

THE DRAWN BATTLE

HOW LUTON EARNED THE REPLAY

(By Crusader)

ATTENTION will be focussed on the report of yesterday's re-play, and so detail of the visit to Barnsley may be abbreviated considerably. Yet there should be a reasonable record of the struggle if only to make a permanent record of the magnificent fight of Luton Town to earn the right of re-play on their own ground. It was a harder battle than that at Stockport, for the latter certainly played better football than Barnsley—by which I mean more scientific football. Barnsley lived up to their tradition as a raging, milling team, intent upon winning, if not by hook or crook, at least by broiling tactics.

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THERE were not many incidents dis-creditable, however, and the only player to be sternly rebuked was Archibald, the Barnsley left winger, who could not keep his temper when beaten by Kean. Archibald appeared to me to be something of a spoiled favourite, and the game had not been in progress half-an-hour before he was called to book. Compared with the Stockport match, however, there was none of the unseemliness that characterised the closing stages of that game. It was just that Barnsley lived up to their ancient reputation as Cup-fighters. In League football I should imagine that the Town would beat the same team five games in six, but this was a Cup-tie.

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UNQUESTIONABLY the better side from a football standpoint, I thought the trouble with the Town was that the forwards allowed themselves to be thrown out of gear, sometimes by the offside game, and at others by the desperate tackling of the home halves and backs. Had they swung the ball about all the time as consistently as they did in the first half-hour there would not have been a re-play, for it was obvious that the Barnsley halves and backs were almost panic-stricken when the ball was shot out to the wings and back again quickly. They gave a lot of corners, and kicked out a lot in the first half.

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IN that period the escapes of the Barnsley goal were closer than ever befell the Town. Rennie had a storming shot scrape the bar with the goalkeeper well out of position; then he missed completely when Roberts slipped the ball across and gave him a gilt-edged chance, or what would have deserved that term had the ground been in less treacherous condition. Later he did beat the goalkeeper with a clever hook as the goalkeeper came out, and the ball slowly passed by the empty goal with all the defenders helpless to get near. This was the narrowest shave of either goal during the match.

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BARNSELY'S best efforts were two shots from free kicks, one of which skimmed the bar, and the other was touched on to the bar by Harford; there was also a shot by Smith that was grandly saved by Harford. Considering that the Town were playing against the wind, and it was a keen January wind, they did remarkably well to have the better of the exchanges, and served up the more attractive football. The spectators were not wanting that so much, however, as goals, and made themselves heard to that effect.

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IN the second half the Town again began well, and for some time the home goal was the more in danger. The best attempts came from Rennie

and Tait, each of whom had strong shots that went over or close, while Alderson once drove in a fierce shot that had the goalkeeper beaten, but again the ball was inches too high. On the other hand, Ashton had a couple of good openings, once shooting wide when he had all the goal to aim at, and the second time driving very hard and low, only to see the ball strike Harford's leg and go for a corner. Towards the end the Town concentrated almost wholly on defence, and Barnsley tried their utmost to break it down by violent rushes, but met their masters.

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THE Town defenders kept their heads, and resisted with combined courage and craft. Right in the closing minute there was a terrific rush on the goal as a result of a free kick, and the ball actually went into the net, but the whistle had already gone for a foul, and a bad one, too. As Harford jumped to fist away Wallbanks simply rammed him — there was no other adequate description, and neither Harford nor any other player touched the ball, for it fell on top of Harford as he lay in the back of the net. The infringement was so glaring that had it been earlier in the game there would not have been either the demonstration by the Barnsley players or the crowd. The referee was in the best position to see what happened, for he was right under the bar, and before the ball was in the net he had whistled and was pointing for a free kick.

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WHETHER the Town have won or lost the re-play, they deserved all praise for a great and gallant resistance, and none more so than the rearguard. Harford had not a tremendous amount of work, but Kingham and Mackey saw to that, and their coolness and resource evoked outbursts of praise from the people who were anxious to see Barnsley win. No commendation could be fulsome for these. As for the halves, they were right at their best, and Kean again played a true skipper's game, daring and ubiquitous, while Fraser was magnificent in his skilful extrication of the defence from tight corners, and helped his forwards immensely. McGinnigle was handicapped by his boots failing to function properly in the first half, but Horace Pakes saw to that during the rest, and he was himself in the second half.

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THE forwards played well for an hour, but were too often at a loss to circumvent the offside tactics adopted by the home defenders, though it must be granted that they were let down badly several times by a linesman who evidently did not thoroughly understand the offside rule. There was not enough open play in the second period, or they would have given just as much trouble as in the first half. Bearing in mind that the surface of the pitch was very greasy, and control was exceedingly difficult, they did not do badly, and are as good a formation as the Club can command.

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BARNSELY 0
LUTON TOWN 0
BARNSELY.—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.