

HOLIDAY FOOTBALL

A POINT PER MATCH FOR LUTON TOWN

Better Marksmanship Required

A Brilliant Wind-up

(By Crusader)

LUTON TOWN have played four games this Eastertide, and have taken four points. They have won each of their home games with a good deal in hand, and have lost the two away. Those who have seen all the matches know perfectly well that the one reason why all were not won was simply the poor marksmanship. In each of the four games the Town have had many more real scoring opportunities than the opposition, and it has been galling to see easy openings missed for want of a little resolution or nippiness, or lack of coolness and resource.

At home to Mansfield on Good Friday there was never any question as to the better team, and the score could have been much better had the team not slackened appreciably. At Bristol it was a tale of missed opportunities; at Mansfield even more so, though delighted 4,000 spectators by a brilliant wind-up, in which they smashed Norwich City's fine defence and scored seven goals. Even in this instance, however, they had so much of the game that had they made the score twice seven their superiority would not have been exaggerated, so brilliantly did they perform.

Here are the results and the teams:—

At LUTON on Good Friday:—

LUTON TOWN	3
MANSFIELD TOWN	1

Scorers for Luton: Rennie, Loasby, Bryce. For Mansfield: Johnson.

LUTON.—Imrie; Kingham, Hodgson; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Cupit, Tait, Loasby, Rennie, Bryce.

MANSFIELD.—Staples; Clifford, England; Readman, Robinson, Blackburn; Storer, Broom, Johnson, Featherby, Bowater.

At MANSFIELD on Easter Monday:—

MANSFIELD TOWN	5
LUTON TOWN	2

Scorers:—For Luton: Bryce, Loasby. For Mansfield: Johnson (3), Bowater (2).

TEAMS as on Good Friday, except that Mansfield had Stanforth for Featherby.

At BRISTOL on Saturday:—

BRISTOL ROVERS	3
LUTON TOWN	1

Scorer for Luton: Bryce. For Bristol: Oakton (2), Findlay.

LUTON team unchanged.

ROVERS.—Calvert; Russell, Smith; Black, Stoddart, Townrow; Oakton, Routledge, Cook, Findlay, Dix.

At LUTON on Tuesday:—

LUTON TOWN	7
NORWICH CITY	1

LUTON team the same as above except Bryce at outside-right instead of Cupit, and Slicer at outside-left instead of Bryce.

NORWICH.—Wharton; Wren, Smith; Blakemore, Williamson, Lochhead; Bell, Burditt, Brown, Thompson, Slack.

Scorers for Luton: Loasby (3), Slicer (2), Rennie, Tait. For Norwich: Thompson.

FRIDAY

MANSFIELD TOWN met with the fate expected by the Luton supporters. The score does not nearly reflect the superiority of the Town, who were slow to bring to fruition splendid approach work. Rarely did the visitors find a footing in the home half after the first ten minutes, and their moments of danger were chiefly due to the raiding qualities of their wingers and the enterprise of Johnson, the old Sheffield centre-forward. Staples made brilliant saves before being beaten by RENNIE heading into the net a grand centre from Cupit.

This was the only goal before the change of ends, but the Mansfield defence had to work very hard and resolutely all the time. LOASBY added the second goal early in the second half, and later BRYCE registered the third, as the result of a strong solo effort. It was then the Town relaxed their efforts and the visitors had more of the game, but even then they had a slice of luck in getting the chance, for while the Town players were held up through an injury to an opponent, JOHNSON and Bowater got clean away together, and the former was left with a run-through, and succeeded with an admirably-placed shot.

SATURDAY

THE game was lost to BRISTOL ROVERS owing to the inefficiency of the attack. A quick beginning by the home team had the Town unsettled for some time, and FINDLAY headed a fine goal from a clever centre by Oakton very early on. The Town afterwards took command, but were weak in front of goal, and many chances were missed before the equalising goal fell to BRYCE, who took a pass from McGinnigle and broke through to score at close range. Smith was hurt and had to retire soon afterwards.

In the second half Smith returned, but played at outside-left. Again the Town were slow off the mark, and in a sudden burst was forced. Dix placed Cook a corner, and OAKTON headed the kick nicely, and the Town should have drawn through. The Town should have drawn level very quickly, and subsequently had level opportunities and not a little luck. Tait once broke right through and shot past Calvert as the upright, came out, but the ball hit the upright, and Loasby missed the easiest chance of the holiday. Straight from the clearance the Rovers got away, and, following a free kick, OAKTON scored Jowing an offside position. The Town from an offside appeal without avail for defenders appealing without avail for the infringement.

