

THE NEXT BEST THING

LUTON'S GREAT CUP FIGHT AT BARNSELEY

Brilliant Defence Earns a Draw

(By Crusader)

BARNSELEY 0
LUTON TOWN 0

BARNSELEY.—Ellis; Richards, Shotton; Lax, Henderson, Whitworth; Ashton, Smith, Wallbanks, Andrews, Archibald.

LUTON TOWN.—Harford; Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Mills, Tait, Rennie, Alderson, Roberts.

Referee: Mr. T. Greaves, Burslem.

TO-MORROW the supporters of Luton Town will have the opportunity of seeing their favourites make another bid for the next round of the F.A. Cup. It will be a hard match if it is anything like the struggle that took place at Oakwell, but the Town should pull through all right. Had the game been a purely scientific display they would already been there, for even allowing for the superiority—gauged from the amount of pressure—of Barnsley in the second half, the Town might well have had such a commanding lead at the interval as to have been favourites at long odds when the second session was opened. Chances were missed, but those who know the difficulties of playing on a pitch in the state of the Oakwell ground on Saturday would blame none. The ground was firm underneath a thin layer of mud; apparently frost had been very keen for some days, but the rain and, later, the sun, had thawed the surface, and the ball skidded off it at a great speed. This was evident from the opening kicks, and the effect could also be understood by thoughtful people from the fact that while the Town were the better side when facing the wind, Barnsley also did much more pressing when they were required to turn round.

THE "GOAL" THAT WAS NOT

In some respects it was a good match, but there were long periods in the second half when play was very scrappy, due to the rugged tactics of the home side. Throughout the game the halves and backs slogged the ball for their forwards to chase it among the Town defenders, challenging them for possession at every opportunity, and but for the wit and skill of Smith the home forward line would seldom have been dangerous as a combination. What I liked about the Barnsley side was their magnificent fighting spirit; they never ceased trying right to the final whistle, and though one could not admire their attitude on decisions and claims, they put in every ounce of strength and zeal. In some of the papers you might have read that they had a goal disallowed in the last minute. Well, it was never a goal, for the referee, right under the bar, whistled as soon as the forward fouled Harford, and before the ball was in the net. Had Harford not been foully charged the ball would never have been in the net, for he was in the act of punching away when simply bashed into the back of the net, and he had to

receive attention for a minute or two before he could resume.

ROUGHNESS

That was Barnsley's way, and none could grumble at charging when it was fair, or robust tackling, or fearlessness. I never believe that a player should hold back at all if he can kick the ball or charge the man fairly, but there was an instance early on when one player kicked over the top of the ball and would have crippled Kean had he caught him. It was rather curious that Whitworth and Archibald especially seemed to make a butt of the Town captain before there was any suggestion of foul play from any of the others, and it culminated in Archibald being warned by the referee. He had deserved it before, but the referee depended upon his linesmen a great deal, and one of the pair seemed peculiarly blind to the infringements of Barnsley, but could detect all sorts of faults against the Town.

WHAT OFFENCE?

Here let me say at once that I differ from those who thought Mr. Greaves was not a good referee. Plenty of referees would not have risked the displeasure of penalising the Barnsley centre-forward when he fouled Harford in the last minute, but Mr. Greaves refused to be intimidated by the crowd or badgered by the home players. Such mistakes as he made were due to his acceptance of the signals of the linesmen and there were at least half a dozen offside decisions that were grossly unfair to the Town. Mills was pulled up three times, although well inside the right latitude when the pass was made, but the most ludicrous decision was in the second half. There was a big kick from the right, and the ball travelled yards over Rennie's head; he made no attempt whatever to get to the ball or to interfere with an opponent; Roberts, from within his own half, raced up and caught the ball but the linesman was flagging. It was clear that the referee himself was surprised, as he stopped the game and came over to consult the linesman; but then took the ball and gave a free kick to Barnsley, yet whether the decision was against Rennie or Roberts was not clear.

