

A POINT DROPPED

ONLY KEAN'S SKILL AVERTED DEFEAT

(By Crusader)

MANY supporters of Luton Town were disposed to say that they were lucky to avoid defeat on Saturday, and that was true up to a point, but unquestionably, on the run of the game, they should have finished up with a victory not far short in margin of the success of the previous meeting of the teams, when the Town scored seven goals against one. The balance of play after the first half-hour was overwhelmingly in favour of the Town, and the sole reason they failed to carry both points was the inability of the attack to bring their efforts, excellent in midfield, to fruition.

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NORWICH CITY made a splendid start, going into the game from the kick-off with a dash and virility that was all too much for the Town defence, and the goal had narrow escapes before it ultimately fell, after only twelve minutes' play, to BURDITT, whose opportunism was deservedly rewarded, though the main credit for the initiation belonged to the right wing pair, Ramsay and Scott. The Town had chances, but for a long time they never touched the speed and understanding of the City, to say nothing of the vigour introduced by the visitors.

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AS the game wore on the crowd were exasperated by the rough work of certain City players, and particularly the halves and backs, and, with the referee failing to bring the offenders to book, a lot of admirable play was marred, for some of the Town players took reprisal. Free kicks were of little use to the Town, for most of them were wasted by poor placing, the ball nearly always going to a City player, and when accuracy was found the City backs and halves put up a stubborn defence and barred the way to the Town forwards.

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IMRIE made several good saves, and had more to do than the City goalkeeper in the first half-hour, but subsequently the Town infused a lot more dash and speed into their work, and the last fifteen minutes before the interval were practically fought out in the City penalty area. Indeed, the five minutes before the change of ends saw fierce struggles all round the City goal, which had many narrow escapes, while Robinson, the custodian, made many fine saves. Once the ball seemed to be well over the line as Robinson got to a header from Tait, but the referee ignored the appeal, and the City held a goal lead at the change of ends.

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THERE was simply a duel between the Town attack and the City defence for more than three-fourths of the second half, and, had there been one effective marksman among the Town forwards, or a less efficient goalkeeper to face, many goals would have been scored. The Town forwards, reinforced for the most part by the middle men, strove hard, and some of the combination touched first-class quality, but whenever the danger zone was reached it was found that the City defence had been strengthened, and Robinson proved to be one of the best goalkeepers seen

on the ground for many a long day. It was not so much his agility, although he was very quick and clever, but his anticipation of shots from close range. Seldom was he out of position.

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LUTON must have forced more corner kicks than Imrie had goal kicks, but the forwards were quite unable to break through, and, though there were exciting scuffles on the goal-line, and players were injured in stemming fierce rushes, the minutes slipped by without bringing success. Now and then the City forwards made a raid, and invariably they gave a lot of trouble, but these breaks were few and far between, and it was only during the period added to the forty-five minutes through stoppages for injury that the equalising goal was scored.

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THIS fell to KEAN, and was but a just reward for the captain's game. With his half-back colleagues, he had tried tremendously hard to infuse the forwards with the fire that would have succeeded, and he was the inspiration of a tremendous assault in the closing minutes. Two or three corners were forced, and from one, placed by Mills the Town skipper dashed into the ruck of players and forced the ball into the net. There remained only a few seconds, for as soon as the ball was re-started the final whistle sounded, and the game was over.

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ALL the defensive players and the middle men played splendidly, and their work would have been simpler had the forwards been able to fulfil completely their mission. In midfield the football was good enough, but so many efforts came to grief because of the failure to shoot, or because there was neither enough powder nor the right direction to the shots. That, individually, the forwards are clever, there can be no question, but the sting is lacking at close quarters, and, until that deficiency is overcome, there will be little satisfaction for the supporters.

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THE City were strong in defence and attack, and, though the midfield work of the Town was better than that of the visitors, as instanced by the frequency of the attacks, there was a threat in almost every move of the visiting forwards, while the halves were a resolute and unceremonious lot. The backs kicked strongly, and recked little of what happened to opponents so long as they got the ball away, while Robinson gave a very fine display in goal.

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LUTON TOWN 1
NORWICH CITY 1

LUTON.—Imrie; Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Mills, Nelson, Tait, Hutchison, Rowe.

NORWICH. — Robinson (Robert); Thorpe, Smith; Robinson (Bernard); Williamson, Lockhead; Ramsay, Scott (T.), Burditt, Bell, Murphy.

Referee.—Mr. A. J. Spittle, Gravesend.