

Football Notes and News.

By "The Goalie."

COVENTRY CITY BEATEN.

HOME FORTUNES STILL RISING.

The fortunes of the Town Football Club are still rising, after so many years of depression. They won again on Saturday in their Southern League encounter with Coventry City by 4 goals to 2; and their win places them again in that coveted position at the top of the S.L. table.

It has been said that the Town did not deserve their win; that it was one of luck. I do not agree. The home team well deserved a win, if not by quite so substantial a lead. I am not so foolish as to say that they did not have any luck at all in the game,—they certainly did. But the team has had bad luck for long enough; and they cannot be blamed or the merit of their play questioned too severely when the luck turns a little their way for a while.

Within three minutes after the close of the match I heard it already being said that it was Hickleton's score against his own side that turned the tide in the home favour, and that but for that we should not have won at all. I count such opinion rubbish. A half-back does not put through his own goal except under stress of severe pressure by the opposing forwards; and therefore I think that the home forwards should certainly be given credit for having so well and constantly worried the defence as to have caused such an egregious mistake to be made.

The other goals were well deserved, the last one in particular being one of the finest the Town ground has seen for a long time. The win gives Luton a new record—I gave a long enough list last week, thinking that then perhaps I should have finished with writing of records, as the home team in the past could but rarely boast of having any to its credit. But I enjoy the change, all the same—as the Town's supporters also evidently do, judging by the size of Saturday's crowd.

The record now to be recorded—pardon: no pun meant!—Is this: The Luton men have scored more goals in League games this season than any team in either of the three principal Leagues. This is an honour that the Luton forward line may well be proud of. The half-backs must also be commended on the same grounds, for to their efficient work and steady feeding of the front line at least some of the success of the latter is due. The defence on Saturday was also greatly improved, Potts in particular kicking very cleanly and well. Chapman also did several good things, and Naisby played a grand game again in goal.

Once more in this match my remarks after the team's first S.L. game (with Southampton) are justified to the hilt. The home men certainly did not have the majority of the play during the first three quarters of the game, though they were "keeping their end up" well; but by that time they had so "fagged" the visitors that the Coventry men were kicking out of play constantly in order to waste time and get their breath. Meanwhile, the Luton lads were playing as strenuously as ever; and "coming up" splendidly towards the end, as they did in the first match and in that with Southend, their superior training and staying powers told, and they gained victory in the last five minutes. Once more I have to congratulate the whole team, with "Billy" Lawson, their capable trainer, on this

The team on Saturday still showed Bushell absent, owing to his injured thumb. Our "utility" man, Johnson, played in his place, and gave a fine exhibition, scarcely making a mistake throughout the game. The teams lined up as follows:—

Luton: Naisby; Chapman, Potts; F. Hawkes, Johnson, R. Hawkes; Brown, Quinn, Smith, Moody, Stansfield.

Coventry: Evans; Saul, Gordon; Hickleton, Bradley, Johnson; Tickle, Arnold, Powell, Warren, Buckle.

Referee: Mr. A. Adams, Nottingham.

The visitors were a heavy lot, and they did not hesitate to use their weight against Luton's light but "nippy" lads. A feature of the game was the number of decisions of the referee's which were questioned—and some of them rightly—by the crowd. The visitors won the toss, and Luton kicked off against a slight wind that was blowing. Coventry were pulled up three times in the first few minutes for hands, and two fouls against them came in quick succession afterwards.

The opposing forwards took it in turn to be dangerous for a while. "Bob" tested Evans with a troublesome shot, and soon afterwards Bradley sent a ball vibrating by the home cross-bar, just on the wrong side—for him! Brown sent the ball across the visitors' goal-mouth beautifully, and Stansfield, who was scarcely a yard out, neatly pushed it into the corner of the goal. After the score had thus been opened for the home side, play grew warmer.

It was scarcely of a scientific character, however; it was more of the Cup-tie order, with hard work taking the place of science. But what matter, so long as goals are scored and matches won? After a bit of strenuous but not very exciting play, Buckle centred the ball, and Warren from close in hooked it round into the net, putting Coventry level.

All the home forwards were now getting shots at Evans, but he proved very safe. Brown put in some capital centres, Smith had several good tries, and Stansfield and Moody were quite a number of times dangerous; but nothing of importance happened till the next goal came. Unfortunately it was against the home team. A penalty was given against Chapman for pushing Powell, amid loud protests from the crowd. Bradley took the shot, and easily scored. The interval thus came with the home team down by the odd goal in three.

Play re-opened slow, and for a while was uninteresting. Then Moody got through with a good bit of work, and centred the ball so that it fell right in front of goal. Smith rushed up and headed the ball through, falling after it in doing so, and hurting his own knee and the goalie's wrist. The "ref." failed to

see several things against the Coventry men—one of them, for instance, held on when down to Stansfield's leg for nearly a minute, and the crowd howled maledictions. Quinn twice shot into Evans' hands.

Play now grew more interesting. Brown sent a tickler in to Evans, and Smith and Moody tackled the keeper, but he cleared. A dangerous move by Luton was stopped by an offside decision. Within five minutes from time Luton were having things more their own way, though the scores were still level; but then in the excitement of a spell of strong pressure by the home forwards, Hickleton scored a fine goal—against his own side! Three minutes later Stansfield gave Smith a pass while the centre-forward was still a full 20 yards from goal; but Smith took it beautifully and lifted the ball right up into the far corner of the goal, right out of Evans' reach. A minute later the whistle blew, with the score standing:

LUTON 4, COVENTRY 2.