

PRESSURE WITHOUT PROFIT

LUTON LACKED THRUST AT SOUTHEND

Roberts's Success

(By Crusader).

SOUTHEND UNITED 2
LUTON TOWN 1
SOUTHEND. — Whitelaw, Hatfield, Robinson; Dixon, Randle, Donovan; Barnett, Jones, Morfitt, Lewis, Robson.
LUTON. — Imrie; Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser, Mills, Nelson. Tait, Rennie, Roberts.
Referee. — Mr. S. F. Rous, Hemel Hempstead.

REVERSAL of the scores would be a better reflex of the trend of the play at Southend on Saturday. To say that the Town had sixty per cent. of the game is no exaggeration; they attacked for the longer periods; the home backs were in action much more frequently than the Town pair, and the home goal was packed for stretches which were never necessary at the Town end. The defeat could be attributed to weakness in defence, though there was not such tightness and reliability as we would like. The real reason for the loss once again was inability of the forwards to round off successfully their clever approach work. Southend's goals were the reward of speedy raids, and the readiness in which they swung the ball about. The Town's goal also came as the result of first-time passing, and the celerity of the most consistent forward. For half an hour the Town kept the game open splendidly, and then, for some reason, began to hold the ball too close at inside forward, and against a team that concentrated on defence and presented a compact resistance, close work was useless.

THE Town found their stride very much quicker than usual; they swung the ball about finely, with the result that Whitelaw had to get busy very much sooner than Imrie. Quite early on there was a classy bout of passing by Rennie, Tait and Roberts, and the last-named ran in when the centre-forward verged towards the corner flag; he received the pass and drove in a grand shot that would have beaten a less resourceful custodian than Whitelaw. There was another very good attempt when Tait hooked the ball over the head of Hatfield, and then drove hard before the ball touched the ground, but there was too much elevation, and it sailed over. We then had a fright, for in a left-wing raid by the home team, Robson swung in a centre to which Imrie came out a yard or two; he failed to take the ball in his arms, but, luckily, it cannoned off his leg and went to the right; Barnett nipped in and turned the ball in front of goal; there was a desperate rush, but Mackey and McGinnigle got in the way, and eventually Kean slipped back and cleared with a fine kick from a difficult position.

IMRIE was again faulty in dealing with another centre, but this time Mackey, who had dropped behind him, lifted the ball well out of danger. The Town then pressed severely. Rennie and Roberts were chiefly responsible for the moves, the former passing cleverly, and Roberts got the ball across nicely, but Tait was crowded out, the backs shadowing him closely, and Randle remaining in close attendance. Mills was prominent with a quick run and centre when Rennie varied the procedure with a strong transfer to the right, but Whitelaw came out and caught the ball. The home goalkeeper was kept on the alert, but was well protected, and there was no sting behind shots from Nelson. For fully twenty-five minutes the Town were the better side, but could not score, and when Jones initiated an assault at the other end a goal accrued from a penalty kick. Though the Town players protested hotly, it seemed to be a just award, for Kingham charged Morfitt in the back when the latter was trying to head a centre from Barnett. HATFIELD scored from the penalty kick.

THE Town would have had no more than their deserts had they been ganted a penalty kick the next minute. There was good work by Kean and Nelson, and Mills darted through and had the ball past Robinson when the latter brought him down. Had Mills remained down there might have been a penalty kick, but he scrambled to his feet to chase the ball, and was too late to get it. The Town remained on the attack for some minutes, but seldom got in a good shot, for Tait was too well

watched, and only Roberts seemed disposed to have a try, so that Whitelaw, while having more work than Imrie, found it fairly comfortable. Then came another thrust by the home forwards, and Morfitt had a clear run in and seemed certain to score, but Imrie managed to divert the ball at three or four yards range, and Mackey completed the clearance. Again the Town, thanks to the sound work of the flank halves in supporting their forwards, went to the attack, but no likely scoring shot was found, and when the siege was raised Southend went further ahead. There was some loose play on the left, and Robson, from near the flag, drove the ball across. BARNETT, from the inside-left position, got hold and shot, and Imrie's dive was too late, the ball entering the net off the upright.

