

"ON ILLKLA MOOR!"

LUTON'S HAT TRICK OVER NORTHERN CLUBS

Wonderful Team Spirit Beats Halifax

TWO WITHOUT REPLY

(By Crusader).

LUTON TOWN	2
HALIFAX TOWN	0
HALIFAX—Shirlaw: Flack, Barrie; Thompson, Craig, Parkin; Davies, Brown, Chambers, Wellock, Tunstall.	
LUTON—Harford: Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Nelson, Tait, Rennie, Alderson, Roberts.	
Referee: Mr. A. H. Kingscott, Derby.	

AFTER continuous expression of absolute faith in the ability of LUTON TOWN to overcome HALIFAX TOWN in their own Yorkshire stronghold, it would be absurd to describe their success on Saturday as the greatest of the series. Actually it was the most comfortable game they have had, even including the Kingstonsians in the first round. The drawback was the troublesome weather, because I am quite certain that had the game been played in normal circumstances the margin of victory would have been much more decisive. It is true, as many newspaper correspondents stated, that Luton adapted themselves better when wind and snow were making demands upon skill and stamina, but there was that control of the ball, and quicker perception of power in using it, which advantage, that stamps men individually and collectively superior. The determination and the courage of Halifax were never in dispute, but with one or two exceptions they never rose to the standard set by the winners.

AT THE SHAY

Set in magnificent surroundings the Shay ground presented a picture that thrilled Lutonians, but perhaps no thought was given to the fact that had it not been sheltered by the splendid hoods, blizzard conditions down from the Wolds would have prevented the game being fought to a definite issue. Before we reached the ground we were looking for shelter from the blast and the snowflakes that were so icy cold as to sting the faces of the crowds flocking to the gates. When Bob Hawkes and I eventually arrived in the front of the stand at Fraser's virtually without shelter, the snow would have been as dismal but for the remarkable spirit of the crowd, and not the least joyous were those from Luton. When we sat down the snow was driven under the stand and leached off faces, but there was little protection for the hands, but even then the frost bit them, and as the snow melted streams trickled down from hat brims on to the desk and the papers.

THE BLIZZARD

Before the kick-off, however, there was a change, and the sun peered out a little upon the groundsmen who had been hastily requisitioned to sweep clear the lines on the pitch. Apparently the going was good, but before the game had been in progress a minute it was snowed that the turf was under the snow, and the players slipped about a good deal. It seemed strange that Halifax should win the toss and then choose to take such advantage as the conditions offered, because when the snow came again, although it whirled about a lot, it seemed to be more at the backs of the Town than against them. We were told that the weather had been delightful during the morning, save for a few light snow showers, but less than an hour before the start there was a real snow-storm, and the ground was covered with snow when we arrived. Moreover the wind had increased, and perhaps it was the idea that it would increase as the afternoon progressed that decided Thompson to face it.

BETTER METHOD

Luton found their stride at once, and there was a concerted movement between halves and forwards as the ball was thrust up the middle for Rennie to take it in his stride, but the whistle pulled him up for offside. Halifax seemed to be very anxious, and could not get very close to the Town before they were pulled up. Fraser checked Davies and Brown very skilfully, and from his cut round pass Tait received, and went on to shoot hard but the ball was well placed, and took the ball coolly Kean was evidently intent upon holding Tunstall, and twice robbed the Halifax left wing, and drove up to his own forwards, but Barrie was a stumbling block to Tait and Nelson. Craig got out a nice pass to his left wing, which came along splendidly, but when the ball came across Mackey outwitted Brown and cleared the net. Roberts dashed away and got the ball across for Rennie to hit it hard on the run, but there was too much elevation by far. Play went from end to end, but Luton were showing signs of coming forward as the strategy was clearly puzzling the home back and halves. Each goalkeeper had to advance from his charge to intercept centres or passes that outstripped the forwards, but Barrie was a master in his own eyes, made the first strong shooting effort, and the ball was very close as it flew right across goal.

WHEN HALIFAX NETTED

Roberts was a handful for Thompson, and now and then surprised the opposition by running quickly inside instead of punting, as he perturbed with the ball in the right hand. It would have been a damaging move, but two or three times he held on until robbed. Once, however, he got the ball well over, and Nelson dashed into meet it, but it struck too high. Davies, who was already marked down by the Luton supporters as being quite as dangerous as Tunstall, mapped up the ball after Fraser had

slipped on the frozen ground, but he had come back for the ball, and the Fraser and McGinnigle were beaten in attempts to dribble, for the none team were tackling quickly and robustly, and it was well that Kingham and Mackey were short. Each in turn cleared threats, and then Fraser miskicked, and the home right came up the middle, and Tunstall also ran in to take the ball as Chambers put it between the backings and the snowflakes. The whistle went before Tunstall got the ball, and Harford did not make an spectacular effort.

