

LUTON'S FIFTH CUP VICTORY

HALIFAX BEATEN ON MERIT

(By Crusader)

LUTON TOWN achieved an ambition of the club when they visited Halifax Town on Saturday and won their tie in the fifth round of the F.A. Cup. It was the first time Luton had appeared in the last eight teams in the competition, and the honour was well won, because this was the third occasion on which the team had to travel to meet a club in the Northern Section of the Football League. The victory was thoroughly deserved, and at no point of the game, played under unusual conditions, were Luton in danger of defeat.

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During the first half there was a severe snow storm which resulted in the referee stopping play for a period of about twenty-five minutes. At that stage Luton led by a goal to nil, and there was no change until after the interval, when the issue was placed virtually beyond doubt by a second goal. Luton were immeasurably the better side, playing fine, fast football on the treacherous ground, and the Halifax goal had several narrow escapes, the like of which were never seen in any instance at the Luton goal.

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There was a record crowd of 29,235 spectators, and the receipts were £1,624 10s. 6d. In spite of the heavy snowfall, the crowd made the very best of the day, though, naturally, the Yorkshiremen were sorely disappointed by the defeat of their team. Possibly Halifax made a mistake when their captain chose to face the wind after he had won the toss. Though not exactly direct from goal to goal, the direction was such as to favour the Town in the first half.

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From the kick-off the superiority of Luton was apparent, for they showed better control, their passing was more precise, and the home defenders had to do a lot of ball chasing and could not prevent the Luton forwards getting in shots. Shirlaw accepted a very hot drive from Tait, while Rennie, Alderson and Nelson all had efforts that went wide. Tunstall once carried on after the whistle had sounded for offside, and shot into the net, but there was only a laugh for his pains.

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After a lot of pressure the first goal was scored by TAIT, whose shot was going for the farther corner of the goal, when a defender shot out his foot and deflected the ball into the net. It was shortly after this that the game was stopped owing to the snowstorm, but before that the home goal had twice escaped very narrowly from Rennie, one shot hitting the goalkeeper and being cleared by a defender from close to the line.

During the period of waiting for the snow to cease, many spectators left the ground, while in the enclosure and the stands, hundreds joined in the famous Yorkshire anthem, "On Ilkla Moor." When the storm ceased the markings had to be done afresh. The players found the conditions more difficult, but Luton overcame them the better, and pressed heavily again. Only twice was the Luton goal in any sort of danger before the interval; once when Davies raced in and had only Harford to beat, and shot over; and again when Tunstall made a clever dribble, but was held up by McGinnigle at the expense of a corner which was fruitless. On the other hand, Luton's forwards were often shooting, and once Rennie beat Shirlaw with a fast drive, but the goalkeeper recovered the ball at the second attempt and cleared, the referee refusing the claim for goal. Half-time:—

LUTON 1
HALIFAX nil

Halifax resumed strongly, but they were soon on the defensive again, for they were repelled by a sterling defence, and the forwards were soon giving Shirlaw trouble. The combination between the halves and forwards was all too much for the home halves, and they had to fall back on defence. It came as no surprise when the lead was increased nine minutes after the restart. There was a left wing movement engineered by Fraser, and the ball was centred for Rennie to shoot hard: Shirlaw saved, but could only just push the ball out, and NELSON was on hand to shoot into the net.

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From this point the game seemed to be safe. Harford, however, had more work than he had seen in the first half, but it was usually from long range, and he had plenty of time to punch away, or to gather shots. On the other hand, Shirlaw and his backs were frequently in demand to prevent goals. Very fine shots were made by Tait and Rennie in particular, and there was clever scheming in which Alderson had a big part. Rennie struck the bar with a lovely effort as the game was nearing the end.

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None questioned the result, for it was gained on sheer merit. In every department Luton were the better side. The main strength was at half, for Kean, McGinnigle and Fraser dictated the course of the game, not only getting a firm grip on the home forwards, but also feeding their own attack so well that they were bound to give a lot of trouble. The three played magnificent football throughout. Harford and his backs were safe as could be desired, and the kicking of Kingham and Mackey under adverse conditions was remarkably accurate.

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All the forwards played well, though Roberts did one or two freakish things. Nevertheless, he managed to keep the home backs uncertain as to his intentions, and he and Alderson got on well together. On the other flank, Nelson made good as a winger, while Tait gave splendid support to him, and was a constant source of danger to Shirlaw. Rennie distributed neatly as ever, and had much hard luck with good shots.

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Halifax had a deal for which to thank their rearguard, which was the best part of the team. The halves were not good enough to hold the Luton attack, and much work devolved upon the home backs, who stood up to it well without being capable of preventing the forwards from shooting. Craig did a few good things, particularly in support of his

forwards, but they had very few chances to get away, and fewer still of shooting.

It was a clean, sporting game, a credit to all taking part, and was well controlled. Indeed, it could almost have been conducted by a snow man, so finely did the players enter into the true spirit of the game.



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.