

SEVENTH DRAW AT HOME

EXETER CITY STEAL A POINT FROM LUTON.

Shooting Boots Required.

By Crusader.

LUTON TOWN 2
EXETER CITY 2
LUTON.—Harper: Graham, Till; Gordon, Richards, Fraser; Pointon, Yardley, Panther, Agnew, Clark.

EXETER.—Bailey: Lowton, Pollard; Pool, Good, Potter; Purcell, Phoenix, Blackmore, Lienesley, Compton.

Referee.—E. C. Sambrook, Swansea.

Many times during the years it has been my task to follow Luton football, I have suggested an intensive course of training in marksmanship, and given what I think is the simplest and best recipe known to the football world. It strikes me that in dealing with the game on Saturday I can only repeat that I still think it is necessary. Inability to shoot goals was the cause once more of the Town having to share points with visiting teams, and for the third match in succession it was the most painful fault in the team's work. I have to admit that there were moments when the rear-guard gave decided qualms, but their part in the failure to win was infinitesimal compared with the shortcomings of the attack.

EXCUSES.

The state of the ground had a good deal to do with the inability to score; that must be conceded, for the depth and holding power of the mud was far worse than a mere view of it indicated. Having allowed so much, however, it is permissible to ask what would have happened to Harper had the Exeter inside forwards been presented with the openings afforded to those of Luton. It seems to me that Harper would have counted a double figure score against him. It was not Bailey's fault that he did not. Certainly he made several good saves, but I am not sure that he was not partly blameworthy for the first goal to Luton. The trouble was that the Town's inside trio could not call up the necessary promptitude and precision in shooting.

CITY'S CHANCE.

The City safely accounted for their one really good chance of the first half when it came at the end of two minutes' play. A fine bit of work between Good and Blackmore enabled the latter to drive in a shot that had Harper beaten all the way, but the ball struck the foot of the post as Harper dived. Before he could recover PHOENIX had steered the ball into the net. Thereafter the Town had practically all the play, and the visitors were kept defending stubbornly. Time after time the Town halves and backs put their forwards through, and some of the passing of the forwards was really fine. The old fault of trying to walk through the mire was in evidence, and with the Exeter halves and backs packing their goal well, and Bailey having some good fortune, the equaliser was delayed.

SOLO BY POINTON.

When it came, POINTON was the solo performer. He received from Yardley and cleverly outwitted Charlton. He went too far, and should have centred, but he chased the ball right up to the line. Bailey seemed to cover up the angle completely, but Lowton had run across to help him, and between them they failed, for the ball got past the two of them at an almost impossible angle and crossed the line to enter the net. There had been exciting moments in Bailey's vicinity before this, for Agnew had hit the upright with a great drive, and Panther had skimmed the bar, while shots had gone over the bar and by the posts. Anything but score the Town players could do. Every half back had a shot, and once Fraser made a splendid dribble and struck the bar with a splendid effort.

THE PENALTY KICK.

Only at rare intervals did the visitors get away, and then they were soon running back again to assist in the protection of their own citadel. The Town wingers were very busy, and little fault could be found with the general manner in which the attacks were brought into the danger zone, but it was the lack of a telling shot that prevented the lead until the stroke of the interval. There was a skirmish on the Town right wing, and Pointon shot across. Pool could not trap the ball, and with Agnew in close attendance he handled it. A penalty kick was awarded without hesitation or cavil. GRAHAM was called up, and Bailey had not a ghost of a chance to save a terrific shot, and everybody then felt that the game was secure if the Town could maintain their form, so all was serene for the supporters at the interval.

LUTON TOWN 2
EXETER CITY 1

The visitors showed a certain liveliness on Harper's front after the interval, but they were soon repulsed and had to concentrate on keeping out the Town forwards. When Purcell got the ball there was always danger, and Compton also caused some little trouble. Moreover the Town defenders were not playing so briskly as before the change of ends, and there were two or three flutters when the wingers got away. However, Panther, who was as big a sinner

or unfortunate as the other inside men, and Yardley kept getting the ball out to Pointon, who was doing much better than in any game this year, and he galloped through two or three times, but spoiled chances either by shooting badly or centreing too hard. Clark was not getting half so much work, but muddled well, and Bailey was in trouble frequently.