TAIT DOES THE TRICK

McGinnigle then came up the field with the ball at his toe, and sent the left wing away. Roberts passed to Alderson, who shot hard, but the ball skidded off his foot and was wide. The ball came again, now as a faster pace, and the home defenders were harassed. Roberts and Alderson worked through and the latter sent right across the goal-mouth. Nelson had closed in, cleverly, but Mackey was coming down, but the Town pressed heavily, and the left wing again came through, a similar movement again finding Nelson well placed, and another fast man by the left wing, but at the opposition, and TAIT took possession, and shot hard for the farther corner of the net: Shirlaw rushed across, but a defender, either Wellock or Roberts, shot a shot, and the ball travelled into the net. It is doubtful whether Shirlaw would have got to the ball, but the interception left him helpless, and the Luton followers made the welkin ring.

"ON ILLKLA MOOR"

From the kick-off Luton raced through again. Kean and his right wing working together, finely, and from Nelson's centre Rennie neatly attempted to turn the ball out of the reach of Shirlaw, but it struck the goalkeeper and rebounded to the crowd. Kicked away, The Luton halves were dominating the game, and the ball was nearly all the time about the Halifax penalty area, but it was difficult to control, and as the snow was falling heavily, and the swept into the faces of the Halifax defenders, the referee called a halt, and the teams trooped off the field. It became doubtful whether the game would be resumed, but the snow of people began to leave the ground, but after a time, when umbrellas and hats were snow-covered, there was a sudden cessation and the sun laughed at us as the snow became impatient and began to shout for the players to return before the snowfall ceased. Mr. Kingscott, along with the two club managers, Fraser, Kean, and Craig, went on to the field, and soon the groundmen were busy, the crowd meanwhile raising the Yorkshire chorus, "On Illkla Moor." Everybody in the open wore a snow-crown when play was resumed after a stoppage lasting a little over twenty-five minutes.

TUNSTALL TOUCH

Immediately Luton took the upper hand, the forwards playing brightly in front of dashing halves, and a powerful drive by Tait reached Shirlaw. Again was the crowd becoming impatient, and Nelson's pass, Rennie had a first-time shot that travelled well wide. Mackey then won applause for magnificently holding up the home right wing. A moment later Davies cut in, moved a centre, and had only Harford to beat, but got well under the ball and lifted it high over the goalkeeper and the bar. Roberts next took the pass from Alderson and, instead of centring, went right through, and Shirlaw rushed out of goal just in time to prevent him taking a shot from four or five yards range. The Town continued to hold the upper hand, and two corners were forced on the left, but Halifax defended sternly. Then we saw a touch of the real Tunstall, for he made a zig-zag run right through the Town defence, but McGinnigle raced in and kicked the ball off his foot, and the resultant flick kick gave no trouble for Kean promptly met the ball and headed well out.

RENNIE'S ILL-LUCK

Luton were soon attacking again, and Alderson, by adroit manoeuvres, found a way through the defence, and then tapped the ball to Rennie, who shot hard, but the ball was well placed for the ball and managed to intercept it near the upright, but could not hold it, and it went behind him. Quickly he turned and gathered the ball, and the Luton players stood still and applauded loudly for a goal, but the referee ordered play to proceed until Roberts ran and took hold of his arm. Then he stopped play and sternly rebuked the Luton player. Still the visitors had the upper hand, and from another bright movement, in which nearly all the team, beginning with Mackey, took part, Nelson shot in and beat Shirlaw, but Thompson had fallen back, and he and Flack got the ball away just in time. The interval came with the score:

HALIFAX

Without leaving the field the players changed ends and resumed. Conditions were still very difficult, and there could be no doubt that the two sides were of the superior play of Luton might be of no avail. Halifax began as though they thought that way, too. For the

first time during the game their best workman, Wellock, was prominent, and made a fine dribble, but Kingham stopped him at the expense of a corner. This was got away, and then Chambers and Davies tried hard to score a goal, but two or three shots were tried, but usually from such a range as gave Harford no anxiety at all. Roberts and Alderson changed the scene, and the three well-respected players they broke past Flack but the former's pass to the middle was taken by Craig, who was keeping close to Rennie. Mackey's strong work helped us to a goal, and King, and after Kean sprinted through and beat three men before lifting the ball out to Nelson. The latter and Tait worked together well, and the ball was swung over at the right moment, but neither Roberts nor Alderson could gather it. The Town were always the more dangerous when they held possession; Tait did grand work, and Nelson doing quite well on the extreme wing.

