

GRAND GAME BY LUTON.

SWINDON TOWN COMPLETELY MASTERED.

Rennie the Arch Schemer.

LUTON TOWN 4
SWINDON TOWN 0

LUTON. — Harford; Kingham, Hodgson; Clark, McGinnigle, Fraser; Heslop, M Nestry, Yardley, Rennie, Slicer.

SWINDON. — Cope; Stansfield, Girvan; Braithwaite, Cockburn, Batty; Munnings, Eddeleston, Morris, Richardson, Kirby.

Referee.—Mr. L. E. Gibbs, Reading.

If ever a team tried to compensate loyal supporters for braving atrocious weather conditions, LUTON TOWN did so on Saturday, when they trounced SWINDON TOWN far more decisively than the score suggests. There were short periods when Swindon threatened to do things, but these occasions were few and far between, and were usually of individual character. It might be argued that most of Luton's many menaces were due to the inspiration of an individual, but, to my way of thinking, the feature of the game was Luton's wonderful co-operation and co-ordination of effort. Whereas Swindon tried to achieve personal brilliance, the home side, in the main, seemed to be striving for team success, and individual performance was forfeited for the sake of the whole. Now and then a player would hold on too long, but, by comparison with the visitors, such incidents were rare.

CONQUERED CONDITIONS.

On Friday morning the Luton players were rejoicing over the splendid condition of the ground; 24 hours later they were afraid that the conditions would beat them, so far as entertaining football was concerned. The ground had been well rolled, and was springy, but, by noon on Saturday, heavy rain and sleet had made it more like the pitch to which we have been accustomed ever since December came in. There were tiny puddles all over the ground, though the extreme wings were not so bad as that middle stretch, which we have come to hate because of the many times it has nullified splendid work. Well, the team rose superior to the conditions, and gave a display which merited the praise that found vent so frequently in loud applause. I do not remember hearing so much in any previous game this season, even though the attendance was limited to 5,000.

MORRIS SOON MOVES.

Snow was falling a few seconds before the players left the dressing rooms, but had ceased and the sun was shining when Cockburn guessed correctly the fall of the coin spun by Tom Hodgson.



MORRIS.
SWINDON'S CRACK
CENTRE FORWARD

The Town defended the Kenilworth-road end, and the defence had to be a left straight-away, for Morris quickly made a move, aided by his left wing, Kingham barred the way, however, and we soon saw Rennie trying a shot, the

ball being lifted over the bar by Cope just as the whistle went for off-side. A very fine centre by Munnings went right across the Luton goal, and Harford would not have had much chance if Morris could have touched the ball with his head; back it came from the left, and there were several poor kicks by Luton defenders until Harford got his fists to the ball.

THE ROUGH STUFF.

The Luton left began to make matters warm for Swindon, and Braithwaite—the principal offender in the match at Swindon—twice fouled Slicer, the second offence bringing a rebuke from the referee as well as from the crowd. The Swindon backs and halves became somewhat panicky as the pressure increased, and, with Heslop and Slicer making

good use of nice service from the inside men and the halves, the ball was swung into the vicinity of Cope too often to please him. He was safe enough, however, though several hot shots travelled very close. Some of the Swindon team were trying to use their weight, and none would have grumbled had they done so legitimately, but they were not content with that, and the whistle was heard a lot, but not as often as it should have been, so that the crowd cheered derisively when a series of fouls at last brought a free kick.

RENNIE'S CENTURY.

Braithwaite was again spoken to, this time for fouling Yardley, and the assaults on the Swindon goal increased in fierceness, relieved only by one or two sudden bursts by Morris, but he was well watched by Kingham and Hodgson. Once a fine shot by Kirby went at speed across the goal and rose just above the bar at the farther end. Then Luton took command for a long time, and the Swindon goal suffered many escapes, one shot hitting the upright and Cope accepting the ball as it came back. He saved splendidly several times, but the fall could not long be delayed. Hodgson had refused to allow the irrepressible Morris to bore past him, and the ball went up the field. M'Nestry seized, and then corkscrewed his way past four defenders who tried to stop him; he was on the point of shooting past Cope, almost arm's length away, when Girvan flung out a leg, and the Luton player toppled over. The referee had no hesitation in awarding a penalty kick, and RENNIE gave Cope no chance with a fast drive, although I thought the goalkeeper touched it with the tips of his fingers. The pace was very hot, however, and no goalkeeper could have stopped it.

YARDLEY'S TURN.

A great cheer went up in recognition of Rennie achieving his 100th goal in League games, and was renewed as he came to take his place for the re-start. It was a very warm tribute, and seemed to animate Rennie, for, within a few seconds, he burst through in company with Slicer—a delightful movement—and Cope managed to take Rennie's full-blooded drive at the second attempt. Luton were playing great football now, the halves plying the forwards with lovely passes, and Cope and his backs were constantly engaged. M'Nestry galloped through and was forced to the extreme right; Slicer headed in his centre, but Cope scrambled the ball out, and, for a few seconds, there was a fierce tussle in the Swindon goal-mouth; the ball would not go through, and Cope seemed invincible; he went down and saved at full length, and, as he was rising, Slicer shot, and the ball struck him, but YARDLEY was on it in a tick and sent into the net.

