

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

LUTON TOWN TAKE REVENGE ON COVENTRY.

Team Work Wins Again.

LUTON TOWN 4
COVENTRY CITY 1

LUTON. — Harger; Richards; Till; Black, Rennie, Millar; Clark, Reid, Thompson, Woods, Dennis.

COVENTRY. — Newton; Fergus, Randle; Brown, McClure, Gardiner; Crisp, Dunn, Heathcote, Herbert, Ferguson.

Referee.—D. H. Asson, West Bromwich.

When Luton Town visited Coventry in November the conditions were similar to those of Saturday, except that the wind was a little colder. There was rain during the game, and the ground conditions were anything but satisfactory. Coventry then won by four goals to one, though Luton had quite a good share of the play and missed comfortable chances. The reason for the "Bantams'" success then was largely because of the manner in which they opened out the game, whereas the Town were apt to hold the ball too close.

At Luton on Saturday the Town deserved their success because they kept the game open, and Coventry missed chances because they failed to appreciate the best tactics on a ground sticky at first, and afterwards slippery. Everybody who saw the two games will agree that the clubs may well cry quits.

WHOLESOME RESPECT.

There can be no doubt that the City commanded wholesome respect on Saturday. They were not quickly off the mark, but their defence was safe in the opening stages, and although the ball was in their territory for the most part, there was not a lot of danger, and Newton dealt with all that came his way fairly comfortably. The Town forwards were harassing the Coventry middle men, however, and a delightful bit of play, in which Black, Clark, and Reid were the principals, enabled the last named to dribble through. As Newton came out REID shot hard with his left foot; the ball struck the goalkeeper's leg, but found the net all right.

From their previous attempts, Coventry were not regarded as likely to succeed immediately, but within a minute the ball had been to the Coventry end, was sent out on the left, and Black, rushing to meet it breast high, used his hand. The free kick was well placed to the left; Herbert cleverly got the better of Richards' rush, swung it into the middle, and DUNN promptly crashed it past Harper.

TO-AND-FRO-ITES.

For the next twenty minutes there was not much to choose between the teams. The halves on either side played strongly, but many passes were misjudged because the ground held the ball, while there was a tendency to over-dribble or to hold on too long, with the result that successful tackles or offside spoilt many efforts. Both goalkeepers had ticklish work, though Newton was the more frequently in action. Each goal had narrow escapes, but the Town were improving, and from a corner kick by Dennis, Thompson headed against the bar. Thirty-six minutes had passed, when Clark passed to Reid, and the latter beat McClure very skilfully, but the centre-half brought his opponent down, and a penalty kick was awarded without hesitation. DENNIS scored with one of his old-time patents, the pace beating Newton all the way. Coventry went into the fray undismayed, but the Town were keeping the ball on the move much better now, and had the better of the exchanges right to the interval.

THOMPSON'S TURN.

There was a throw-in on the Town's left flank, near the middle line, and Dennis shot the ball through to Thompson, who had positioned nicely for the pass. As Fergus came in, Thompson slipped the ball ahead and sprinted. Hot on his heels were Fergus and Brown, but the Town centre-forward never looked like being overhauled, kept the ball well under control until three or four yards from the goal, but the same distance wide on the left. As Newton covered the angle, Thompson turned the ball deftly into the middle, and DENNIS, who had sensed the possibilities splendidly and dashed up the middle, had simply to tap the ball into the goal, and this put the Town in a fine position at the interval:—

LUTON 3
COVENTRY 1

It was the reward of opportunism rather than a bigger share of the game that gave the Town this good start for the opening of the second half. They needed it. Evidently the "Bantams" had some sort of confab during the adjournment, for they made the pace on the re-start. There had been plenty of vigour in the first half, but now there were many trips and improper charges, and the burly McClure evoked the wrath of the crowd over and over again. Harper made fine saves, twice turning the ball round the upright, when he seemed certain to be beaten, and in one desperate sally by the City he could not get the ball away, and only the sheer bulk of players, with

Richards at the head, managed to keep the ball out of the Town goal.

THOMPSON SUCCEEDS.

It was a fierce storm until the Town began to open out again, and to take a more lively interest in the Coventry custodian. Thompson was the danger spot, thanks to the way in which he was plied by his colleagues, who were giving him plenty of room. Once he tore between the backs and had the goal at his mercy, but failed to get the direction aright, and his shot struck the advertisement hoardings. Again he was en route when McClure swept his feet from under him just outside the area. Thompson took the free kick himself. His shot struck an opponent, but he got the rebound, and only a brilliant dive by Newton kept the ball out of the net. It was only a matter of time for Thompson to succeed on this form, however, and when Reid gave him a dainty pass up the middle the centre-forward went through, the backs being far apart. Almost up to the goalkeeper before he shot, THOMPSON scored easily—a popular success.

"BANTAMS" TAIL DOWN.

There was a spirited rally by the City after this, and Harper again saved in quite wonderful fashion, but gradually they were worn down, and in the later stages their goal had narrow escapes. When Herbert was hurt in a mix-up they lost their most effective forward, and, apart from a good solo effort by Ferguson, were not prominent. The defence held out, although three efforts by the Town forwards should have been productive. Still, the Town had good cause to be satisfied with the result, since it secured their position in the table, and put their goal average on the right side.

DEFENCE.

Harper made some brilliant saves, especially during that period of the second half when Coventry were all out to make make up lost ground. He anticipated finely, and his fielding was good, though he does not come out as promptly as he might when necessary. Richards played a giant game, and his massive figure was always in the picture when there was work of a desperate character. Ever since he came Trainer Barr has said that Richards' proper place was at full back, and recent games have convinced supporters that is a correct judgment. Till was as polished as ever, and I doubt if there is a back in the kingdom that has had fewer fouls given against him, either in a single season or in the whole of his career.

MIDDLE MEN.

The Town middle line was much more effective than that of the City. The flank halves did not give the wingers too much rope, and in speed and quickness of tackling, all three surprised the opposing line, while they nursed their forwards skilfully. Now and then Black and Millar were inclined to hang on too long, but often drew the visiting halves before pushing the ball out to the wing or sending it through the middle. This co-operation was a feature of the game, and all three did splendid service. Rennie distributed well, and is showing better form in almost every match.

ATTACK.

Thompson again led the attack in capital style, and his speedy rushes disconcerted McClure and the backs time after time. He owed a lot to his colleagues. Woods was crafty as ever, and although never ostentatious, found Dennis with clever and accurate passes, and generalised the line. Reid may have a long way to go before he is an ideal inside winger, but he improves, his passer to Clark being well-timed, and it was good to see him slip the ball through for Thompson, now and then. Clark and Dennis showed speed, and the latter is back at his best. He got the ball over better than Clark, because the latter was disposed to delay his parting, but dribbled well, and when he found the middle, the ball had just the right pace and place.

COVENTRY.

Newton was a good goalkeeper, and had no chance with the goals against him. His backs began better than the Town pair, since, on the holding ground, they lost no time in getting it up to the forwards, but fell away after the first twenty minutes in each half. McClure still showed that he can be a good player, but, like so many of the "old hands," was apt to compensate loss of pace by unfair tactics. The forwards showed no little skill. Crisp was fast and tricky, and Dunn very active, but the most dangerous of the line was Herbert, who was cool and clever, and the real leader of the attack.

Mr. Asson has the right temperament for a referee, and was firmer than many of the spectators thought, while he seemed to enjoy the game as much as anybody on the ground, including the 6,900 spectators.