

SECOND AWAY SUCCESS

LUTON WIN AT NORTHAMPTON LAST NIGHT

Hodgson Injured

(By Crusader)

LUTON TOWN 2
NORTHAMPTON TOWN 1

NORTHAMPTON.—Hammond; Inglis, Anthony; Allon, Odell, Davies; Scott, Boyle, Bowen, Dawes (A.), Wells.

LUTON.—Imrie; Kingham, Hodgson, Kean, McGinnigle, Hale; M'Nestry, Tait, Yardley, Rennie, Slicer.

Referee.—Mr. H. E. Gray, Ilford.

ONLY those who saw the game at Northampton last night can fully appreciate the merits of the success. Everywhere, except among the Luton visitors, who perhaps numbered fifty, there was the feeling that as Luton had been beaten at Fulham, and as Northampton, as late as Saturday, won at Craven Cottage by a margin of two goals, the match was almost as good as won by the Cobblers. Frankly, they should have won on the run of the play in the second half, as the fortunes of the game were with them. Just over half an hour had elapsed when Boyle dashed into Hodgson and brought the Town skipper down so badly that he had to be carried off. After the interval he returned to take up the outside left position, but was quite unable to run, and could only kick the ball when it came to him. There was no score when he was removed from the field, but within five minutes the Town were two goals ahead, and deserved to be, for the points were very cleverly earned. Afterwards, naturally, Northampton had the better of the game, and gave the Town defenders a rare battering, but only beat them once, and that goal should not have been allowed. More concerning it anon, but it can be said straightaway that Mr. Harold Wightman's opinion that there is not a sounder defence in the League than Luton's was justified. He said it before the match, and there was ample corroboration in the play.

FORM FANCY

The journey was made by motor coach, and the party arrived about forty minutes before the kick-off (5.30). The sun was shining brightly, and there were only a few spectators, but more began to roll up, and a few minutes after the start there were 5,000 present. Hodgson won the toss and the Cobblers faced the sun, which was beginning to wane a little when Bowen started the game. I should have mentioned that the Cobblers had the side that proved successful at Fulham, but the Town had to bring in Hale for Fraser at left half, and a further attempt was made to discover a better attacking machine by putting M'Nestry back to the extreme right, with Tait as partner, and Yardley making his first appearance in the side, this time as leader of the line.

The Town made the first move, but Inglis sent them back, and then Odell lunged so hard from the middle line that the ball sailed harmlessly behind the Town's goal-line. Midfield play was the order, but there were soon indications that the changes forward had been beneficial, for Tait was giving M'Nestry nice passes, and Yardley was worrying the backs at every opportunity. A wild charge by Wells brought Kingham down so badly that there was a hold-up for a few moments while he was attended by Horace Pakes. When the game was resumed the Town right went rapidly through, and Anthony kicked so wildly that the ball sailed into his own goal area, but Hammond got it away. Kingham made a grand clearance when Dawes threatened, but the respite was temporary, and Imrie took safely a header from Bowen.

M'NESTRY AND KEAN

Play continued very fast, and Luton attacked hotly, M'Nestry putting across a fine centre after two or three shots had rebounded from defenders. McGinnigle had a try, but sent behind. A fierce rush by the home forwards tested Imrie again, and in a repeat movement Bowen headed past. A linesman flagged M'Nestry offside after the winger had run past two defenders, and then there was a wonderful bout of play by Kean and M'Nestry, and the latter centred well, but Hammond again rushed out and gathered the ball. M'Nestry was now playing finely, and another move by him had Anthony in straits, and the winger muddled squarely; Slicer got the ball and returned it, but Inglis managed to turn the ball off Yardley's toe as the latter was accepting. A moment later M'Nestry hit the side net after clever play by Tait and Yardley.

A CHANCE LOST

Northampton now woke up again, and in a raid Bowen headed over from Scott's centre. Imrie cleverly saved another header from Bowen, and from the clearance the Town got away, and Yardley gave Slicer a lovely pass; the winger ran past Inglis and then shot, and the ball beat Hammond, who had come out of goal, but went just wide of the farther post. Again we had a clearing movement by M'Nestry and

Kean, and they took the ball right down, and from Kean's centre Yardley shot over when he had a good chance. A brisk attack at the Town end found Imrie cool, and he cleared from Bowen and Boyle. Hodgson saved the situation a moment later, and Allon handled when the Town were getting away. A corner followed, but was fruitless, and then a good chance was lost. The home backs had been playing a lot of offside tricks, but were caught napping when Rennie sent the ball forward and Yardley dashed ahead with a clear field. He was inside the penalty area when his feet became entangled with the ball, and though he managed to get it out to Slicer, the latter shot over.