ON THE MARK.

In the minutes before the change of ends, Luton overplayed the visitors, though Morris and his wingers were always dangerous triers when they got going, and Harford had to save twice from Morris and Kirby. Mainly, the play was at the other end, and all the forwards had hard luck, but none more so than Rennie, who shot grandly on two occasions, and M'Nestry followed suit, Cope making fine saves. So the interval came with the score:—

LUTON 2
SWINDON 0

In the early stages of the second half, Luton seemed to be satisfied with their lead, and there was a tendency to hang on to the ball, the halves and forwards alike doing this. Swindon had a little more of the play, and Munnings was a trouble to Fraser and Hodgson now and then. Harford twice had to make haste to pick up the ball, and one wondered if the home team were going to remain content with what they had. Rennie broke the spell with clever passes to the right, and Heslop came well into the picture.

LUTON FIND LOOPHOLES.

The halves were the first to change their methods, and the forwards were soon hammering at Cope's goal again. He behaved magnificently. Shots and centres were frequent, and the Swindon halves were over-run, while the backs could not cover all the loop-holes that the Luton forwards discovered. So play

went on until the second session was half spent. Then came a tremendous assault, and Cope was severely tested by several shots; the ball seemed as though it would never pass Cope. Rennie was doing the most extraordinary scheming, and all the forwards benefited. Eventually, Yardley, who had been very persistently, took a pass from the left, swerved inwards and beat the backs, then hock-winked Cope and tried to lift the ball into what appeared to be a vacant goal. Glirvan, however, had fallen back, and, by diving headlong, managed to turn the ball out to his left; there was a short scrambling scuffle, and Cope was back in goal when HESLOP rushed in and shot with all his might; the goalkeeper got his hands to the ball and deflected it to the bar, but it fell behind him into the net. It was a gallant effort to save.

GREAT FOOTBALL.

Morris was not so conspicuous now, but kept on striving to force a way, and there was a gasp as he forged past several defenders at top speed, but Hodgson came across and, at the right moment, got his shoulder against the Swindon leader and sent him sprawling, while the ball went behind. Luton then played havoc with the Swindon halves and backs, and time after time the crowd were thrilled by the effective combination of the forwards, with the middle men moving along behind in perfect support. Cope was a hero, and his backs worked energetically, but the goal escaped again and again in the luckiest fashion imaginable. Once Yardley worked clean through, and then could only lift the ball out of the mud into the hands of the waiting Cope. Richardson, by the way, had likewise failed at the other end just before. Yardley also tumbled over the goalkeeper after he had caught a centre from Heslop, and a fraction of a second had enabled Cope to toss the ball behind. Then Yardley and M'Nestry went through and beat all, going right up to the goalkeeper, but Cope saved brilliantly when all seemed lost. We thought the scoring was at an end, but Yardley and Heslop joined in as pretty a run as could be imagined, passing and re-passing until only Cope remained to be beaten, and YARDLEY did that easily. From the kick-off, M'Nestry and Heslop tried the same sort of thing, and again went clean through, but once more Cope saved when it appeared im-

possible for M'Nestry to fail to score. **DEFENCE.**

Harford had just enough to do to enable him to recognise Morris and one or two others, but, for the greater part of the game, had a soft job. Kingham and Hodgson played finely, but their work also was not too difficult, thanks to the excellent understanding with the line in front. They paired well, covering each other cleverly and never losing sight of the fact that Morris was the mainspring of danger for the visitors. The halves have never worked more harmoniously or with better judgment and consideration for the men behind and those in front. I do not select any one as being the best, for all three played grand football, obstructive work being skilful and free from offence, while the service to the forwards was positively brilliant. The forwards could not fail to do well, and there was not a spectator displeased with the quality of the play.

RENNIE'S GRAND GAME.

Rennie's footwork was a sheer joy to follow; at times he mystified the spectators by utterly unexpected schemes that sent his line to the fore. His control was that of a conjuror, and his

passes were simply superb, whether to his own partner or to Heslop when the latter was out of the thoughts of the opposition. The triangular work on the Luton left wing was magnificent.

Slicer had a happy day, and to describe some of his centres when it seemed quite impossible to get the ball in front of goal is difficult. I can only think of the word "slewed," which is an archaic expression describing the round-arm bowler's ball when delivered at a low

trajectory. On the other wing, Heslop and M'Nestry got on exceedingly well, and the former once more tired out the opposition by his quickness off the mark and the unexpected routes he took. He was unfortunately not to score. Heslop is coming along finely, and his speed and centres were very troublesome. After this game he would have gained a lot of confidence. Yardley led the line with great dash and judgment, distributing well and hustling the defenders whenever there was a chance.

For Swindon, Cope was the outstanding performer, and well deserved the little ovation the crowd gave him at the close. No goalkeeper could have done better. The backs were plucky, and Cockburn was a good half, while, in attack, Morris and his extreme wingers were always requiring vigilance.

—CRUSADER.



RENNIE