

LUTON WIN AGAIN

DOUBLE COMPLETED AGAINST COVENTRY CITY

Brown Impresses as Leader

(By Crusader).

LUTON TOWN 2.

COVENTRY CITY nil.

LUTON—Harford, Kingham, Rennie, Allen, McGinnigle, Fraser, Heslop, Bryce.
COVENTRY—Allen, Crown, Tilford, Baker, McNabb, Richard, Mapp, Ball, Bowden.

Referee—Mr. W. J. Lewington, Cleckton.

Shown by superiority forward, LUTON Town accounted for their visitors from COVENTRY CITY on Saturday. There was not a great deal to choose between the teams on the actual run of the game, though I thought the Town were a trifle the cleverer, possibly due to the determination and general skillfulness of the inside forwards as compared with those of the City. It is not often that one can praise the inside trio for carrying off the spoils, but it was so in this game, even though the defence was steady as ever, and entitled to a considerable bouquet. To some extent the game was spoiled as a spectacle by roughness that developed in the second half. For that the City halves were mainly responsible. I do not lose sight of the fact that some of the Town players retaliated, but they had tried to play the game for over an hour before they began reprisals, and some of them had stood a good deal without the intervention of the referee.

"THE POOR REF."

Many of us were disposed to blame Mr. Lewington for weakness, and he has certainly been seen to much better advantage, but in these days one needs to be careful about the referee. There are so many linesmen who have yet to understand that a player is not offside merely because he happens to be nearer his opponents' goal than all but one player, that the referee who relies upon them often gets badly let down. In three instances at least on Saturday, Mr. Lewington whistled offside on the intervention of a linesman when the player who received the ball was onside at the moment the pass was made. It was difficult to understand how the referee failed to see the flagrant trips by Tilford on Brown, and the equally flagrant case of handling by Crown when he literally took the ball with his hands from Brown's head. Mr. Lewington was not able to get about very much, and was often left in the middle of the field when he should have been near the goal-mouth. Moreover, he should have dealt more firmly with the reckless charging and barging by Stokes long before the players got out of hand—as they did in the second period.

SUCCESS DESERVED

It is not often that there is roughness between Coventry and Luton, but there was too much of it in this game, though there was not a lot to grumble about before the change of ends. It seemed to me that the City halves were upset by the speed and determination of the Town forwards, and one or two of the City's attackers were inclined to cut up roughly when they could not unsettle the Town backs. Some allowance must be made for the irritating breeze, which played tricks with the ball, and the speed of the ball on the fast ground. Taking the game throughout, the Town deserved their success, and should have augmented the margin considerably on the chances they made. They kept a clean sheet at their own end, but were very fortunate on three or four occasions.

OPENING SPASMS

Tom Hodgson must be about the luckiest captain the Town have had since the War, for again he won the toss, and was able to take his choice of ends. The wind was frisky, but favouring the defence of the Kenilworth-road end. First spasms came from the City left wing, and they soon impressed Clark and Kingham as a subtle combination. The Town's first dangerous movement was held up by Baker foiling M'Nestry, and though Rennie placed the ball nicely to M'Nestry, the defenders were on the watch, and pounced immediately to clear. The exchanges were then even, the ball travelling quickly from end to end, but Harford soon had his hands full in the literal sense. A spurt by M'Nestry and Heslop won a corner, but this was fruitless, and Kingham and Hodgson had to defend stoutly. Clark tried a bit of combination with his right wing, and got over a nice ball, but the tall Tilford headed clear. From Bryce's crafty pass Brown broke through and tested Allen with a fine drive, the custodian saving in the corner of the goal.

TWO QUICK GOALS

Brown appreciated the applause, evidently, for just afterwards a similar pass gave him possession, and he raced the backs out of it, finally shooting hard and low; Allen went down full length and managed to toss the ball aside, but before he could regain his feet BROWN had darted forward and shot into the net. It was a splendid effort, and the crowd were not slow to recognise the youngster's success. Coventry's left wing had a turn, but were shunted, and once more Bryce was set in motion by Rennie. He managed to keep possession until he could centre, and

M'NESTRY took the ball on the run, dashed past the defence and shot very hard; the ball would have beaten Allen, anyhow, but the goalkeeper had not the slightest chance when it struck a defender's leg and passed into the net.