MONDAY

IT was a hectic struggle at MANSFIELD, and here the Town, if they did not have all the misfortune, were handicapped by decisions both of the referee and by decisions. In the very first minute Loasby scored a capital goal after Bryce had challenged back, but the winger then the scorer was offside, referee held that the home team BOWATER scored for the home team after Imrie had failed to negotiate a sweeping pass from the result of a badly

cut head, after a collision with Blackburn, and the latter later had to be removed to hospital owing to concussion, either due to his collision with Kean or because he was struck on the head by a terrific drive from Rennie. Before the interval had defensive play let in JOHNSON to score a second, and shortly afterwards JOHNSON was allowed to go through from an offside position and score the third.

Luton had much the better of the game for a time after re-starting, and it was no more than their due when BRYCE scored a grand goal with a first-time shot, after good play on the left wing. However, BOWATER replied for Mansfield as the result of misjudgement by Kingham. LOASBY capped more brilliant play by Bryce, and the Town showed a lot of skilful play in advances, but failed badly close to Cupit and Loasby being the chief sinners. Another bad blunder by McGinnigle let in JOHNSON to score the fifth goal for the home side, and though the Town played up strongly and had further chances, they were unable to get through again.

TUESDAY

ONLY about 4,000 spectators saw the rout of NORWICH CITY on Tuesday, after one of the most brilliant displays the Town have given for two or three seasons. With the exception of Brentford's, the City's defensive record was the best in the Division, and they held a stronger position than the Town. Few could have expected such a spectacle as that to which the Town treated the crowd, and once more it could be said that had they given consistently at home anything approaching this performance they would already have been virtually the champions. After scoring five goals long before half-time they slackened, and yet had much the better of the play, scoring twice to the visitors once in the second period. Even so, they lost chances comparatively innumerable, and contrived to bewilder utterly the City defenders. The general play was positively dazzling, and no team could have withstood the attack.

The ground was heavy after the rain, and three games, and the run of the play was largely determined by the adaptability of the players. The Town brought Bryce to outside-right, Cupit standing down, and Slicer took the extreme left. Hodgson won the toss, and the visitors were soon thrust on the defensive. Loasby received from the right and looked like scoring as he rushed through with the ball at his feet, within a yard or two of goal he was tackled, and the referee held that he had pushed an opponent, and a free kick was awarded the City.

Slack received from Williamson and got the ball under control by using his hands on the blind side of the referee; he centred well, and Bell received the shot strongly. Imrie diving to bring off a glorious save at full length, throwing the ball out for Kingham to kick away. The visitors returned strongly, and the Town defenders had to be wide awake to get rid of the attack.

and Imrie saved well. Then the ball travelled quickly from end to end. A fine run by Tait enabled Bryce to carry on, but he held on a fraction of time too long, and the best he got was a flag kick. However, he placed this so well that TAIT was able to forestall Wharton as the goalkeeper reached for the ball, and it sailed from his head into the net.

Fraser was in the picture with wonderful work, but Rennie just failed to make good from the pass. McGinnigle followed and lifted the ball out to Slicer, whose grand centre was punched away by Wharton. A corner followed, and Rennie headed into Wharton's hands. Then Loasby was laid out in a charge on Wharton, and play was suspended for a few minutes while he received attention. A quick thrust by Brown was dangerous, but Hodgson recovered finely and cleared. Kingham also did well to negative an effort by Thompson and Slack, and Kean and Rennie were applauded for splendid scheming. Kean was fouled, and Kingham placed the free kick well; there was a scramble in the City goal area and the ball was headed to the left. Slicer returned it, and LOASBY was on hand to put the finishing touch. The Town monopolised the game, and the visitors' goal was in constant jeopardy. Wharton made grand saves, and though Bryce missed an easy opening, Bryce followed with a splendid run half the length of the field, beating all opposition except Wharton, who ran out and managed to block the ball as it left Bryce's foot at close quarters.

