

BROKEN AT BRISTOL.

LUTON TOWN HEAVILY BEATEN BY THE CITY.

Rapid Scoring.

By Crusader.

BRISTOL CITY 6
LUTON TOWN 0

BRISTOL.—Coggins; Walsh (J.), Glenn; Neesam, Wadsworth, Smailes; Gilhespy, Martin, Walsh (T.), Keating, Rankin.

LUTON.—Harper; Richards, Till; Black, Rennie, Fraser; Pointon, Yardley, Reid, Woods, Dennis.

Referee.—P. E. Elphce, Maidstone.

The first question I was asked on my return on Saturday night was: "How are you going to explain this lot after the win over Brighton on Monday?"

Well, each day's work for everybody brings something pleasant and something otherwise, but it must be done, and there is no more reason why I should shirk the unpleasant than that anyone else should. The score speaks for itself in a way, for there is no doubt whatever that the City deserved a good win, as they were by far the more aggressive and energetic side. The curious thing about it, however, was well described by a City club official when he said, just before half-time: "Well, just fancy a lead of four goals after Luton had all the better of the play up to the first goal!" He did not make the remark to me, but to a colleague.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

I could not agree, for the City had shown the better style even before they scored, but the Town had two or three good chances, and failed to take advantage of them. Had Reid, for instance, been accurate of aim when he had an easy chance only a few yards out, the whole complexion of the game might have been changed, though I still think the City would have won, because of their intense desire to achieve promotion. It was after this, however, that the City took the game into their own hands for a space of seven minutes, and could do nothing wrong. It was a little avalanche that swept on the Town goal, and the successes, generally, were deserved.

THE ASSAULT.

Walsh took a forward pass, and was forced out to the goal-line some distance from goal, with Richards close up. In the ordinary way we expected the Town back to charge the centre-forward over the line, but he did not, and Walsh tipped the ball in front for KEATING to head an easy goal. A minute later Rankin was allowed to go on when certainly offside. Till standing with outstretched arms and appealing, with a clear space showing between him and the winger, and none other but Harper in front of the winger. The referee was too far down the field, and allowed Rankin to proceed. The ball was centred, and KEATING headed the second goal.

HARPER'S ERROR.

The City surged down again, the left wing being very lively, and Rankin again muddled, and this time Walsh's head sent the ball into the net. Harper appeared to save quite comfortably, but the ball slipped out of his hands and behind him. All these goals had come within a period of four minutes, the first being after 22 minutes' play, and the third after 26 minutes.

REPRISALS.

The City had been playing with great vigour in this period, and some of the Town began to throw their weight about, too. Till, who has earned the name of being the fairest defender in the South, was tackling Gilhespy when he brought the winger down. He promptly stopped, and helped the winger to his feet, but it was obvious from the Press box that Gilhespy was pettish. Immediately after Till robbed the winger, who then kicked Till, and the latter escaped very serious injury only by an inch. There was an immediate outcry from the spectators, and the winger was called more names by the City crowd in the next three minutes than all the twenty-two players were called during the match. Luckily for him, he was on the blind side of the referee.

A GREAT SHOT.

Till had not recovered from this when the fourth goal came, and he was hobbling painfully in front of goal when the City left wing again made matters too warm for the Town defence. KEATING was given a chance to shoot on the run, and the ball nearly tore out the roof of the net. It was a great shot. The Town made many good efforts, but there was a lack of punch about their forward work when near goal, and though Coggins had frequently to handle, he had nothing exceptionally difficult. The Town goal had other escapes before the change of ends, when the score was:

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The second half was a dull and listless affair. The City were content so long as the Luton forwards were kept out of mischief, and the ball was generally in midfield. Harper had much more work than Coggins, and the incisive rushes of the City inside forwards were always dangerous. Their left wing also played clever football.

MASTER MARTIN'S TURN.