CHEERS AND TEARS

Before dealing with the play, a word about the crowd. The attendance was not more than 10,000 when the teams turned out, but there was a big rush for the stiles for some time after the game began, and the Luton followers who travelled by the excursion arrived on the ground when play had started. The total was 15,190, and the receipts £798 11s. 9d. Naturally, there were nearly 15,000 who wanted to see the home team win, and they did their utmost to infuse more zeal and enthusiasm among the players. They worked themselves into a frenzy late in the second half and had Barnsley won, I would have said that it was due as much to the crowd as to the players. Just in front of the Press-box was one stalwart supporter of the "Reds," proud of his colours, and when he found that the referee had given a free kick against Wallbanks when the ball was in the net he gave way to tears, so strong marked is the loyalty and enthusiasm of the Northerners for their team; and it would not do Luton any harm if there were a few here of like sentiment.

RENNIE'S SHOT

It was so cold that the task of writing was hard labour, and when the Town had to face the biting breeze I thought they were in for a hard time. Almost from the kick-off Lax got hold and banged the ball as hard as he could, without any attempt at finding his forwards; Mackey, well up the field, tried to head the ball, but it clipped his hair and travelled fast over the line near the corner flag. The locals thought this was a good omen, and began to open their lungs to some tune when Lax drove in a long hard shot which Harford punched out in capital style. Then the Town began to get into their stride, and Fraser was prominent with delightful work against a strong right wing. His head and feet were getting the ball, and he did useful service; and Roberts once cut in and was only a few inches wide with a shot that passed right across goal. Two or three free kicks were awarded the Town, and from one of these Rennie cleverly slipped past Richards and shot very hard as the goalkeeper came out; Ellis was beaten, but the ball just topped the bar.

TOWN NEATER

When Barnsley got going they could not find a position for a shot, save from

FOOTBALL

ON THE TOWN GROUND.

F.A. CUP
3rd ROUND REPLAY.

TO-MORROW, WEDNESDAY

AT 2.15 P.M.

LUTON

V.

BARNSELEY

Kick-off 2.15 p.m.

long range, and the Town hit back, the forwards going through with good passing; so quickly did the ball skid off the turf, however, that none could hold it in front of goal, and there was a respite for the home defence when it was kicked behind for a fruitless corner. Rapid and even exchanges followed, but the Town were showing the neater footwork, and one thrilling bout of passing, in which the ball traversed the whole of the forward line, ended with Roberts tapping the ball along the ground for Rennie to take a m at an open goal, but he clean missed the ball as he sped across. Barnsley's best effort so far came from a free kick taken by Whitworth, and Harford just managed to touch the ball on to the bar, whence it rebounded to be scrambled away. The Town right wing took a turn, and Mills cleverly put the ball forward for Rennie to rush between the backs; Ellis came out, and the Town centre-forward hooked the ball over his head, and a goal seemed certain, but the ball trickled only inches wide of an empty goal. For a long time the Town held the upper hand, and the home defenders were glad to make use of touch, and kicked anywhere for safety. Ellis had to handle many times, but he was always safe, as was Harford when Smith broke through and fired in a strong shot, the Town goalkeeper again rising away. Shortly before the change of ends Barnsley attacked desperately, but found Kingham and Mackey at their very best, and, with all the halves also facing up to the business courageously, all the rushing and excitement was of no avail, and the Town were in the Barnsley quarters when the whistle sounded.

