

ANOTHER POINT DROPPED

BRISTOL ROVERS PLAYED WELL AT LUTON

Hutchison's Penalty Kick

(By Crusader).

LUTON TOWN 1

BRISTOL ROVERS 1

LUTON.—Harford; Hodgson, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Brown; Mills, Hutchison, Tait, Alderson, Roberts.

BRISTOL ROVERS.—Beby; Pickering, Donald; Irving, Routledge, Eyres; M'Nestry, McKay, Lewis, Stevenson, Green.

Referee.—Mr. F. W. Reeve, Devonport.

YET another valuable point was dropped by Luton Town yesterday when they entertained Bristol Rovers in the postponed League match. In a measure the Town were lucky to save a point, because their goal had infinitely more good luck than the Rovers, although taking the game throughout the Town had quite as much of the play. As a team, however, they did not show either the same spirit or equal skill with the Rovers; there was a keener menace in the Bristol attack, and every forward seemed to carry a scoring shot, which was very much in contradistinction to the Town front line. Moreover the visitors had more pace and punch in all departments, and one wondered if the exertions in the Cup fights had left the Town eleven stale and wilting. The ground was very hard and the light ball was difficult to control, but the Rovers never hesitated to get in first time, and they swung the ball about in a manner that all too seldom was emulated by the Town attack. Kingham and Fraser were unable to turn out owing to injury and Hodgson and Brown deputised. Hutchison displaced Nelson. For the Rovers Gibbins and Blake were unable to play owing to scholastic duties, and their places were filled by Lewis and Eyres.

ROVERS START WELL

Kean won the toss, and the Rovers at once made tracks for the Town goal, and for some minutes there was a constant threat of downfall, for the Rovers showed much thrust, and never hesitated to tackle the defenders for possession. Lewis twice got the ball over, and there was a clever shot from long range by Eyres that made Harford jump to it. When the Town made a move on the right as a result of the foresight of Kean, Mills got over a fine centre from near his flag, but Beby sprang up and seized the ball just before Alderson could get his head to it. The Rovers replied on the right, and Brown was beaten by M'Nestry, who centred well, and Lewis headed over with only Harford to beat. The Town got away more frequently now, but they could not overcome a strong pair of backs, and although Beby had shots to handle, there was nothing difficult. For some minutes the Rovers penned in the Town defenders, and Mackey was prominent with clever work, and then Roberts dashed through, but was beaten off by Pickering. From another rally on the Rovers' right, McKay shot hard, and the ball glanced off McGinnigle's head and went for a corner. This was placed well by Green, and the ball was headed in; Harford appeared to have it safe, but he dropped the ball, and LEWIS dashed in and netted.

EFFORTS FOILED

The Town woke up a bit, and Alderson and Tait made a determined effort to break through, but Pickering got there first, and Beby had time to get the ball away comfortably when it was returned. Beby again cleared a centre by Mills, and when the Rovers came back there were storming drives by McKay and Eyres that passed over the bar. Harford saw more of the ball than Beby, but he was not often called upon now, though once there was some resentment against M'Nestry when he dashed into

the Town goalkeeper as the latter was trying to punch a high shot. Stevenson and Green were felled by Hodgson when they were close in, and then the Town had a couple of free kicks, each winger being fouled in turn. Beby made a capital save from a free kick by McGinnigle, and the Town pressed heavily, with Tait and Mills most prominent. Beby was very safe, however, and Tait generally found a couple of opponents waiting for him when he tried to force a passage close in. Beby saved from Alderson and Roberts in turn, and then Hutchison tried a couple of hard shots that went harmlessly past. Nearing the interval M'Nestry made five runs, but Brown was improving and with Mackey very watchful the Rovers were kept at bay, though they deserved their lead at the cross over.

ROVERS 1
TOWN 0

Luton were at once aggressive when the game was resumed, and for a long time they maintained the attack, and several free kicks were given against the Rovers for petty fouls. From one free kick the ball was lifted into the goal-mouth, and it bobbed about from head to head, and then Roberts nodded it right into the goal-mouth, where Tait headed over an empty goal. Beby made good clearances after this big slice of luck, and for a long time there were seven or eight of the Rovers defending strenuously. Donald once kicked the ball from off the line when Beby was well out of goal, and the custodian then brought off a very fine save from Roberts. A free kick, well placed by Roberts, was snapped up by Mills, but he lifted the ball well over. It was all Luton for some time, but the forwards were not swinging the ball about so freely as the Rovers, and when the latter got away they tested the home backs very severely. From a quick thrust by Green the ball traversed the front of the Town goal, Harford and two of the Rovers missing completely.

