

BEATEN BY RUGGED ROVERS

LUTON MISS MANY CHANCES

(By Crusader)

BRISTOL ROVERS 3
LUTON TOWN 1
BRISTOL ROVERS.—Calvert; Russell, Smith; Black, Stoddart, Townrow; Oakton, Routledge, Cook, Findlay, Dix.
LUTON TOWN.—Imrie; Kingham, Hodgson; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Cupit, Tait, Loasby, Rennie, Bryce.

Referee.—Mr. A. J. Spittle, Gravesend.
THOUGH a hard game was anticipated at Eastville, few who had seen the Town's displays away from home thought they would fail. Nor should the result have been against them. The Rovers deserved their success, nevertheless, for they played a very plucky game with the odds all against them, and on such form their lowly position is difficult to understand. Not so clever as the Town, they had no punch in attack and defence; gave the ball plenty of boot, and took the shortest and straightest route to goal, grimly challenging every movement of the Town and putting every ounce of weight and drawing to the fullest extent upon their zeal in order to attain their objective. They won by a combination of their own very hard work and the Town's failures both in attack and defence.

OAKTON'S SPEED

A good start is said to be half the battle, and by quick and successful opening the Rovers damaged the hopes of the Town. The speed of Oakton had been amply demonstrated in the first meeting at Luton, and when he had the good fortune to receive a ball that came from the left flank of the Rovers' defence to the extreme touchline on the right, he went through unattended. The Town defence was scattered, and he centred splendidly for FINDLAY to head a very fine goal. For some time the Town could not settle down, and the Town goal was often endangered through Dix's skilful work. However, the Town halves began to get a grip of things, and after levelling up the play, they had the better of the exchanges, though they never impressed in front of goal. There was a loud and justifiable appeal for a penalty kick when Smith dived to hold up Loasby, and the former Town full-back got the ball away by using his hands, but the referee refused the claim.

BRYCE'S GOAL

There was too much holding of the ball by the Town forwards in the Rovers' penalty area, too, and players were waiting for a pass that did not come, and Loasby was so well watched that his attempts to force a passage were unavailing. Rennie was playing cleverly as ever, and dribbling with more confidence than usual, while Tait put in good work and Cupit got the ball over better than is his wont. Smith was fortunate to get the ball away during one assault, and his kick landed it at the feet of McGinnigle, who swung it over the heads of the defenders to the left, and BRYCE, who was unmarked, went in to score from close quarters. Smith was hurt and carried off when holding up another strong attack, and the Town continued to have the better of the exchanges, though the Rovers were always dangerous when their wingers got away, and Cook was a stalwart and aggressive leader. The Town did so well in the last twenty minutes before the change of ends that they looked like a winning side, but crossed over level.

ROVERS 1
TOWN 1

A NARROW ESCAPE

Resuming with only ten men, the Rovers were forced to defend, but were equal to the task, and though Calvert was called upon several times, there was not much difficulty. The Rovers replied by long kicks and wide passes, and from one such Dix got possession and shot the ball forward for Cook. Hodgson came across and could only kick the ball for a corner. Dix placed this well, and the ball should have been punched away, but it fell to the head of OAKTON, who headed another very good goal. The Town livened up again, and Rennie and Tait did splendid work, but there was poor response, the wingers hanging on and invariably being robbed, while Loasby was not quick enough to elude the attentions of Russell and Stoddart. The Rovers were very lucky in one attack, for Townrow was forced to kick back hurriedly, and as Calvert came out the ball went past him and was a certain scorer, but the goalkeeper turned in a flash, flung himself at full length to seize the ball right on the line, and eventually clear.

TAIT'S ILL-LUCK

All the Town halves were playing magnificently, but their labours could not be brought to fruition by the forwards. Bryce failed badly after a cute pass by Rennie, and when Loasby was waiting to head the ball close in goal he was bowled over from behind, the appeal for a penalty kick being refused. Kean brought off a wonderful clearance when he darted over and robbed Oakton, who had gone clean away with only Imrie in front of him. Cupit made one or two good moves, but usually Townrow was too strong for him. Once the right winger was given a rare chance from a lovely pass by Rennie, but could not control the ball. Kean skimmed the bar after another hot assault, and then Rennie outwitted the opposition and tapped the ball to Tait, who rushed right through and shot past the goalkeeper as he came out. Everybody thought a goal was certain, but the ball struck the post and came back to Loasby, who had the easiest of chances, but tamely lifted the ball from three yards' range into the hands of the goalkeeper, who rolled

over with it in his possession, and the centre-forward was pulled up for fouling him.

A BAD DECISION

From the free kick the Rovers got right away. The ball was kicked hard up the field towards the Town goal, and Kingham let it go to Imrie, while he met Cook. He floored the home leader with a heavy charge, and was penalised. Stoddart took the free kick and tapped the ball to Findlay, who lifted it over the heads of the defenders to Oakton, at an acute angle, but words offside. The Town players stood and appealed, but OAKTON shot hard and true past Imrie, and the referee allowed the goal. This was a shocking decision, and the Town players appealed vigorously, but without avail. The game was now won, for the Town were evidently disheartened by the decision. The Rovers came to the attack again, and as Cook shot for goal Dix dashed in and slipped, to crash against the goalpost. His head was covered with blood, and he was clearly in a bad way, and had to be removed on a stretcher. Rennie gave Cupit another good chance, but again failed to control at close quarters, and the end came with the Rovers deserving their success.

PLAYERS

The most disappointing feature from the Town's standpoint was the failure in front of goal. There were chances enough to have won with a good deal in hand. Tait seems dead out of luck. He played finely, as did Rennie, both doing hard spade-work, but the others could not carry through. Cupit played about the same as on Friday, but was in too much of a hurry when he had ample time at close quarters. Still he is gaining by experience. Bryce had not the speed to succeed against Black and Russell by the simple method of kicking the ball past them and going for it, as he so often did. The halves put up a magnificent game, all three playing grandly, but Kingham and Hodgson were distinctly worried by the dashing methods of Cook and his colleagues, while Imrie could well have copied the habit of Calvert in taking away the corner kicks that came close in goal. He kept goal well, however, and when the scoring efforts were made had no chance.

For the Rovers, Calvert was a safe custodian, and Russell and Smith were vigorous backs. Townrow also did good work when he took Smith's place, and Black was as good as the Luton halves. Dix was the cleverest forward, though all played well.

There were 6,000 spectators.