Then Rennie outwitted the opposition and went up the middle, passed to Tait, who transferred to Bryce, and the winger swung the ball right over the heads of the defenders, and SLICER came running in to shoot into the net for the third goal. Rennie then worked a way through and drove in a terrific shot, Wharton stopping the ball and then managing to scramble out on all fours and move it away from Rennie's foot as the inside-left came up to shoot again. A further assault followed immediately and after a free kick had been well saved, Rennie twice put in hot drives for the goalkeeper to let away, but another full-blooded effort by RENNIE beat the goalkeeper all the way for the fourth goal. Tait narrowly missed a moment later, and then there was a flutter at the other end, but Imrie was not troubled. A remarkable incident followed. Tait made a great run and had beaten all, including the goalkeeper, and was on the point of netting when brought down from behind, but the referee, amid derisive jeers from the crowd, refused to give a penalty kick.

First-time passing by the whole of the Town forwards and the City halves and backs beaten time after time, and Slicer swept the ball to the right wing. Bryce returned it, and Tait and Loasby rushed through together, and were only foiled in the jaws of the goal, the ball rebounding to the left wing; SLICER came up at full speed and shot into the net, the goalkeeper being helpless. The Town continued to attack, and Loasby was tripped just outside the penalty area as he was dribbling through; Rennie took the kick and his first shot rebounded from an opponent, his second whizzing past the upright at a tremendous pace. The interval came just afterwards with the score:

LUTON	5
NORWICH CITY	NIL

The Town showed no immediate diminution of energy when they resumed, but swarmed to the attack, and Slicer was fouled in the first minute, but Hodgson's free kick was not good enough. Backed by magnificent halves, the Town forwards besieged the City goal. McGinnigle put Tait through, and he passed to Rennie, from whom Wharton saved brilliantly. Wharton was tested by shots from all directions, many of them from close range, but he stood it well, and gave a fine exhibition of his ability could not shake off the Town attack, and could not make any impression on the Town defence for a long time. Bryce and Loasby were pulled up for offside at critical moments, in the former's case a bad decision. Bell changed the scene and made a capital run, but landed the ball on top of the net.

Kean and Rennie again combined in a midfield movement, and as a result Slicer got right away and centred grandly, but the heading was wide. Then Fraser was prominent with a corner, runs on the left wing, and from his pass Slicer drew the defence and lifted the ball across; Bryce had a good chance, but his shot hit the goalkeeper and rebounded to LOASBY, who made no mistake. Play became very tame, and the Town toyed with the opposition, rather too much of it, and did not strive for more goals as they might have done. Both Kean and Fraser seemed anxious to have a goal, and frequently took the ball close in to try a shot. Tait again worked clean through, and seemed to have the goal at his mercy, but Wharton again made a successful dash, and the ball struck him and went to Bryce, who put it across the goal-mouth, but neither Tait nor Rennie could get it in. Following another free kick Slicer headed into the goal-mouth, and Loasby again missed.

There was an obvious slackening of effort among the Town players, and rather loose play enabled Slicer to go right away unattended and centre, and THOMPSON headed a fine goal. Just afterwards the referee got in the way of a hard drive from the City pivot, and was knocked out, requiring the attention of the trainers before he could resume. There was much laughter from the crowd, but they gave him a hearty cheer for his pluck on resuming. The game had scarcely been re-started before another volley struck him, but this time in a better protected part, though he felt it. A sharp run by the Town left wing found Tait well placed, but he could not get the ball under control, and Loasby shaped no better when he had a chance. Imrie had to flay away from two corners by the visitors, and then Bryce was going full pelt for goal when Lochhead dashed across and tackled him successfully; both came down, and Lochhead was hurt and had to be carried off on a stretcher. It was ascertained that he had damaged his knee.

Luton continued to command, and forced several corners, Tait once going very close with a great header from a flag kick. Tait again burst through and had the opposition well beaten, but Wharton once more got in the way of the shot, and a goal seemed a certainty, and when Tait recovered and freed Loasby the latter missed an easy chance; Tait again got there and forced the ball into the net, but the referee pulled up Loasby for an infringement. Immediately afterwards LOASBY took a pass up the middle from Kean and went between the backs to score with a fast ground shot, at which Wharton dived in vain. Bryce was given a gilt-edged chance just afterwards, and went almost under the goalkeeper's nose, but then sent the ball straight to him. The winger came again just afterwards and slammed the ball right across the mouth of goal, but neither Tait nor Loasby could give it the necessary touch. The end came with the score as stated.