

EXETER ECLIPSED

LUTON'S ALL-ROUND EXCELLENCE PREVAILS

Tait's Brace

(By Crusader)

LUTON TOWN 4
EXETER CITY Nil

LUTON TOWN.—Harford; Kingham,

Mackey; Keau, McGinnigle, Fraser;

Mills, Nelson, Tait, Alderson, Roberts.

EXETER CITY.—Davies; Gray,

Hughes; Clarke, Angus, Barber; Scott,

Kennedy, Whitlow, Houghton, Higgins.

Referee.—Mr. W. E. Russell, Swindon.

IT was time the Town won a League

game, and they showed us very con-

clusively that they knew how. Com-

parison of the merits of the teams,

without regard to the actual score, left

no doubt in the mind as to which team

should be holding the higher position

in the League table, and yet we have

Exeter challenging for the leadership

and the Town wallowing in the lower

half. As an earnest of the game they

will play at Halifax, if it can so be

reckoned, it was a splendid display, and

an Exeter Press representative who

travels with the City marvelled at the

Town's fine exhibition. He had no hesi-

tation in saying that the Town were

quite good enough to fight their way

to Wembley on form which had made

Exeter's successful side appear fourth

rate. It was not merely the number of

goals, or the tremendous pressure the

Town brought to bear on the City goal,

but the manner in which they achieved

it. There was great team spirit, admir-

able understanding, and, to me the

most important phase, the open methods

which had the City halves all at sea,

and their dour backs defending with

their backs to the wall almost from

start to finish.

BEATEN FORE AND AFT

There was no period in the game

when the City could be said to have

had the better of the exchanges. Their

movements generally were skirmishes

rather than attacks, for they were

seldom sustained for more than a few

seconds, and then only when the Town

were taking things easily. The City

were handsomely beaten fore and aft,

and only the wholehearted work of their

rearguard kept down the score to four

goals, although it must be admitted

that the Town attack could have been

much more successful in marksmanship.

So much better of the game had they

in the first half that had their final

score been the order at half-way it would

have been not a whit more than their

skill and craft deserved. Moreover, the

Town continually played the ball,

whereas the City, especially the middle

men, were frequently guilty of petty

and trivial offences that achieved their

purpose in holding up a speedy attack

and enabling the defenders to regain

position. With a less firm controller

there might have been trouble in some

instances, but Mr. Russell was sharp

to detect and punish infringements,

and, though there was no goal directly

traceable to an offence, there were

serious threats in consequence.

STUBBORN BACKS

The Town took the game in hand

from the start, and pranced around the

City goal in ominous fashion. Roberts

once sent well wide when he should have

done much better, following a lofty kick

from Kingham that found the outside-

left well placed and unattended. Then

Alderson lifted the ball well over from

a scrimmage following a free kick. Play

was almost continuously in the City

half, for when their forwards got away

they could not find the way to Harford.

Only the grand defensive work of Gray

and Hughes frustrated efforts of Tait

to get close in, but Davies made many

capital saves. Once, however, there was

a flutter when Scott got clear away, and

then lashed in a hard centre, which

Harford could only parry with hands

at full stretch. Davies twice did well

to get the ball away from free kicks,

and once dashed from goal when Tait

and Alderson seemed certain to score,

and managed to get first kick, and so

the danger was averted. The City con-

ceded many corners, and these were

usually well placed by the Town wingers,

but Davies continued to play well, and

was splendidly served by his backs, who

fought tenaciously against clever com-

bination.

