

THE CITIZEN

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FOOTBALL

GLOUCESTER'S DEFEAT AT LLANELLY

The extent of the margin in Llanelly's favour against Gloucester on Saturday came as rather a surprise to the 'Cestrians' supporters, and, truth to tell, it was a bit of a facer. But it must be remembered that there were extenuating circumstances, and it was very hard lines on Gloucester having to go to meet the Scarlets on their own ground with a somewhat disorganised team. Six absentees mean a great difference to any team.

The forwards were beaten by the rushing tactics of the Llanelly front, but the worst feature unfortunately was behind the scrums, where the passes were lobbed out very poorly. Holford, who was captain for the day, worked like a veritable Trojan, and it was no fault of his that the Llanelly front kept getting away. Hall had a stiffish task at the back of the scrum, but although to some degree handicapped by slow passes, he got out of the difficulty very well, and created a most favourable impression among the Welshmen.

Cook got through a great deal of work in excellent style, and his fielding and kicking, with a treacherous ball, were up to his best recent form; in fact, he found touch better than usual. L. Hamblin was the best of the threes, and he made several excellent bursts, but the outsides as a whole did not shine, and it must still be admitted that Gloucester sadly lacks pace behind.

The cleverest man on the Llanelly side was Hawkins, not so much for the openings he made as for the way, time after time, he hoodwinked the referee to penalise Hamblin, by the gentle art (?) of "diddling" the ball back in among his forwards' feet after the Gloucester half had come round.

The Llanelly crowd were awfully pleased with the game, and the visitors came in for quite a fair share of the applause, especially Hall and Cook. It is to be hoped Gloucester will be able to place a full side in the field on Saturday, and then "we shall see what we shall see."

Gloucester would be the last to deny credit to Llanelly for a glorious victory, as they were well beaten before the game had been long in progress. The Scarlets, who were playing at the top of their form, have rarely been seen to better advantage. Realising the futility of wasting their energy in the tight scrummages at the outset, they adopted more profitable tactics, and in the open were more than a match for Gloucester, who, as the game wore on, had to confess that they were inferior to the Scarlets.

The Llanelly halves were far too good for J. Hamblin and Hall, although the latter was about the best of the visiting backs. – "South Wales Daily News."

It was beyond the highest expectations of the local enthusiasts that Llanelly would have defeated Gloucester by fourteen points to nil. Bearing in mind the sequence of wins by the home side in the past few matches, it was generally expected that the Scarlets would prove victorious by a few points.

It was apparent at the outset that Llanelly were out to win, and the convincing manner in which they played in the open was an indication of their desire to repeat last year's performance on the Stradey enclosure. It is to the credit of the 'Cestrians, however, that although a beaten side, they played in the second half with grim determination, and the stubborn nature of their defence could not but call forth admiration.

Towards the close of an exhilarating game – the best seen at Stradey this season – the visitors made a few spasmodic attacks, their three-quarters especially bringing off many fine movements. Although playing with unflinching vigour they found the Scarlets equally good on the defence.

The home side tackled in an unmistakable manner, and the deadly tackle by Harold Thomas when one of the visiting three-quarters was going strongly for the line elicited applause. It was a splendid effort, and the home custodian saved what would have been an undoubted try.

There can be no division of opinion as to the superiority of the visiting forwards in the scrums, but in open play the Scarlet octette were seen at their best, and they brought off several of those typical rushes which have proved disastrous to many visiting teams. In this phase of the game they also gave every opportunity to the backs, who played a decidedly good game.

In view of the frequency with which the opposing half secured from the scrum, the few movements among the visiting backs can only be attributed to the keenness of the defence of the home side. Hawkins, who substituted Dai Lloyd, the home captain, played a hard, strenuous game, and completely upset the calculations of Hamblin, the visiting half. The latter, however, had in Hall a brilliant partner, and one wonders what would have happened had Hall been absent. His display was all the more creditable when it is considered that Saturday's game was the first this season in which he had played with Hamblin.

A comparison of the backs will give Llanelly the credit of being the better combination. Some of the individual efforts of the 'Cestrians were well executed, but they played with less harmony than the home "threes." – "Western Mail."