THE GOALS

Boyle rushed at Hodgson as the latter was heading away, and brought the Town captain down heavily. It was clear that he was hurt, but the referee allowed play to continue while he was on the ground, though there was no danger to either goal. After strong protests by the Town he stopped play, and Hodgson was carried off. Immediately there was a lucky escape for the Town goal, but Imrie managed to get the ball away after once having it knocked out of his possession in a hot scuffle. From the clearance the ball went to Yardley, who promptly pushed it forward, and TAIT, from just inside the Town half, kicked forward and beat the backs in a race; keeping it under control splendidly he went right on, and as Hammond dashed out sent the ball past him, all along the ground, into the net. It was a capital goal, and play had been in progress 36 minutes. A moment later M'Nestry was again wrongly given offside by a linesman, but the rebuff was followed by another shock for the crowd. Rennie picked up a pass in the middle and natively tapped it forward on the left; Slicer was not there to take it, but he challenged Inglis for possession, and the back kicked the ball against the Town winger; it rebounded to Yardley, who promptly turned and raced off, and when Anthony dashed across to tackle, the Town centre forward passed neatly across goal, and M'NESTRY came up at breakneck speed and crashed the ball past Hammond for a magnificently earned goal. The Cobblers worked desperately again, and in a hot assault Bowen once more headed wrongly, and soon afterwards the whistle sounded the interval:—

LUTON 2
NORTHAMPTON 0

The second half opened with strenuous attacks by the home side, but the Town defended valiantly. Hale was a host in himself at left back, and Slicer worried the home right wing unceasingly. Time after time the ball was sent into the Town penalty area, and the home forwards and halves threw themselves at ball or opponent in their desperation, but the Town defenders kept their eyes glued on the ball, and checkmated so well that Imrie had little work. McGinnigle played brilliantly, and was always in the thick of the fray, while Kingham and Kean outwitted every move on their flank. The burst lasted quite a long time, and then came another hair-raiser for the crowd. Yardley and M'Nestry went away and beat the opposition, and a goal seemed certain when M'Nestry lifted the ball over the heads of the advancing Hammond, but it travelled inches wide. A pass to Yardley would have brought an easy opening. Just afterwards there was a fierce scuffle in the Northampton goal area, but the ball was eventually got away. Kean won applause for magnificent play, and then Northampton's right wing forced a corner. Imrie once saved well, but there was another desperate tussle, and Kean kicked off the goal-line when the ball seemed bound to enter the net.

STRENUOUS DEFENCE

More stubborn defensive work was necessary, and there was another narrow escape when Wells centred and Bowen dashed in and headed in, but the ball went wide. Imrie was adjudged to have touched it, and a corner was given. This was nullified by Kingham, but another followed, and the Cobblers tried to rush the goal almost en masse, but they were baffled. The referee spoke to Davies for dirty play, but the free kick came to nothing, and when well offside Bowen was allowed to go through, but Imrie touched his shot over the bar. Two more corners followed, and when the Town were getting away Allon sent Slicer off his legs, but the free kick was of little use. Kingham brought off another glorious clearance, and Tait sent M'Nestry away. The winger centred right across goal, but Inglis hopped in and cleared. Try as they would the Cobblers could not beat through the Town defence. Tait made a great run and centred rather too hard; Hodgson managed to return the ball, and it skidded off Rennie's foot and went to Yardley, who missed a good chance by shooting too high. The Town forced a corner, and were

playing strongly now, and Rennie gave M'Nestry the chance to run through, but he shot instead of passing, and the ball fell on top of the net

COBBLERS' GOAL

The Cobblers forced a fruitless corner on the right, and then the ball was sent up field. A tussle between Allon and Slicer resulted in a free kick being given against the Town player. Without attempting to place the ball in position—and it was some yards from the place of the alleged offence, and it was on the move when Allon pushed it forward before the referee had given any signal, and before the Town players were aware of what was happening—Scott promptly centred, and BOWEN headed the ball into the net. The referee should have ordered the free kick to have been properly taken, but he did not do so, and the goal stood. It was an encouragement to Northampton, and they fought fiercely for the equaliser in the nine minutes that remained for play. They forced two corners, and had a free kick for "hands," which Imrie punched away. There was a terrific struggle in the Town goal area, and Kinham cleared off the line. It was a rousing finish, and another turbulent assault by the Cobblers was frustrated just before the final whistle.

THE PLAYERS

I will not here single out individual players in the defence. Every man played magnificently against the roughest team met to date. Northampton gave no quarter; they charged violently, jumping was prevalent, and there was not a Town player that did not carry marks of the fight. It was to their credit there was no retaliation, and they beat the Cobblers by football. Everyone pulled his weight and tried to overcome the handicap caused by the injury to Hodgson. I am tempted to make reference to one or two, but will simply add that Hale and Slicer, in the unusual position of back and half-back respectively, were real trumps. The forwards, however, should be dealt with because they had been re-shuffled. The change did good. They were playing very good football, and match-winning football, before Hodgson's injury upset the balance. Tait put up a really fine game at inside-right, and seemed to control much better, and M'Nestry played a fine game, and would have done better had he put the ball in the middle more often instead of shooting when colleagues were waiting for the pass. Rennie gave neat passes without reaching his very best, and Yardley undertook the duties of centre-forward so well that he is bound to continue in the position. Against less vigorous backs he would have been a scorer, but as it was he had a hand in each goal. It was a grand win.