

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1902

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v. SWANSEA

CITY TEAM'S THIRD SUCCESSIVE DEFEAT

SWANSEA'S BACK PLAY WIN THE MATCH

The visit of the Welsh Champions to Kingsholm as usual proved a big attraction, and notwithstanding the dull, threatening weather, there was a big attendance of spectators. Swansea came with an unbeaten record – their best performance of the season being a decisive victory over Llanelly last week – and on form the Welshmen were expected to win with a bit in hand.

Gloucester, who had met with defeats on two successive Saturdays away from home, were unfortunate in having to take the field minus the services of two of their best forwards – Goulding and Click – both of whom are on the injured list.

It was in this department where the City team had hopes of holding their own, but the loss of two such players was a severe handicap, as it left the pack without a recognised leader.

Behind the scrum there were two changes, F. Rooke being again included at centre three-quarter vice A. James (Bream), whilst A. Brown displaced F. Keys at half-back.

Brown has been doing splendid work for Stroud this season, but it was a severe trial to introduce him into first-class football against such a pair as Owen and Jones, the Welsh Internationals.

Swansea, who have the services of six players for the three-quarter line, left out Dan Rees and Freear, the former being indisposed, whilst the Irish International acceded to a request of W. Llewellyn to assist London Welsh against Leicester. This arrangement enabled George Davies to occupy his old position at centre three-quarter, with the veteran Bancroft at full-back. Thus the All Whites had a powerful combination at command and after their brilliant achievement at Llanelly the team took the field with every confidence.

An excursion train from Swansea brought a goodly contingent of supporters, but locally there was not any great enthusiasm, the game being regarded as a foregone conclusion for one side – and that not Gloucester.

The visitors arrived on the ground in good time, and punctually to time the teams took the field, the crowd according the players a hearty reception. The teams were as follows : –

GLOUCESTER	Positions	SWANSEA
G. Romans	Backs	W. J. Bancroft
C. Smith	Three-quarter	F. Jowett
F. Rooke	Backs	F. Gordon
G. F. Collett	"	G. Davies
L. Smith	"	W. Trew
J. Stephens	Half-Backs	R. M. Owen
A. Brown	"	R. Jones
A. Hawker	Forwards	F. Scrine
W. Essex	"	W. Parker
F. Westbury	"	A. Smith
A. Purton	"	S. Bevan
G. H. Smith	"	D. Davies
Bert Parham	"	D. Thomas
F. Oswell	"	E. Morgan
W. Johns	"	W. Coles

Referee : Mr. F. W. NICHOLLS (Leicester)

THE GAME

Gloucester won the toss, and Romans elected to defend the Worcester-street goal. Bancroft started with a short kick, and there being no return the first scrum took place in the home half. The Swansea forwards at once heeled, and early the visiting backs displayed a nice bout of passing, but Jowett's pass back inside to Gordon was not accepted.

The effort, however, led to Gloucester being pressed, several scrums taking place in close proximity to the City lines. The ball coming out to Romans, the latter punted dead, but the referee ordered a scrum five yards outside. Brown gained relief with a short kick, and Romans further improved matters with a splendidly judged punt to touch from a penalty.

Owen, getting away from a scrum, ran back, and exciting play followed in the home half. Jones, with a clever run, tested the home defence, but the passing went astray. Romans, fielding cleverly, punted well out to Bancroft, whose kick was charged down by Essex. The City forward kicked on, but Parker got back and saved in good style.

Swansea soon afterwards were on the attack again, but Romans saved in grand fashion. Following up smartly, the Gloucester forwards reached the centre, but Jones got away in fine style, and feeding Jowett, the latter made off down the touch-line. Collett, however, got across and pushed the Swansea flyer out of play.

Passing by the visiting backs looked promising for a score, but Trew was beautifully floored by Romans, and the ball getting loose Essex dribbled out of danger. Brown, with a neat punt, gained further ground for Gloucester, but G. Davies sent play into the home end with a splendid kick.

Swansea attacked with vigour, and, following some neat exchanges, Jowett notched a corner try. Bancroft failed at goal.

Resuming, play was immediately taken to the City quarter, where Owen and Jones exhibited considerable smartness in opening out the game. The passing, however, was too methodical, and ground was lost. The Gloucester forwards heeled once, but the pass from Stephens was knocked on. From the ensuing scrum the Swansea halves got away beautifully, but Rooke stopped them, and for a palpable foul by Jones Swansea were penalised. Romans punted to Bancroft, who only returned feebly, and Gloucester gained some 20 yards.

