

THE CITIZEN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1902

SATURDAY'S FOOTBALL

RUGBY

GLOUCESTER v. SWANSEA

There was no mistaking Swansea's superiority, and the only wonder is the Welshmen did not run up a taller score. That they had the chances admits of no question, but despite some brilliant running and passing the home team's lines were only crossed on three occasions.

All round Swansea had a pull, the forwards being fast and tricky, and the backs a clever and resourceful combination. Gloucester played a real plucky game, and came out of the contest better than the most ardent admirer could have expected. The style of play of the two teams was a distinct contrast, and all through Gloucester were mainly engaged in smothering tactics and chasing their opponents.

The City forwards stuck to their opponents well, and had they gone in for more wheeling and loose rushing it is probable that the All Whites would have had a more anxious time. In the scrums both packs worked hard, and though the Gloucester eight were beaten in getting the ball they were on terms with their opponents in other departments. There was no shirking, and every man appeared to be doing his level best.

Oswell was appointed leader for the day, and he kept his colleagues at it to the finish. The City players were at fault in tackling at times, and too often allowed the visitors to get on the move. An instance was when Bancroft slipped them very easily. Loose footwork was perhaps the best point about the play of the home front rank, and the combined effort which led to Parham scoring was as good as anything seen in the match. It was characteristic of the City pack of a few seasons ago, and well merited a score.

Individually Parham, Westbury, Hawker, and Oswell were most conspicuous, though the other players were not by any means overshadowed.

For Swansea, Scrine and Parker were to the fore in the open, the former using excellent judgment, and never failing to make headway when he had the ball. At half Owen and Jones displayed perfect combination, the former being wonderfully clever in getting the ball away. He had a tireless worker opposed to him in Brown, who created a very favourable impression on his first appearance with the City team. What Brown's capabilities are in attack remains to be seen, but in a game where smothering is required he is extremely useful. There were occasions when the Stroud player infringed the off-side rule, but with the ball continually going out the other side of the scrum it was not to be wondered at that he was at times tempted to get too far round.

Stephens did a lot of useful work, but it was mainly of a defensive nature. As outside half on the visiting side, Jones made some splendid openings, and it was not his fault the score was not heavier. Comparing the rival three-quarter lines, Gloucester cut a poor figure as a combination.

The Swansea quartette were all good, but though they passed with beautiful precision, there was not that initiative which was so strongly marked in the play of Newport the previous week. In the centre Gordon and G. Davies accomplished some really fine work, and the wing men, Jowett and Trew, were all that could be desired.

The Gloucester men did nothing in the way of attack, but in defence "Whacker" Smith waited on Trew with great success. Lewis Smith effected a couple of good saves when he stopped Jowett on the line, but there were occasions when he was caught in two minds as to which man to tackle in a passing movement. This hesitancy allowed the Swansea men several times to get down to Romans, and how they failed to score was a mystery.

In the centre Collett and Rooke were repeatedly beaten, the men making the mistake of collaring too high. At full-back Romans worthily sustained his reputation, and in a large measure Gloucester had to thank the captain that they escaped with a six points' defeat.

Bancroft showed that he still retains a lot of his old skill and judgment. His try was the result of a brilliant bit of work, and the effort was deservedly applauded.

The game, it is a pleasure to remark, was contested in the best possible spirit, and though the tackling was vigorous on both sides, we saw no exhibition of unnecessary roughness.

RESULT:

Swansea.....3 tries (9 points)
Gloucester.....1 try (3 points)

GLOUCESTER A v. GORDON LEAGUE

Played at Hempsted.

RESULT:

Gloucester A.....2 goals (10 points)
Gordon League.....Nil

Rudge and Bland scored, the latter's try being awarded on a foul.