PENALTY GOAL

Pickering fouled Roberts in another Luton assault, and McGinnigle sent the ball over the bar. The Rovers' backs had to work very hard, but did it splendidly, and never failed to give their forwards a chance, while the halves were resolute in tackling, and generally quick enough when they got a chance to intercept a pass. However, the way in which Hutchison opened out the game was making a big difference to the Town attack, and Brown also did fine work in this half. There was a good deal of excitement in the Rovers' penalty area as attack after attack was beaten off. Then M'Nestry suddenly rushed away and beat Mackey in the spring, but his centre was safely taken by McGinnigle and Kean. Harford had to save a ground shot from M'Nestry in another movement. There was a quick return to the other end, and Tait burst through the defence and centred from near the line; Donald slapped the ball with his hand, a glaring offence, and then, after a moment's thought, joined in the protests which the other Rovers were making. The referee rightly ignored all the fuss, for it was a bad case of hands, and not a very necessary thing either. HUTCHISON scored from the penalty kick, and did it in a way that amused the crowd, and even Beby joined in the laugh against himself. The Town player walked a couple of paces, then made as though to fire hard, but, with Beby anticipating a terrific bang, the ball was side-footed just inside the upright, the goalkeeper making no attempt whatever to reach it.

The Rovers now came back again

(Continued in next Column)

(Continued from preceding Column)
with fierce assaults, their wingers working well, and Routledge doing fine work in support. McKay sent in a stinging shot, and Stevenson twice went very close, while Lewis headed wide. From a free kick against the Rovers, Mills was given a good chance by Alderson, but he ballooned the ball. The Rovers were again forced to defend, but with Tait limping at outside-right, having been hurt just before the penalty kick, there was not much hope of success, for the Rovers' backs stubbornly resisted. Green led another raid, and Harford saved finely. Hodgson twice cleared his line cleverly, and Kean put in useful work, sending his forwards away again and again, but they could not break through to shoot. Routledge once cleared when the other defenders were spreadeagled, and then came a big effort by the Rovers in the closing stages. They beat through the defence easily, and Harford made good saves. Lewis was beaten just in time by Mackey, and then Hodgson and McGinnigle foiled Stevenson when he had dribbled to within a couple of yards of goal. In the last few seconds the Town goal had a marvellous escape, for Harford could not gather the ball properly twice, and it was slithering about just in front of goal, but at the finish the packed goal prevailed, and the end came with the honours shared.

THE PLAYERS

From the aspect of team work and general skill the Rovers were the better side, although the Town perhaps had a slight balance of play on the whole owing to their second half improvement. It was rather an advancement owing more to desperation than to skill, and the attack was lop-sided and quite unreliable near goal. Hutchison was clever, and did many fine things, and Tait was a splendid worker all through, with Mills also very useful indeed. The left wing, however, could make little progress, and the line seemed to be quite out of joint. When Tait was hurt there was little idea and no leadership. After a poor start Brown did very well in the middle line, and the same may be said of McGinnigle, while Kean, if not at his best, was the pick of the line. Mackey was again in fine form at back, and Hodgson, if not quite up to his old standard, was responsible for judicious work. Harford kept goal well, though he seemed to be a bit shaky at times. However, the hard ground and the light ball did much to put the players off their game, and they made the mistake of waiting for the ball to bounce instead of taking it first time, as did the Rovers.

For the visitors Beby did his bit well, though he seemed inclined to take risks. Fickering was the better of two good backs, and in a level intermediate line Routledge was perhaps the most conspicuous. The forwards were a sharp and skilful lot. M'Nestry did very well against his old club, and he seemed to get the ball over better than when he played for Luton. However, all showed good footwork, speed and understanding, to say nothing of much better marksmanship than the Town.

There were about 2,000 spectators.