

CITY BEATS TOWN

NORWICH GET FOUR WITHOUT REPLY

Futile Forward Play

(By CRUSADER)

NORWICH CITY 4
LUTON TOWN 0

NORWICH: Wharton; Hannah, Smith; Robinson, Halliday, Ramsay; Warnes, Scott, Vinall, Burditt, Murphy.
LUTON: Mittell; Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser, Pease, Martin, Tait, Rennie, Pearson.
Referee: Mr. A. J. Spittle, Gravesend.

TOM PARKER, the old Arsenal full back, and now manager of Norwich City, was the man who made the Nest such an uncomfortable place for Luton Town on Saturday. In a game in which they showed more cleverness and not a little thrust and fire, the Town completely failed to overcome the game for which the Arsenal might have taken out a patent—the three-back game. It does not make for attractiveness, but it is very useful, especially against an attack that cannot vary tactics according to the opposition. After the first quarter-of-an-hour one could see the Town struggling vainly against the methods of the City defenders, and although one might have expected this formation of the rear-guard when the City had to face the slope, it was certainly a surprise to see them adopt it from the kick-off. I doubt if their centre-half spent three minutes of the game inside the Luton half, and time and again he was nearer Wharton than either of his backs. To me it seemed quite clear that the old Arsenal captain had not only instructed, but had taught the City how to make best use of this game.

FIRST FALL

Fred Kean chose to face the slope when he won the toss, and the early play was an earnest of the fast and fierce struggle that was to follow. Pease was the first to bring real danger, for after a mazy dribble by Martin the outside-right centred beautifully, squarely across the goalmouth, but Tait's desperate effort to turn the ball past Wharton failed. Very soon we discovered that Scott was a danger point in the City attack, his control being exceptionally clever, and he distributed the ball left or right with judgment. It was from the left wing, however, that the first goal came, and Murphy centred brilliantly for **WARNES**, unmarked, to head past Mittell, the goalkeeper having no chance. This was a tonic to both teams, and thence play was contested at a great pace, and with any amount of vigour. For quite a long spell the Town had the better of the exchanges in mid-field, but there seemed little prospect of an opening for a real shot, though Wharton had to handle once or twice.

VAIN PROTESTS

When the City had their turn, it was chiefly due to the long kicking of the backs and halves, the forwards chasing the ball hard, and they made their presence felt in the vicinity of Mittell. Warnes was very tricky, but Scott continued to be the player most likely to bring danger. The goalkeeper had nothing serious however, the backs and halves playing strongly, but the City forwards were always on the look-out for a shot, and they rushed the defenders whenever the ball came over from the wings. The second goal came as the result of a decision by a linesman; Warnes got past Fraser and Mackey, but McGinnigle raced into position and then held the winger off while the ball passed behind. The linesman gave a corner kick although the Town protested strongly, and it certainly seemed impossible that the ball had gone behind off anyone but Warnes. The ball was headed away by Fraser, but was returned, and **BURDITT** jumped above a crowd of players and headed the ball; it seemed to be going behind, and was a long time about it, too, but after it dropped it trickled slowly on to the upright and into the net. Many around me said it was a soft goal, and should have been saved, but I would not go so far as to endorse that opinion, as there was a crowd in the goalmouth at the time, and the goalkeeper might have been unsighted.

BIG BOOT

The Town were thus two goals behind after having slightly the better of the play. The ball travelled quickly from end to end, and the mid-field work of both sides was entertaining, though the City players used a harder boot in defensive work. Two or three times Tait seemed to have a chance, but always there were two or three defenders, and he was crowded out. The best shot of the first half for the Town came from Pearson, who ran into the middle to receive from the right wing, and his first-time shot skimmed the bar. Towards the interval there was some temper introduced, and Tait was twice fouled by Halliday, while Pease was given a crack by Smith and retaliated. Just before the interval the City gave the Town defence a hard time, but Mittell saved well, and his backs and McGinnigle resisted splendidly. A burst on the Town left ended with Rennie swinging the ball right across the goalmouth, the goalkeeper touching the ball out, but Kean, who had dashed up, banged wide.