THE Town resumed the aggressive, and were often in the vicinity of Whitelaw, but the goal was packed, and such shots as were attempted were either lacking powder or were well off the mark. Tait was hanging on too much, too, and was injured and had to be assisted from the field when brought down near the corner flag. Rennie took over the leadership, and there were hot times for the home defence because the ball was kept on the move. Kean and his wing eventually brought play right up the field and Mills centred well; Rennie deflected the ball with his head; while the home backs were paying rough attention to Rennie, ROBERTS rushed through with the ball at his feet to shoot a splendid goal. Despite the handicap of Tait's absence the Town were the superior side to the interval, but could not draw level.

SOUTHEND 2
LUTON 1

THE manner of their restart suggested that the Town would soon have the game in hand. They pressed continuously for some minutes, swinging the ball about well, and the home halves and inside forwards were brought back to assist the rearguard. Many free kicks were given against the home defenders, but the ball was never well placed from any one of them, usually falling short of the goal area. Time after time the Town forwards, with Tait in command, swept down the field, but always failed against the hard kicking and sturdy tackling of the home backs and halves. Both Hatfield and Robinson were disposed to play the man too much, but for all that the Town forwards had so much of the ball that they should have given Whitelaw a lot more trouble. Roberts had hard luck when he ran inside and hit first time a centre from Mills, but the ball struck Robinson and was deflected for a corner.

THERE was not the pace that we had seen before the interval, and the raids of the home team were not so frequent because their halves were playing almost constantly in line with the backs, and it was clear that the first aim of the United was to hold the lead. They were dangerous now and then, but Imrie had nothing very serious to deal with. At the other end good footwork by the Town forwards and halves outwitted the home middle men, but when shots were tried there were so many defenders that a way past could not be found. Once a terrific shot by Roberts nearly knocked over Dixon—a shot that was going straight for the mark. Many more shots struck defenders, too, yet there was still a lack of wit that would enable the Town forwards to beat the defensive methods of the United.

THE game was wearing old before the United made a really dangerous assault, and then Imrie had half-a-dozen shots in quick time, some at close quarters, but he fielded well, and did not look like being beaten again. More splendid work by the Town halves maintained an almost incessant attack, and once Nelson got in the way of another fierce drive by Kean and was knocked over. There was a good deal of

vizour, and both the home backs were rebuked for dirty play. Southend woke up again before the end, but Imrie had a fairly safe job, though the ball was centred well many times, and Jones and Lewis were never hesitant when they had a chance to slip through. The Town were attacking again before the end, but there was no more virility in their efforts, and the second half was without a goal.

IMRIE was again below his best. He certainly made a few good saves, but faulted several times in a manner that must have scared his colleagues. The backs were useful, Mackey again playing finely, his kicking being strong and accurate, and not a foul was given against him. Kingham was up to his average form, and as a pair they again got on very well together. The halves worked very hard and continued to be the best part of the team. McGinnigle was perhaps not so safe, but took a bigger part in attack than usual. Kean and Fraser played finely, though the latter had his work cut out in dealing with a tricky wing. It was in attack that the Town failed. Roberts was the best of the line, for he got down to his work splendidly, was ready to exchange place with either Rennie or Tait, and his goal was a gem of opportunism. Rennie looked after him well, finding him with perfect passes, but he might have kept up the field a bit more and tried a few shots, especially as Tait was so well policed. The latter and Nelson hung on to the ball a lot too much both trying to beat two or three men when other forwards were waiting for a pass, and unmarked at that. Mills did not do badly after his month's rest, but could have done better with a lot more work, for virtually all he got came from Kean and Rennie.

SOUTHEND showed a determined defence, not always scrupulous, but ever sturdy and very speedy in recovery. The goal was packed at almost every threat, for the halves got well back. Whitelaw had more shots to deal with, but little hot stuff. The halves did sound, rather than brilliant, work, and Jones was easily the best forward on the field.

There were 5,000 spectators.

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