

# THE CITIZEN

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1906.

TO-DAY'S FOOTBALL.

GLOUCESTER v. SWANSEA.

THE CITY TEAM AT ST. HELEN'S.

PLUCKY FIGHT BY WEAKENED FIFTEEN.

LUCKY VICTORY FOR THE ALL WHITES.

Fixtures between Gloucester and Swansea have extended over something like 22 years, yet during this lengthy period the City team have never been able to defeat the famous Welshmen at St. Helen's. Eleven years ago, during J. Hanman's captaincy, Gloucester made a bold bid for victory, and actually led up to within a few minutes of "time" by a lovely dropped goal, obtained by Walter Taylor. Bancroft, however, equalised before the end with a placed goal from a mark on the centre line.

Last season the City gave their powerful rivals a close game, and after a strenuously fought contest were only beaten by a dropped goal. These performances stand out as the best achievements of Gloucester at Swansea, though at home the City have several wins to their credit at the expense of the All Whites.

For to-day's engagement Gloucester lacked the valuable services of their two Internationals – Gent and Hudson – who were doing duty for England against Ireland at Leicester, while J. Jewell played for A. Hawker, who is suffering from an injured leg.

Swansea had out a strong team, W. Trew re-appearing at three-quarter, and their supporters were pretty confident of accounting for the visitors.

The following were the teams : –

GLOUCESTER.	Positions.	SWANSEA.
A. E. Wood	Backs.	J. Bancroft
G. Romans	Three-Quarter	J. Evans
J. Harrison	Backs.	F. Gordon
E. Hall	"	W. Arnold
C. Smith	"	W. Trew
J. Stephens	Half-Backs.	R. M. Owen
A. Hall	"	P. Hopkins
W. Johns (capt.)	Forwards.	F. Scrine
J. Jewell	"	W. Joseph
B. Parham	"	H. Hunt
G. Matthews	"	D. Davies
G. Vears	"	W. Coles
H. Collins	"	A. Smith
W. Holder	"	G. Hayward
J. Merchant	"	I. Morgan

Referee : Mr. Pollock (Newport).

### THE GAME.

There were about 5,000 spectators present when Johns started for Gloucester, the visitors having the wind in their favour. Scrine allowed the ball to go to touch, and from the line-out Gloucester rushed to the home line. Here A. Hall passed wildly from the scrum, and Swansea relieved. The visitors, however, returned to the attack, and Bancroft was collared close in.

Neat passing by Owen, Trew, and Evans, saw the latter cross-kick to E. Hall, who replied nicely to touch. The home backs immediately got going again, and Gordon, with a clever feint, beat the defence, but his pass went astray. Trew next attempted to break through, but he was upset, and though he managed to pass the ball Gloucester saved.

Loose footwork benefited the City, and Johns picking up punted to Evans, who fumbled. Romans and Harrison took the ball on, the latter appearing likely to clear, but he was checked in time. Ensuing play was contested in the Swansea half, but nothing of note occurred.

The Welshmen eventually changed the venue with neat handling, but Romans intercepting, ran back, and passed, only to see the ball go astray. The ball was kicked on, and Bancroft marked under pressure near the centre. Hall secured, and the Gloucester forwards put in some capital exchanges, which were heartily applauded.

Harrison tricked Gordon cleverly, but passed inside with Romans unmarked on his left. From a punt by Owen, Hall marked in a good position, and Romans only just failed at goal with a fine kick. Gloucester played up grandly on the drop out, and twice in rapid succession missed passes which lost almost certain tries. Next Smith charged down a kick by Gordon, and E. Hall had a splendid opening. He, however, essayed a drop at goal, which failed.

On the drop-out Hall beat Owen and dribbled cleverly, Trew saving a few yards outside. A couple of free kicks to Swansea gained relief, but Smith and Holder forced a minor with punts over the line. Bancroft allowed the ball to roll dead. Gloucester continued to force the game, and the Swansea defence was severely tested.

Harrison transferred forward to Romans after clever passing, and then a similar mistake on the left wing spoiled another nice effort. Hall was laid out in collision, but was able to resume. Gloucester heeled smartly on continuing, and the backs handled neatly, but they were unable to pierce the defence.

To the interval Gloucester had the better of the exchanges. Swansea played very poorly.

HALF-TIME SCORE :  
Gloucester ..... Nil  
Swansea ..... Nil

Joseph resumed for Swansea, who were now favoured with the wind. The home backs were early set in motion, but the passing only went right across the ground. Then Stephens fed Romans on the blind side of the scrum, and the latter punted down to Bancroft. Vears rushed up and secured possession. Parham next handled, and Gloucester appeared to have a good opening, but the ball was lost right on the line – a lucky escape for Swansea.

The home back punted out to Wood, who returned finely to touch. Gloucester got the ball away from the subsequent scrum, but Arnold snapped up an opponent's pass and ran to Wood, when he kicked, but the ball rolled dead. Arnold was charged over after he had got rid of the ball, and was temporarily laid out.

Resuming, Swansea got in a smart attack, but the defence prevailed. Trew, however, was nearly through just afterwards after a clever run, only being held up on the line. Good footwork by the Gloucester forwards enabled the visitors to make headway, but Swansea worked back by the aid of good kicks. Swansea were continually getting the ball in the scrum, but mistakes were frequent among the backs, and Gloucester kept their line intact.

A splendid rush by the City forwards covered nearly half the ground, but Bancroft stopped them by making his mark. Back Swansea came with good combination, but they could not get through. Wheeling well, Gloucester gained some 20 yards, and for the next five minutes play was fairly even.

Scrine, who had been operating at extra half, now went back in the scrum, but the Gloucester front held their own fairly well. A desperate burst by the home forwards was well stopped by Smith, who, however, got a nasty kick in the head, necessitating his retirement. When the game was resumed Vears came out to three-quarter. Swansea immediately initiated an attack, but Arnold could not clear the opposition. Marks fell to Bancroft and Stephens in quick succession, but little advantage accrued to either side. A good kick by E. Hall was well followed up, and Evans fumbling he was floored at midfield.

Loose kicking ended in Harrison punting across the ground for Gordon to gather with practically only Wood to beat. The Swansea captain ran almost to the line, when he passed to Davis, who scored. Bancroft kicked a goal.

With ten minutes to play, Smith returned to the field amidst hearty applause. Swansea made great efforts to increase their score, but were met with sterling defence. Before the end E. Hall was roughly tackled and severely injured.

RESULT :

Swansea ..... 1 goal (5 points)  
Gloucester ..... Nil

REMARKS.

The game was stoutly contested, and on the run of the play Gloucester deserved at least to have divided the honours. The only try of the match was obtained by Swansea when Smith was off the field, and the score was a lucky one.

Gloucester were distinctly superior in the first half, and they experienced decidedly hard lines in losing a couple of tries. The Gloucester pack showed fine form. They were, perhaps, not so clever in heeling as the Welshmen but in other respects their work was excellent. The tackling on both sides was exceptionally keen, and no quarter was given. Behind the scrum the Gloucester backs displayed clever combination.

At times A. Hall and Stephens performed with great credit at half, and E. Hall and Smith were the pick of the third line. Wood put in some excellent kicking at full-back, and was superior to Bancroft in general play. Owen was not so reliable as usual at half, and the Swansea backs were frequently at fault in handling. Trew and Arnold were smart, but were well looked after.

GLOUCESTER A v. ST. MARK'S.

Result :

Gloucester A ..... 1 goal (5 points)  
St. Mark's ..... 1 try (3 points)

Gloucester played with only 14 men. Dicks scored for St. Mark's and Hughes for Gloucester, Hayward converting.

JC