

THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1906.

TO-DAY'S MATCHES.

GLOUCESTER v. SWANSEA.

THE CITY TEAM AT ST. HELENS.

HARD LINES FOR GLOUCESTER.

GENT AND PARHAM INJURED.

CAPTAIN'S COLLAR BONE BROKEN.

For their first visit into Wales, Gloucester were able to take a representative team, though E. Hall and Hawker (both injured) were absentees. Gent re-appeared, and had Albert Hall for a colleague at half, J. Stephens going centre. Swansea, who last week beat Plymouth by 18 points to nil, had several new men in their ranks – Ll. Davies, Morgan (three-quarters), Toft (half), and the two Davies (forward). The City fifteen travelled to Swansea by the 9.25 train.

The teams turned out as follows : –

Gloucester. – G. Romans, back; C. Smith, J. Stephens, A. Wood, and A. Hudson, three-quarters; A. Hall and D. R. Gent (captain), halves; B. Parham, W. Johns, G. Matthews, W. Holder, J. Merchant, G. Vears, F. Pegler, and H. Collins, forwards.

Swansea. – J. Bancroft, back; W. Trew (captain), I. Morgan, Ll. Davies, and P. Hopkins, three-quarters; R. M. Owen and H. Toft, halves; W. Joseph, F. Scrine, A. Smith, D. J. Thomas, H. Hunt, G. Hayward, E. Davies, and W. J. Davies, forwards.

Referee : Mr. R. Pollock (Newport).

THE GAME.

The weather was dull, but there was no rain, and the ground was in perfect condition. Swansea won the toss and Parham started, the return going to touch near the centre. Gent was early penalised for handling in the scrum, but Bancroft gained little ground with the kick. Hudson marked from a line-out, and Scrine fumbling, the Gloucester forwards rushed away, being only stopped by Bancroft in front of goal.

Swansea relieved with useful kicks, and play was hotly contested at the centre. Gent at length got the ball away to A. Hall, who fed Hudson, who was only faced by Bancroft. He was, however, hotly pressed from behind and punted, Bancroft marking on his goal-line. Swansea came away with passing, but the visitors tackled well and prevented an opening being made. Near half-way Owen broke away and sent to Hopkins, who raced down touch and cross-kicked. Several Swansea forwards were yards in front when the ball was kicked, but Thomas fielded and ran in unopposed. Bancroft converted.

Gloucester resumed, and at once reached the home end. They were repulsed, and a long punt went to Romans, who failed to gather, and L. Davies dribbled clear. "Whacker" Smith got back and tried to save, but he, too, missed the ball, and Davies had a very soft try. Bancroft added the goal points, and Swansea had a ten points' lead in as many minutes.

Gloucester were seen to advantage on resumption, Holder being prominent, and Swansea were hard pressed. Clever kicking changed the venue, and then Wood missed fielding, but recovered when matters looked dangerous. The Gloucester forwards heeled successfully from a couple of scrums, but the backs failed to make much headway.

A splendid loose dribble by the City front looked promising, but they lost the ball, and Swansea easily cleared. Gloucester, however, worked back, and brilliant combination between Gent, Hall, and Hudson only failed in its purpose through the International stepping into touch.

Gloucester were going strongly now, and the home defence was severely tested. Romans kept the game in Swansea quarters with some beautiful touch-kicking. Then a serious misfortune befell Gloucester, Parham sustaining an injury to his shoulder in a tackle by Owen, and having to leave the field.

With a man short in the pack Gloucester held their own, and Wood might have done better with a possible opening. The same player immediately after just missed dropping a goal from a penalty with a lovely kick. On the re-start, Swansea came away with delightful passing but Morgan held on too long.

HALF-TIME SCORE :

Swansea 2 goals
Gloucester Nil

Swansea commenced the second half, and Serine's kick going over the line, Romans touched down. The drop-out was well returned, and Swansea gained a footing in the visitors' quarters. Good footwork by Gloucester relieved, and ensuing play was fought out at midfield. Here Scrine broke away and fed Ll. Davies, who ran and passed to Trew. The latter raced down to Romans, and cross-kicked over the goal-line.

Gent beat the Swansea man for possession, and got in a good punt, but he was tumbled over by an opponent and injured. The Gloucester captain left the field, and on examination was found to be suffering with a broken collar-bone. This was very hard lines for Gloucester, and general sympathy was expressed with the team on their misfortune.

With only thirteen men Gloucester played up in great style, the forwards doing magnificently. Stephens went up to half-back, and with a clever dribble took the ball right to the Swansea line. Gloucester set up a hot attack, and twice they came near scoring, Hudson once having hard lines. At length Trew brought relief to his side with a clever screw kick to touch.

Gloucester immediately got back with a forward burst, and Stephens took the ball over the line, only to see Bancroft send dead. Scrine had been off for Swansea some minutes ere this, making a serious casualty list for the match.

For a time after the drop-out Gloucester more than held their own, but splendid passing by the home backs looked dangerous. Trew, however, was grandly thrown to touch by Smith. A minute later Swansea had a fine opening, but the pass was snapped up by Wood, who found touch at the centre. From this point Gloucester made headway, and Hudson charging down a kick by Bancroft, the Swansea lines narrowly escaped.

From in his own 25 Trew put in a grand run, beating Romans, but he was headed off and tackled. Swansea, however, pressed on, and but for superb tackling the defence would have been penetrated. Good kicking by Romans eased the pressure, and Holder, near midfield, tried hard to clear, but he was unsuccessful. Wheeling a scrum, the Swansea forwards burst away, and following some neat exchanges Hayward crossed in the corner. The place-kick failed.

Only a few minutes remained for play, and nothing further in the way of scoring was done.