THE EQUALISER.

The visitors never gave up, however, and suddenly Purcell found a gap on the Town's left flank, and came careering through. Blackmore snapped up a pass and ran hard in, but Gordon sprang up from nowhere and managed to frustrate the visiting centre-forward by taking the ball off his toe and kicking it away for a corner kick. This was well placed by Compton, but headed away. Potter it came to, and he took a flying hazard. GRAHAM tried hard to get at a ball that would have landed safely in Harper's arms, but he merely succeeded in turning it away from the goalkeeper, and it landed in the back of the net to bring the scores level again.

FUTILE FORWARDS.

This gave the visitors a lot of encouragement, and they played for some time with great determination, and had more of the game than previously. It required all the skill of Graham and Till to keep them at bay, and several shots had to be taken care of by Harper. However, the Town halves got their attack moving again, and from now to the end they were much the better side. Bailey was employed more than in the first half, but the scoring shot was not in any boot. There was plenty of interest in the exchanges between the Town forwards and the visiting defence in the first half, but now it began to evaporate, and but for the forceful work of all the Town halves the attack would have collapsed. So it continued to the end, and for the seventh time this season the Town had to be content with a share of the booty at home.

EXETER'S FORTUNE.

Apart from the doubtful character of the first goal, Bailey did well, as he was expected to do against his old club. He had a fine pair of backs in front of him, and Lowton was quite as good as Charlton. Both kicked and tackled desperately, and they had to do so, for their halves were not good enough to hold the Town forwards. The middle line of the visitors was the poorest part of the team, for they were simply stoppers, and gave their forwards little support. In attack both wing men and Blackmore were strong and speedy, and gave a lot of trouble, and had there been more help from their rear they might have won the match, judging from the trouble they gave with the few opportunities they had.

AND THE TOWN.

Harper could not be blamed for either goal against him, but he had only two or three difficult shots to stop. He made one brilliant save in the first half, and he kicked a good length in clearing a heavy ball.

Graham again played a powerful game, and was much better than Till. I wondered if the Town captain had got over the Bournemouth injuries, for he seemed to be in a lot of trouble in the second half, and it could not be laid to Fraser's account. Graham certainly had the misfortune to give the visitors their second goal, but for all that he put up a fine show, Compton and Lienesley were the better wing for the visitors, and it was well that there was good understanding again between Graham and Gordon. The latter played with quiet efficiency again.

GOOD SUPPORT.

Indeed, all the middle men supported their attack splendidly, and considering the difficult state of the pitch they held the opposition well. Fraser justified to the supporters his inclusion, and was a very lively asset, perhaps more so in attack than defence. I do not think he was quite up to his Swindon standard, and the reason, to my mind, appears to be that somebody is instructing him to look after the inside man. If so, it is a mistake, and he should be permitted to play his own game. Then he will succeed. Richards did not begin well, and was some time before he could resist the temptation to punch the ball too hard in the endeavour to find his forwards, but he was a strong factor in defence, and when settled down he gave his forwards some nice opportunities.

ATTACK.

All eyes were centred on Yardley. He shared the defection of the other inside forwards in being unable to shoot accurately, but did make some good efforts, and passed very nicely. I think that he did much better than at Bournemouth, and will be valuable when he has settled down. Agnew was as hard-working as ever, but has still to score a goal. None can complain of his industry, for he is always a great worker, but he certainly requires shooting practice. Panther did not get a lot of help, and the

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heavy ground was all against him. He, too, was a worker, always going, but will have to be quicker in taking a chance if he is to give the club what we hope from him.

WING WORK.

Pointon always does better at home than away, and he made some dashing efforts. To beat Charlton as often as he did shows that he is at least a good average winger, but he could improve his game vastly if he would centre while the defenders are scattered, and if he would lob the ball instead of trying to kick the lace out when he is centring, especially from short range. Clark once more proved that he can adapt himself to either wing, but I think he is doing far better on the left than he did on the right. He seldom sends the ball too far across, and it is a notable fact that the scrimmages in the Exeter goal usually came from his right-paced and right-placed middles. He will do even better with more employment.

It was quite a clean game, but the weather conditions earlier on probably kept away a considerable number of supporters, and the crowd was only about 6,000 strong.