-quarters, Hudson sending well down the field.

Swansea worked back owing to faulty play behind on the part of Hudson, but Berry soon recovered with a dashing effort from a line-out. The City man cross-kicked, but Holford was pushed over when about to field the ball, though the referee apparently did not see the incident.

The Gloucester forwards shone in another fine burst, W. J. Lewis being temporarily laid out in checking. Howell Lewis had now returned, and Swansea had their full complement again on the field. The home team had the better of the exchanges to the interval, but there was nothing further of any importance.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Gloucester	1 try
Swansea	Nil

Bancroft resumed for Swansea, Cook returning well to touch. Gloucester heeled from the first scrum, but Hall was out of position to take Dix's pass, and the ball rolled to Cook, who, though pressed, got in his kick. Howell Lewis, who had been limping from his injury in the first half, again went off, Morgan figuring at three-quarter.

Gloucester at once heeled, and Hall receiving the Cinderfordian went straight through, but he sent a low pass to Hamblin, and the latter could not gather. Clever play by Owen and Holbrook took Swansea into the home 25, where Gloucester were penalised. Bancroft had a shot for goal, but a splendid kick went wide of the posts. Swansea returned to the attack on the drop-out, and following neat passing Morgan beat several opponents, and running close to the line passed and Thomas scored in the corner. Bancroft failed at goal.

Following the re-start Gloucester showed up strongly, but Swansea through Owen and Lewis, obtained the advantage again. A long transfer from Owen to Morgan secured a good opening, but the tackling was safe. Then Hamblin, marking from a cross kick, enabled Gloucester to gain relief. Cook assisted the City further with some well-judged kicks to touch, and for a time play was even at midfield. In tackling an opponent Vears was laid out, but he was soon able to resume.

From the next scrum Gloucester heeled, and Dix fed Hudson, who came through strongly, but was smartly upset. Dix, with a pretty dribble away from Owen, gained a nice bit of ground, and Washbourne and Lodge further improved, and a combined rush by the City forwards looked promising, Bancroft saving cleverly. Again the City got on the attack with passing, but the ball went astray, and Swansea cleared. Working desperately the home front got in some splendid rushes, but a bad mistake by Hudson spoiled all the good work, Swansea being allowed to reach the home 25. The forwards again retrieved the position, but when the backs were again set going Staunton this time fumbled badly. Swansea got in a sharp passing movement which tested Cook, but the home custodian was safe, and though tackled he passed back to Dix who found touch cleverly.

Ensuing play was fast and exciting. Gloucester got in a good effort on the left wing, and then Berry cross kicked, but Holbrook fielded and ran and punted to touch. Dix came back with a splendid dribble, keeping the ball in play very cleverly. He was fouled by Holbrook right in front of the grand stand, but the illegality went unpunished.

In the centre Hall fumbled a pass from Dix and allowed Swansea to again get into the home quarters. Here the City opened out, Hall being prominent with a strong run. He passed low but a flying kick took the ball past Bancroft. Holbrook, however, got across and turned the ball to touch a few yards from the line.

Gloucester were in a splendid position, but the attacks were met with a great defence, the tackling being terrific. Gloucester, however, were not to be put off, and they kept pegging away. In the home 25 Swansea started passing, but Morgan threw back wildly. Staunton took advantage and sent the ball to the line, where Bancroft failed to gather, and the Gloucester man dropped over the line with a try. Cook landed a goal amidst great cheering.

Swansea resumed and the game was more exciting than ever. Swansea set up a warm attack, but the City defence was great. Before the end Gloucester cleared their lines, and when the end came the contest was being waged at midfield.

RESULT :

Gloucester 1 goal, 1 try (8 points)
Swansea 1 try (3 points)

REMARKS

It was a fine win for Gloucester, who are to be congratulated on once more upsetting the All Whites. All the same the game was not up to standard, though keenness and vigour were by no means absent. One missed that scientific back play usually associated with Swansea, and the City appeared equally off colour in combination behind.

In the early stages the Welshmen were clearly superior, and with their old-time cleverness at three-quarter I am afraid the City would not have had a clean account at the end of the first quarter.

Forward Gloucester were continually being beaten in the scrums, but the men subsequently found their feet, and there was a vast improvement in the second half. Hudson's try was a good one, but it was Holford who worked out the opening.

After Swansea drew level there was a terrific tussle for supremacy, but except for brief periods Gloucester were on top. It was near the end before the City secured the winning points, but prior to Staunton scoring the Welshmen's lines had some narrow escapes. The Gloucester forwards got in some telling rushes at times, and only a stout defence could have held out against such persistent attacks.

Swansea did not suffer much in the pack by the withdrawal of Ivor Morgan, for before Lewis' retirement the International seldom put his head in the scrummage. Morgan, at his own particular game, has no superior, and he was the most dangerous man on the field. When operating at three-quarter he contributed some splendid runs, the home players continually failing to hold him. Swansea owed their try mainly to Morgan, and he was nearly through on several occasions.

The rival packs were well matched after the first twenty minutes. There was some desperate work on both sides, and the tackling, when the men did get to close quarters, was not of the kid-glove order. Gloucester shone repeatedly in loose rushes, and there was some clever footwork at times. Holford was splendid again in all phases of the game, and Smart, Berry, Pegler, and Vears were noticeable for special mention.

Swansea were a fast and determined lot, of whom Thomas, Davies, and Moulton were prominent.

The struggle at half-back was interesting. Owen showed no loss of form, and Dix compared very favourably with the veteran International. A. Hall put in a lot of sound work, and he took some stopping when on the move. His service to the men behind, however, was again slow, and Hudson and his colleagues were never able to make full use of his dashes through.

Lewis, Swansea's outside half, did rather too much kicking, but perhaps he played the game under orders. The three-quarter work on both sides was never brilliant, and there was no outstanding figure. Hamblin was very safe, cool and confident, but Staunton could not accept his passes. Late in the second half Hudson changed places, but the captain was none too happy in the position, and made several mistakes. Washbourne got very little to do, but he kept an eye on Holbrook.

Cook's return at full-back was watched with interest. His injured leg appeared to fully stand the test, and he kicked all through with splendid length and judgment. In all respects he was quite the equal of Bancroft, which is a distinct compliment to the Gloucestrian.

Try-getters for Gloucester : Hudson and Staunton, Cook converting one.

Next week : Pontypool, at Kingsholm.

As a result of the collection at Kingsholm, the sum of £13 10s. 4d. was realised for the Teague Fund. The Committee of the Fund desire to thank the Gloucester Club and the subscribers for the very excellent response to the appeal.

W. Washbourne will take the place of C. Kingston in the Gloucestershire team against Hants., at Cheltenham next Wednesday. In the event of W. Hall not being fit, J. Baker (Cinderford) will partner his club-mate (A. Hall) at half-back.

JC