ALLEN BUSY

These goals came within fifteen minutes of the start, and with the Town playing a fine, open game, the City defenders had plenty of trouble. After Richards had called upon Harford to deal with a strong, high shot, the City goal had a marvellous escape. All the Town forwards and Clark had shots, but the goal area was packed. Even then Allen had to go down full length, and though he stopped the ball, it was inviting a kick into the net when Tilford managed to clear off the line. The Town left combined natively, and Rennie suddenly swung the ball across for M'Nestry to sprint in and shoot into the net, but he was whistled offside. Then came a bout of pressing at the other end, and Harford frequently saved, while his backs worked very hard, and McGinnigle reinforced them. Once more Brown raised the hopes of the crowd.

for by delightful acceptance of a pass up the middle, he went between the backs, and should have scored comfortably, but, excited, he shot wide.

A PENALTY APPEAL.

The City then played with great vigour, their halves and forwards rushing the Town halves, and only sterling play by Kingham, Hodgson and Harford averted a score. Brown was afterwards brought down very badly by Baker within three yards of goal, and there was a howl of disappointment when the referee refused to award a penalty kick for a palpable offence. Coventry made strenuous efforts, and Ball missed a lovely chance, shooting wide when the goal was at his mercy and the Town players were vainly appealing for offside. Following this escape the Town renewed the attack, and M'Nestry was very unfortunate with a shot that hit the post. The interval found the score:—

LUTON 2.

COVENTRY nil.

After the Town had threatened seriously, chiefly through Heslop and M'Nestry, Coventry put in all they knew. Their extreme wingers were a constant source of danger, and attack after attack was beaten off only with difficulty. A fierce struggle ensued in the Town goal area, and the goal escaped in extraordinary fashion. Three or four shots struck defenders. Harford knocked the ball out two or three times, and then, just as it was passing him and a goal appeared to be a certainty, he grasped the ball and threw it out. It would have surprised no one if a goal had been allowed. The Town had their turn, and when least expected to get a shot in from a most difficult angle, Rennie found the right aim and the ball went at great speed, but Allen made a wonderful save. The assault was renewed again and again, and Rennie almost beat a tattoo with rapid shots, one of which hit the post. More hot work followed.

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then Heslop cleverly centred, and Bryce, after leaving a couple of men, got in such a position that Allen was well-nigh helpless, but the winger only kicked down ground and the ball, and Allen successfully intercepted.

TACKLES

Play became very rough, and the referee spoke to McNab, Baker, Clark and Stokes within a few minutes. Allen was busy again, but was very safe, and when the visitors got away on the right, Harford was at home. There was a lot of mid-field play, and then Fraser went down in a heavy tackle, and his arm was so badly hurt that he had to be assisted from the field. Then the players again seemed to get out of hand, and the whistle was often in action. When Fraser returned his forearm was bandaged, and he went to the wing, with Kennie falling to half-back, to continue useful work in that capacity. Coventry often got within range, but finished badly, and in the later stages there was not much worthy of a note.

DEFENCE

Harford again did exceptionally well in the Town goal, and could not complain that luck was against him. Both Kingham and Hodgson played finely, and the latter was the best back on the field. His positioning was the key to success, and though the visitors' right wing and Lake provided plenty of spirit and no little skill, he revelled in the work, and was coolness personified. Kingham did not shine quite so much, but yet did good service. The middle men were not at their best. McGinnigie was very good in defence at times, but was not so material in mid-field as he can be. Clark played a steady game, and was a forceful resister when the City players showed signs of getting out of hand, while Fraser again played delightful football.

ATTACK

Kennie once more took chief honours in attack, his passing and general work in advance, in opening out the game and misleading the City defenders being splendid. McNestry was an ardent rover, and often sorely harassed the City defence. Bryce was very good at times, and at others seemed none too energetic. Heslop played very well, but had fewer chances than Bryce. Brown made a really good impression, and in him the Town have a most promising young player, who should develop into first-class. His control and speed are good, and if he had the weight he would make the best of backs anxious.

CITY'S BEST

The City owed a good deal to Allen, as usual, at Luton. Crown was a very fine defender, and Tilford helped well. Baker was the best of the middlemen, and Bowden and Richards very fleet wingers, while Ball and Alsop fed them nicely, but Lake, though a trier, could not weld the line.

There were 8,000 spectators.