Playing with any amount of vim, the City forwards wheeled in splendid style. Westbury, securing the ball at his feet, led the home pack in a magnificent rush, which the Swansea backs were powerless to stop. Bancroft was beaten cleverly, and the ball being taken over the line Parham was credited with a try, amidst tremendous cheering. Romans made a good attempt to convert.

Swansea dropped out, and play was fast and furious. Rooke replied nicely to a free-kick by Swansea, and the game for a few minutes was at midfield. Brown was prominent for stopping a dangerous rush of the Swansea forwards, but a minute later Owen got off and Gloucester were again pressed. Brown diving amongst the Swansea forwards, again effected a good save, and Gloucester, aided by Romans, worked out of danger.

Fielding in the loose the Swansea men made tracks for the Gloucester line, but Trew was upset in grand fashion by "Whacker" Smith, who smothered man and ball. A mistake in fielding looked bad for Gloucester, but the situation was saved. Then for legs up the home team were penalised, but the drop at goal fell short.

There was some tight work in the next few minutes in the City 25, but Stephens brought relief with a timely punt to touch. Another free to Swansea followed, but nothing resulted, Romans punting clear. Brown twice kicked smartly to Bancroft, who was allowed to come through the Gloucester forwards, but Davies was subsequently stopped after several players had tried ineffectually to collar him.

Gloucester were working well together, and Collett flooring Davies enabled the home team to reach the centre. Here Brown, who was doing extremely well, punted to Bancroft, who misfielded, the ball going into touch in the Swansea half.

Collett had a kick charged down by Scrine, and the game was quickly taken to the Gloucester end. Brown, getting the ball from a scrum, fed Stephens smartly, but the latter could not do much.

Immediately after there was some clever work by the Swansea backs, and Jowett, fielding a cross-kick by Trew, looked certain to score. Being hemmed in, however, he essayed a pass back inside which did not come off, and the visitors lost a good opportunity. A couple of minutes later the interval was called.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester.....1 try
Swansea.....1 try

Purton resumed, and Bancroft replied to Romans, who sent into touch at the centre. Stephens was conspicuous with a useful punt a minute later, but the visiting backs, with a neat movement, gained headway. Trew, however, was finely tackled by Collett before getting dangerous.

From the next scrum Jones got away in wonderfully smart style, and coming across sent a pass to Scrine, who yielded to Jowett for the latter to register a good try. Bancroft failed at goal.

Gloucester dropped out, but were immediately called upon to defend, and a splendid movement, initiated by G. Davies, nearly ended in Jowett scoring again. Gloucester were hard pressed for a few minutes, but a kick and follow up by Collett gained the necessary relief.

The Swansea forwards were heeling repeatedly now, but the attack lacked sting. A beautiful kick by Stephens gained Gloucester a good slice of ground, and play was taken to the Welshmen's half.

A couple of marks followed to Jowett in quick succession, but from the second kick Rooke replied nicely to touch. For off-side play by Brown Gloucester were penalised, but Romans took Davies' kick and got in a fine return. His effort was lost, for some of the Gloucester forwards were within the ten yards limit, and Davies touching one of them the ball was ordered back to where Romans kicked.

Swansea now attacked strongly, but the Gloucester forwards offered a stout resistance. With short bursts from lines-out the City team made ground, and then from a kick, Bancroft fielded in the open. Dodging a couple of opponents the veteran Welsh International cut up the field in splendid style, and then passed to Gordon. The latter re-passed to Bancroft on nearing Romans, and the full-back went over the line after a delightful bit of combination. The place kick again failed.

Gloucester re-started, and there was at once some more fine combined play by the Swansea backs. Trew once effected a brilliant run, and Gordon had a splendid chance, but he was collared by Lewis Smith and lost the ball on the line.

From the drop-out Gloucester up with a good rush[sic] but Jones saved when matters looked serious. Owen gained ground for Swansea with a useful kick, but Collett, receiving the ball from Westbury in a line-out, retaliated, the ball going into touch near the Swansea 25. From this point the visiting backs came right away with a lovely bout of passing, some half-dozen players handling, but Jowett could not get round.

Back Gloucester came to the other end, but a pass from Brown to Stephens went astray, and Swansea dribbled to the home end. A free to the City team enabled Romans to punt well out of danger, but Bancroft returned with interest. In the last five minutes the game went all in favour of Swansea, and several time the visitors were within an ace of scoring. Jowett made two fine dashes for the line from passes by Gordon, but he could not ground the ball over the mark.

Once Gloucester punted out to Bancroft, but the veteran was equal to the occasion, and slipping a couple of home forwards ran and kicked to touch beyond the Gloucester mark.

In the left corner there was an exciting couple of minutes, but try all they knew Swansea could not penetrate the defence.

RESULT :

Swansea.....3 tries (9 points)

Gloucester.....1 try (3 points)

JC