

SOUTHEND SHOCK FOR LUTON

SEASIDERS' EARLY GOALS

Kean's Great Game of No Avail

(By Crusader)

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LUTON TOWN—Imrie, Kingham, Hodgson, Kean, Gale, Jones, M'Nestry, Loasby, Tait, Rennie, Bryce.

SOUTHEND UNITED—Moore, French, Robinson, Dixon, Wilson, Donovan, Barnett, Jones, Baron, Pike, Crompton.

Referee, Mr. J. F. Farmer, Chatham.

IF ever a team deserved the title of United it was Southend in this game at Luton on Saturday. There was not a single department of the Town that compared favourably with any line of the visitors, unless it were goal. The mystery to me was that the visitors, comprised practically the eleven that the Town handsomely defeated at the Kersall last January, while I thought the Town were an improved side. For skill, dash, and team-work the United were in a class right above the Town, and I do not think any sportsman could grudge their success. It was obtained by good football, in which team-work was the main feature. It was in that aspect that the Town were deplorably lacking. There was no co-operation worth speaking about, and virtually all the many onslaughts on the United goal were initiated from one player—Kean.

A GOOD START

The United began well. They controlled the ball admirably on the slippery surface, and while the Town forwards and halves were prone to give it too much boot in passing, and to hang on unnecessarily when a pass was needed, the visitors went about their business in such workmanlike manner and such confident spirit that their first goal, even though it had an element of luck—two elements, in fact—was merited on the run of the game. There had been one onslaught by the Town, and a really great shot by Kean for Moore to make a magnificent save at full length, but the visitors were moving well together and

had the Town defenders running into the wrong positions, so admirable was their approach. The incidents leading up to the goal included a stab by the visitors' left wing, and this was partially repelled, but the ball went to the right, and came back, Kingham headed hard, but had the misfortune to see the ball crash into Baron, who promptly slipped it aside to Pike, that player shot finely, the ball travelling all along the ground, and being directed to the further corner of the goal, Imrie dived at full length and made a magnificent save by pushing the ball out. CROMPTON was close up, however, and promptly shot into the net.

BARON'S BURST

The United made matters warm for the Town defenders, whereas the scraggy efforts by the Town attack were soon nipped in the bud. After 14 minutes' play, Jones, who was the sparkling figure of the United attack, espied BARON unmarked, and gave him a beautiful pass, and the centre-forward burst through on his own to score a fine goal as Imrie advanced. In the remaining play to the interval the visitors were always showing more polish, but the Town improved a great deal, and if there was nothing out of the ordinary about their movements, they put in a lot of energy. Moore's work was not so exacting as Imrie's, but neither had a vast amount. Towards the interval the Town worked harder than ever, and Kean and Jones were responsible for a good deal of constructive work. It was owing to the grand play of Kean that the lead was reduced. He took the ball up in conjunction with his wing, and he himself had a shot, but the defenders bunched the ball out. Gale returned it, and eventually it went to RENNIE, who promptly shot hard, and Moore flung himself in vain at the ball, which landed in the net. There were hot scenes round Moore's charge after this, and several corner kicks were well placed, while once Loasby had a fine opening but failed to get the right direction behind the ball. Perhaps the visitors were glad of the interval, for they certainly deserved their lead.

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LUTON	1

There was not much to choose between the teams in the early stages after the change of ends, though the ball manipulation by the visitors was still much the better, and Imrie had more work than Moore. For a while it seemed as if the visitors had done their best, for they were not so quick as in the first half. Hodgson, however, indirectly led to forfeiting a third goal and thus inspiring them anew. One or two of the visitors had been rather unscrupulous on occasion, and from one free kick Hodgson sent the ball straight on to a near-by opponent. He at once whipped it past the Town full-back to Barnett, who careered away. Hodgson recovered somewhat, and met the centre, but sent the ball behind for a corner. This was taken by Barnett, and, curiously enough, the smallest player on the field, thanks to his wit and nippiness, DONOVAN, dashed in, and, jumping high above the rest, had the satisfaction of seeing the ball flash past Imrie, who made a valiant, but fruitless, attempt to save.

"KEAN-NESS"

Kean had been playing grandly all through, but it was from this point we saw the best of him. Time after time he beat opponents and whipped the ball in front of goal; he did two men's work, and it was galling to see easy openings simply frittered away. When M'Nestry was fouled, Kean put the ball over well, and Rennie got it close in, but could not collect in time for a shot; he passed to Bryce, but that player could not gather it quickly enough. Moore was called upon several times, and the Town had more corners, but from another fine effort by Kean a very simple chance was given to Loasby three or four yards out. He tapped the ball wide. Within a minute the same player had a like chance, but failed exactly as before, and there was some excuse for the ironical laughter of the crowd, though poor Loasby hardly knew what to do with himself. Worse still, from Kean came another gift, this time to Rennie, and he failed just as badly as had Loasby. All these chances

should have been very easy goals. Southend were now more careful of defence, and their inside forwards came back to assist, and the Town had more of the game. They could not score, however, and the home goal had some narrow escapes before the end was whistled.

DEFENSIVE FAULTS

Imrie was quite blameless, and did his work well. From Kingham we had another very fine game, and there was no better back on the field. Hodgson was not so good, but a lot of work fell upon his shoulders, and he missed the assistance of Fraser, who had to stand down owing to a bad ankle. Vincent Jones was a great little worker, but he made the mistake of trying to go too much, and often left the opposing wing to do as they liked, so that Hodgson was rather over-run. Jones was quite a good half-back, but his tactics were mistaken. Gale played moderately, but a long, long way below that dashing form he showed last season. He was but a shadow of himself, and evidently still is wanting in confidence. The great man of the side, and, in my opinion, the best player on the field, was Kean. His tackling was resolute and yet cunning, and his constructive work was that of an International. The times he opened up the way for an attack were so numerous that a capable forward line should have scored many goals. Towards the end he took a hand in the shooting game, and came nearer than any of the forwards. It was a great pity that such splendid work should go unrewarded.

AND FORWARD FAILINGS

And what of the forwards? We had hoped that with three reputable marksmen in the inside positions there would be a crop of goals, but there was little shooting, and such as there was had little accuracy and no sting. Tait was a worker all the time, but few passes came his way, and when they did he wanted a lot of room in which to operate. Loasby is evidently not much use anywhere but as leader of the line. We can all be wise after the event, but I thought it might have been advantageous for him and Tait to have changed positions. In any case I hope Loasby will never have such a bad afternoon again. Rennie was probably the best of the five, though below par. He did make a few nice passes, however, which was more than could be said of the others. Bryce and M'Nestry did not get going really well, though the latter did get the ball across better than in the match with Northampton. Making all allowance for the state of the ground, the Town were a long way below their true quality, and will have to improve in team work particularly if they are to cut a decent figure in the competition.

The United were a well-balanced, speedy and compact team. The defence was very sound; the halves played with much resourcefulness and energy, and the forwards gave a bright exhibition. Jones being the shining light. There were nearly 10,000 spectators.