ON TOP

Fraser evoked cheers by his skill in depriving the home right wing time after time, and after one of these checks he sent the ball along to his wing, and Alderson and Roberts carried it to the goal. The ball came across Rennie slipped Craig and shot hard; Shirlaw dived and managed to knock the ball out, but NELSON had rushed in and had the easiest of chances to kick into the net. This was ten minutes after the re-start, and the goal was well merited, because Luton were clearly the more polished team. Halifax had in the meantime been very busy, but not good enough to master the Luton defence. Davies was a danger, however, and twice Harford had to punch away, centring, and that Frank MacKinnon, who Kingham were playing finely, and the inside forwards of Halifax had to be content to shoot from well outside the penalty area, and were invariably well covered. Tunstall was tackled by Kean or Kingham, and with the Luton men more confident than ever, the game seemed to be won before the second half was through. In the third, however, Kingham was left in possession, and he shot along the ground, but Harford had no difficulty in accepting the shot. A counter-stroke came when McGinnigle lifted the ball out to the left wing and the pair went through, only to see a hard centre strike Thompson in the face and knock him out. Tait next tricked through, and, with a covering Rennie, he tried to shoot, but there was a yard wide. A moment later he repeated the move, and this time Shirlaw had his work cut out to take a crisp effort.

RENNIE ON THE MARK

On the first half, Rennie, and swung the ball over to the left, where Wellock rushed in and shot, but Harford again saved neatly close to the upright. Tait and Kean brought the ball through, and then to the left wing, and the pair went through, only to see a hard centre strike Thompson in the face and knock him out. Tait next tricked through, and, with a covering Rennie, he tried to shoot, but there was a yard wide. A moment later he repeated the move, and this time Shirlaw had his work cut out to take a crisp effort.

HONOURS WELL WON

In every department the victors were the better, and their footwork won good things for them. The Town crowd showed their appreciation often, and readily admitted that the reward had gone to the deserving team. The best feature of Luton's game was the wonderful teamwork, which was adopted for his side and for his fellows, and though, as was natural, there were occasions in which a player held on too long, and a fine, winning goal adopted, and the precision of their passes, were something new to the Halifax crowd. They had the match-winning spirit, and the middle men played like masters, and the forwards were too speedy and skilful for the opposition. I am convinced that had the pitch been different the result would have been the same, for the score does not represent the difference in class. Harford did his little well, and had less work than Shirlaw, and it was, however, so well played, that Mackey had comparatively easy afternoon, but both were on the alert, and proved that when required they could withstand pressure. The key to the victory lay with the halves, however, for all three played superbly. McGinnigle gave a really fine display, and showed a speed that even those of us who know him so well could not believe. There is a little secret of training about this, I fancy. Kean and Fraser lived right up to their best, playing brilliantly both in attack and defence, and is an eloquent commentary on the run of the game to say that McGinnigle did almost as much attacking as the other two.

THE FORWARDS

I did not fancy Nelson as a wing forward, but much as I do Tait. In the late stages Tait showed, by fine runs along the touch-line, what he could do if required there, but Nelson played splendidly, and so way to the goal. Tait was a powerful personality, and revealed a stamina that surprised the opposition, for he often felt back and down, and was with the full force threatened. He dribbled strongly, and released the ball to advantage. So did Alderson, who fully maintained his fine form, who know him so well could not believe. There is a little secret of training about this, I fancy. Kean and Fraser lived right up to their best, playing brilliantly both in attack and defence, and is an eloquent commentary on the run of the game to say that McGinnigle did almost as much attacking as the other two.

HALIFAX

For Halifax, Shirlaw could not beat

blamed for either goal. He did very well. The backs and halves, however, had not the skill to defeat the tactics of Luton, though they, like their forwards, were triers to a man. Tunstall gave only rare glimpses of his cleverness, but was seldom allowed to have the ball. Davies was quite the best forward, and against less formidable opposition would have done a lot of damage.

The attendance was a big record breaker for Halifax. The previous best was 22,023, and receipts £1,212 17s. 6d.; in this game the official figures were

29,235, and receipts £1,624 10s. 6d.

Mr. Kingscott was a good referee, but could not have had an easier task as far as the players were concerned. There were even fewer infringements than in the Spurs' game; both teams played the ball, and only at rare intervals were the shoulders used. There were not more than a couple of trips, and very few cases of "hands," while heavy changing was taboo. The game was a credit to both teams, for it was played in the friendliest of spirit, and the Yorkshire folk were generous in their praise of the winners.