BARNSELEY 0
LUTON 0

It seemed by their methods at the restart that the Town were going to win with something to spare, but Ellis soon dealt with shots that came his way, and the backs kicked lustily. Owing to the conditions there was much faulty kicking, and then came a halt, and it seemed almost as though there were another omen, and this time for the Town. A small black and white terrier held up the game, running right across the field and in a circle before returning to the rails. Alderson put in

Biassed reports of the alleged goal scored by Barnsley in the closing stages appeared in certain papers. It should be clearly understood that neither Harford nor Wallbanks (the alleged scorer) touched the ball. The goalkeepe was "biffed" while in the act of punching the ball, and the referee penalised the offender before the ball was in the net.

good work, and Tait and Rennie each went close, and Roberts also got in a centre from which Rennie shot hard, the ball going well over the bar. Harford had to clear two or three times, and then there was a period of midfield play. Barnsley were trying all they knew to break down the defence, but Kingham and Mackey were playing well up to their halves, kicking strongly and cleanly, and they refused to allow the home forwards to position for a shot. McGinnigle and Kean also took a hand, and then we had a series of onside decisions, one or two of which were wrong, against the Town forwards. Barnsley fought with more vigour, but the only shot that gave trouble came from Smith, and Harford lifted it over the bar.

DESPERATE STRUGGLE

Tait and Alderson each found passes for Mills, who got the ball across, but Ellis saved all right; and then Ashton was given a pass that enabled him to cut in, but he shot very badly and wide. Tait had been in the wars two or three times, but in a fine solo effort he was just beaten by Shotton, from whose foot the ball went behind. Then the Town fell back on defence, and the home forwards were at their wits' end to find a passage. Once Ashton did get a chance, and shot hard and low, and Harford just managed to deflect the ball with outstretched leg. Mackey and Kingham played grandly now, and it was well they did. Two or three times the whole of the Barnsley inside forwards and halves rushed into the goalmouth, but they were felled again and again. Harford punched away two hot shots, and then brilliantly caught another. In a last desperate effort Barnsley rushed down, and a free kick for "hands" was given against McGinnigle. As the ball came into goal Harford jumped up, and was about to fist away when Wallbanks crashed into him and knocked him into the back of the net, and the ball landed there too. The referee, who had gone right into the goal to see the free kick taken, whistled as soon as ever the foul was committed, and no amount of hectoring by the home players would turn him from his decision, which was quite just. He gave a free kick against Wallbanks, and the ball was in midfield when the end came.

BRAVE REARGUARD

It was a hectic finish, and of such a character that chief credit for the visit of Barnsley to Luton on Wednesday must go to the defence. Harford has often had a great deal more work. About ten shots, of which half were difficult, were sent in, but chiefly from long range. He fielded cleanly, punched well, and cleared strongly, and on this showing fully merited his place. Kingham played his best game of the season; his heading and kicking were crisp and sure, and Archibald, from whom the home crowd expected so much, rarely got the better of their frequent tussles. Mackey gave a magnificent display; cool under pressure, strong enough to command the wholesome regard of the courageous Wallbanks, and shrewd enough to keep a check upon a clever wing, this could also be estimated as his very best performance for the club. The rearguard as a whole played a great game. The halves were as good as ever. McGinnigle found foothold very diff-

cult in the first half, but was in the thick of the fray when most wanted in the second half, and with Kean and Fraser doing great things at half, the defensive departments were as strong as ever they have been.

FORWARDS

The forwards were not so good. The Barnsley defenders would not let them maintain the pace at which they started. Tait's lameness was a handicap, it is true, but they did not keep the ball moving so freely as in the previous match. Rennie was not so effective, but did not receive so many good passes, and his shooting was not so good. Alderson did clever things, but was apt to hang on to the ball a fraction too long against such rugged and relentless tacklers, while Tait, though working hard, was likewise at fault. Mills and Roberts played fairly well without reaching their best, but should have had more long passes than they received. I hope to see the forwards return to the open game they showed against Bristol City, and then they will surely win the replay; but there is too much holding of the ball among the inside men.

Ellis is a good custodian, and will not be easily beaten; but his backs, apart from their unflinching courage, were not great. They seemed to lie too far apart at times. The halves worked like Trojans, and the forwards were much the same, falling back to help their middle men, and giving the ball plenty of boot. Smith was the cleverest of the line, and will be the man to watch on Wednesday. He is much after the style of Donovan, of Southend, both in physique and style of play, and has a lot of craft.