ALDERSON'S CREDIT

When the goal did come it was rather

a scrappy affair, although ALDERSON

deserved credit for the manner in which

he kept his wits and took advantage

of the opposition. Mills had gone along

well, with Nelson and Kean assisting,

and sent the ball into the middle;

Alderson came up behind Tait, but

Angus nipped in and momentarily

deprived him, but could not retain the

ball, and Alderson snapped it up and

went on to shoot hard into the net

right away from Davies as the goal-

keeper came out. The City were not

dismayed, but their forwards were not

allowed an easy course to Harford, and

the Town did more shooting, all the

forwards and halves taking a part in

concerted movements that left the City

middle line at a loss to intervene. How-

ever, Davies dealt safely with all that

came his way before the change of ends,

which found the score:

LUTON 1
EXETER Nil

The City showed fight again imme-

diately the game was re-started, and

Harford had a little work, but it was all

from long range. The Town left wing

became more assertive, and Fraser kept

plying his wing with delightful passes,

while they, in turn, swung the ball into

the middle or over to the right. Once

Tait bored through on the left, and

Davies flung himself full length and

made a great save from close range as

the Town leader tried to force the ball

past him. Corners followed in quick

succession, and Davies and his backs

could not get the ball away very far.

The tendency to try and get inside the

goal area before shooting was often the

undoing of the Town's clever work in

approach, for they were pressing almost

without ceasing. Two or three times the

City backs belted the ball behind, just

missing scoring against themselves,

while Davies dealt with all sorts of

shots. However, success came when,

following a thrust on the left, Tait

and Alderson worked through, and the

latter shot the ball across goal for

MILLS, who had closed in, to send it

into the net, Davies having no chance.

TWO FOR TAIT.

The Town left wing came again, and

the ball was sent forward for Tait to

chase it out to the left. Gray pressed

him, and there was a short and sharp

tussle before the back got the ball

into touch. From the throw-in Fraser

got hold and hit the ball right into

the goal area, where TAIT dashed in

and shot past Davies. For a long time

the Town maintained the attack, and

shots were almost rained on the City

goal. Davies and his backs still resisted

magnificently, and at length Whitlow,

who had worked very hard, but without

anything like success, forced his way

through at the other end, and from a

difficult angle on the right shot very

hard. Harford could not hold the ball

at the first attempt, but quickly

recovered and cleared. This was by far

the best effort for the City, and there

was not another its equal during the

remainder of the game, though once

the ball sailed right across goal and the

left wing pair completely missed it.

Both, however, were well offside. The

Town replied with furious attacks, and

often came near breaking down the City

defence. Tait once hit the upright with

the goalkeeper well beaten, and the ball

was got away. TAIT, however, scored a

further success in the last minute when

he took possession and went between

the backs, right into the goal, and then

pushed the ball past Davies. The whistle

went as soon as the ball was kicked

off.

SPARKLING FORM

It was a capital win over such well-

placed opponents, but the result was

never in question after the Town had

scored, for they were clearly superior

in every department. Harford had little

work, and his backs were safe, with

Kingham playing a polished game, and

Mackey had a quiet afternoon, thanks

to the skill and ingenuity of Fraser,

who had a very good day. Indeed, all

the halves are in sparkling form, and

played magnificent football, keeping the

ball down well, and finding their for-

wards with accurate passes. McGinnigle

was at his best, and Kean was good as

ever. The forwards showed delightful

combination. Tait led them well, and

against less vigorous and less capable

backs would have had more goals. I

liked immensely the work of both Nelson

and Alderson, and the latter has fully

justified the confidence of his friends.

This was probably his best game, and

he released the ball to advantage, often

swinging to the outside-left to vary

the point of attack. Nelson did the

same, and the wingers got plenty of

opportunities. Mills responded the

better of the two, for Roberts was

rather patchy again, sometimes centre-

ing brilliantly, and at others making

bad blunders. Mills was more con-

sistent, and had a good day generally.

Davies could not be blamed for the

goals, while his backs played grandly

all through, and deserved sympathy

for the heavy defeat. Their halves

could not master the determination of

the Town forwards, and as a line they

were not nearly of such class as the

Town middle line. As a result the City

forwards, the third highest scorers in

the Division, had little chance, but even

when they had, were not allowed to

make use of the ball effectively.

Attendance 6,388; receipts £363 10s. 5d