The clever Martin, formerly of Aberdeen, got a well deserved goal midway through the half, though it was a trifle lucky. Keating accepted from Rankin and shot hard at goal, but the ball curled right away, and came out to MARTIN, who took it in and shot into the net.

Luton's efforts were baulked again and again by J. Walsh, but there were several corner kicks that brought scrimmages, and the Town might have scored with a little more dash in their efforts.

Before the close the City got further reward from the skill of the left wing. The ball was taken right down, and Rankin saved it from going out, beat Richards, and lifted it gently in front for T. WALSH to calmly nod into the net.

After this the Town's best effort came from Dennis, who dribbled right from the wing and came into the middle to shoot with terrific force, and Neesam's face stopped the ball, the result being that he needed attention before he could resume playing.

SOFT BALL.

Early on in the game there was an incident that made me think there was something amiss with the ball. Woods took a shot, and the ball seemed to be travelling well wide, but it suddenly swooped inwards and just topped the angle of bar and upright. Harper told me after the game that it was a very soft ball, and that was the reason it spun out of his hands when the third goal was scored. The wind also played tricks, but not enough tricks to upset the City, who played fast and vigorous football and deserved their success. I was told that Brighton outclassed the City a fortnight ago, and deserved to win by an even bigger margin than two goals clear. Apparently someone had to suffer for that blow to the City, and as the Town had put it across Brighton so severely it was perhaps in the justice of things that the City should win so handsomely. They are not an ideal side, and had the Town fielded full strength there would have been a different result.

THOMPSON MISSED.

That is not saying that Yardley and Fraser were any worse than the others, as parts of the team. Both played very hard, but the forward line missed Thompson far more than one can estimate in print. Reid tried hard, but against bigger and vigorous defenders he was seldom dangerous, and the sooner he is put back to his job at inside-right the better. The leadership in these days demands size and strength, or exceptional skill, and while none is better pleased than I that Reid has established himself at inside-right, he does not get so many chances of showing his shooting prowess in the centre as he has done when playing to the right of Thompson.

Yardley played as keenly as ever, and was occasionally dangerous, and Woods was working might and main to make openings, and gave Dennis a lot of passes that were the Town's principal means of progress, for this wing was the better. Pointon did not get the better of Smailes very often, and the whole line missed the inspiring leadership of Thompson.

DEFENCE OVERBURDENED.

Black played splendidly against a very clever wing, and was the Town's best half-back, though Rennie bestirred himself to good purpose intermittently. Fraser was called into the side because Millar was suffering strain. The youngster had not been fit, and it seemed clear that he was not fully recovered from injuries in the holiday games, for I have never seen him play so poorly as in the first half. He improved in the second, and worked cleverly with Woods and Dennis. The rearguard was heavily burdened, and did not come up to the standard of recent games. Richards was nothing like the back against Brighton, though he worked very hard, and used his head to good purpose. When Till was injured the right back was overloaded. Till played well until hurt, and Harper made a few fine saves, and, apart from the error of the third goal, was not at fault.

CITY.

The City defence was very sound, Walsh playing finely, and the middle men were helped a good deal by the fine play of the forwards. Neesam was the pick in this department. All the forwards were very clever, showed good speed, and Keating was very dangerous when in possession. Though the City are not the best side in the League, they look certain champions now.

On previous visits to Ashton Gate I have commented upon the fine sporting spirit shown by the crowd, and I have still to see a better. There were about 14,000 of them, and they applauded Luton's efforts both before and after the City had got their winning lead.

LETCHWORTH RESERVES LUCKY.

Following the benefit match a Beds and District League game was played, Luton Ramblers being the visitors. The Ramblers have a grievance that will perhaps be aired by the League Executive. They were required by Letchworth to agree to a late start, but declined. On Friday night the Herts club informed the Ramblers by phone that the kick-off would not be until 5.45 p.m. The result was that the Ramblers had only three of the regular first-team.

Letchworth had the better of the game, and scored twice to the Ramblers' once, the visitors putting on a fine show.