RESULT :

Swansea 2 goals 1 try (13 points)
Gloucester Nil

REMARKS.

Gloucester were beaten in the first ten minutes, for it was not until near the end that Swansea added to the lead they established so early in the game. Considering the adverse circumstances under which they laboured, Gloucester did splendidly, and few teams would have equalled their performance with only thirteen men. Swansea's opening score ought never to have been allowed, and the second point was one of the flukiest imaginable.

The feature of a hard game was the grand play of the Gloucester forwards, every one of whom surpassed himself. In the scrums, perhaps, Swansea held the advantage, but in loose work there was no comparison between the rival packs, the City being clearly superior. Outside the Gloucester defence was great, but the attack was not so good. More than one chance came in the way of the visitors, but there was something lacking at the critical moment.

Wood did a lot of spoiling, and the other men worked their hardest. Gent, until he was knocked out, was equal to Owen in every respect, and A. Hall showed resource. Romans, after a bad opening, played a very fine game, and his kicking was of the best. On the day he was superior to Bancroft. Swansea at times combined well, but there were a lot of mistakes. Trew was as good as ever, and Morgan shaped well.

GLOUCESTER A v. BREAM.

SECOND TEAMERS WIN A POOR GAME.

Gloucester A were at home to Bream on Saturday, before a small crowd. The Foresters' last appearance on Kingsholm was in the cup competition last season, when they met the premier City team. The visitors' colours being identical with the City jerseys, the Seconds turned out in all white. Changes were made in both sides, which were as follows : –

Gloucester A. – F. Welshman, back; F. Bloxsome, E. Butler, H. Smith (captain), and F. Smith, three-quarters; J. Goddard and S. Edwards, halves; A. Purton, Holford, R. James, J. Wyburn, P. G. Savage, W. J. Pearce, S. Hayward, and J. Welshman, forwards.

Bream. – A. Moore, back; W. Preest, H. James, H. Rudge, and F. Kent, three-quarters; A. Jenkins (captain) and J. Baker, halves; H. Croome, M. Jones, T. James, G. Reeks, T. Wasley, C. James, G. Davies, and A. Adams, forwards.

Referee : Mr. T. Phelps, Gloucester.

Bream started in a cross wind, and play opened in the home 25, where it remained for some time, the visitors retaining their advantage by good forward play. The ball came out to Kent on the left, but he was pulled up five yards out. At the ensuing scrum Bream were penalised but no ground was gained. Eventually the home forwards broke away, and carried the game to neutral ground, but Bream quickly got back. Then Gloucester broke away nicely, and "Tinker" Smith got an opening. He made a lot of ground, but Moore proved a stumbling block. Then Goddard worked out a nice opening on the right, but Bloxsome dropped his pass with a "snip" run-in waiting for him.

These movements had carried the game into [the] Bream 25, where the visitors were unfortunate in losing Davis through an injury to his head. Gloucester forced a minor, and from the drop-out centre play ensued, but the play was of a scrambling, kick and rush nature, and not very interesting. After a series of short kicking exchanges, Gloucester attacked strongly, but Bream relieved with forward rushes. They were particularly good in these tactics, and in fact generally held the advantage in front.

Purton had a shot for goal from a penalty, but the ball went wide. Bream were again penalised, but a good mark and return nullified the ground gained. Rudge obtained possession, and made a dash for the line, but he was stopped. Bream, however, obtained a footing in the home 25, dangerously near.

Another stoppage occurred owing to injuries. On the re-start Bloxsome cleverly intercepted an opponent's pass, and running finely from the Bream 25, sailed clean through the opposition in splendid style, and scored a capital try, amidst loud applause. Purton failed at the kick.

Encouraged by this success Gloucester played up strongly. Butler put in a long kick, and "Tinker" Smith upset Moore finely, the ball getting to H. Smith, who, however, bungled and lost a great chance.

More stoppages occurred, and the Bream full-back left the field. He was walking round behind the goal-line with his coat on, but when the ball came up with a rush and Gloucester looked to have a chance of scoring, he threw down his coat, and dashing in dropped on the ball and touched down, much to the amusement of the spectators.

HALF-TIME SCORE :
Gloucester A 1 try
Bream Nil

On resuming, Davis, Bream's injured forward returned to the fray. The opening stages of this half went in Gloucester's favour, but it was very scrappy play, neither side showing any cleverness. Butler kicked across, but Bloxsome failed to gather, and in a melee Butler was injured and had to leave the field.

Gloucester, however, still managed to confine the game to the visitors' 25, but when opportunities occurred they failed to accept them. Butler resumed amidst applause. Moore was collared in possession, and Gloucester again got into a favourable position, but they failed to keep it, and uninteresting play followed.

Hubert Smith relieved the tediousness of the game by a sharp run, but the ball remained in the central zone, and the play was scrambling and unfinished to a degree. In response to the somewhat derisive shouts of the spectators, Gloucester bucked up a bit, and once more got well into the Bream quarter, but repeated mistakes in handling gave innumerable chances away.

Bream relieved and Rudge dribbling away got dangerously near, but Welshman saved by sending to touch in goal. Butler had to leave the field again, and Hayward landed a capital goal from a penalty kick. Scrambling play ensued to the end.

RESULT :
Gloucester A 1 goal (p) 1 try (6 points)
Bream Nil

REMARKS.

It can be said safely that no one was sorry when the whistle sounded the end of such a dull and uninteresting game, unduly prolonged through frequently occurring stoppages for injuries to players.

Neither side showed anything approaching decent football, and the only bright patches in the picture were Gloucester's solitary try and the excellent work done by Welshman at full-back. Jenkins played a good game for Bream, but further individualisation is quite unnecessary in such a mediocre exhibition.

JC