CITY 2
TOWN 0

The Town took command immediately after the resumption, and for some minutes Wharton and his three backs had an anxious time. When the ball was sent up the field, however, the Town defenders were apt to delay returning it. Had they copied the methods of the City they would have done better. Rennie was conspicuous with clever distribution, swinging the ball out to the right, or sending through the middle to Tait. The latter provided Pearson with good passes, and the little winger sent behind. From one hot assault in which the whole line took part, after Kean had dribbled the ball almost into the penalty area, Pease dash in to meet a pass from the right, and his first-time shot struck Ramsay and rebounded narrowly past the upright. Wharton made a fine save from Rennie, and then Martin spoilt a brilliant dribble, in which he beat three men and got within striking distance, but was so long in taking aim that he was robbed within a few feet of goal by the desperate dual tackle of Smith and Halliday.

COMBINATION LOST

The City forwards had not seen a lot of the ball up to this time, but when they

did they were successful. The move came on the left, where Burditt dribbled well, and when the danger appeared to be saved off **VINALL** got the ball just outside the penalty area and tried a shot; there was not a lot of pace behind the ball, and Mittell dived and seemed to have it covered, but it passed into the net. This seemed to rattle the Town more than anything else, and the combination that had been the feature of their work, was lost. They introduced too much individualism, and this was as much the fault in the rear as in attack. Once Kean and Pease made an opening for Martin, who made a very fine shot, the ball just missing the upright with Wharton at the other end. The City right wing was a big factor, especially as an inclination to take liberties with Warnes did not pay. The balance of play was still in the City half, but their backs and halves were now full of confidence, and few shots were aimed at Wharton's charge.

The final goal came as the result of looseness in defence. Burditt was permitted to dribble right along the wing, and then came in towards goal, with Mittell waiting for the ball as the City forward came along from the corner flag. It seemed impossible to score a goal from that angle and a pass was anticipated, but **BURDITT** deftly tapped the ball between Mittell and the upright. In a fierce attempt to recover some ground, the Town infested the City penalty area, and twice Pearson drove in hard, low shots, Halliday once kicking out from under the bar when Wharton was beaten. Fraser once dribbled right to the goal area, but his final shot was weak, and the closing stages were of a scrambling character, with little hope of the Town wiping off any of the arrears.

THE PLAYERS

It is always difficult to blame justly a goalkeeper, and I hesitate far more than the Luton or the Norwich followers about blaming Mittell. He made several good saves, but certainly it did appear that he should have saved at least two of the shots that scored. He alone knows better how much chance he had with any of the last three goals. I had my doubts about the second, though others were disposed to think he had more chance with that than with the third. Kingham usually plays well at Norwich, and was nearly at his best, while Mackey did much splendid work against the inside men, but allowed himself to be rattled somewhat by Warnes in the second half. The halves were good enough in support of their forwards, but the wingers got rather too much rope, and in the second half all three concentrated more on attack, probably because the forwards could not get goals. Rennie was the best of the front line, for Martin did not maintain the high standard at which he started, and Pease suffered thereby at the time when much was expected from him. Tait could not overcome the third back game, and whenever near goal was policemaned by at least a couple of players. Pearson was again lacking in directness of attack, and though individual play was very clever, there was not enough dash and determination against a rugged and not too scrupulous defence.

CITIZENS

The City are not a brilliant side, but they are full of enthusiasm and dash, fighters in defence, and go-ahead in attack. Wharton was not tested sufficiently, but appeared very safe. His backs were strong kickers, and Hannah played a skilful game, but Smith asks for trouble, and will surely get it. Halliday was as good a back as either of the other two, while Robinson and Ramsay worked very hard and unsparingly. Vinall was not often in the picture, but Scott was very fine, making masterly touches. Burditt did more foraging than his colleagues, and in the second half was playing half-back as much as forward, while both wingers were very lively, and their centres accurate.

There were 13,000 spectators.