

LUTON TOWN WIN

HOW THE CHANGES RANG AGAINST THE CITY

A Brace for Bell

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN 3
BRISTOL CITY 0

LUTON TOWN: Harford; Kingham, Mackey, Brown, McGinnigle, Fraser, Pease, Martin, Bell, Rennie, Anderson.

BRISTOL CITY: Scattergood; Roberts, Birks, Parker, Jennings, Brinton; Limer, Heale, Bowen, Loftus, Scriven.
Referee: Mr. W. J. Lewington, Croydon.

LUTON TOWN won on Saturday, and quite comfortably, yet there was something lacking in the achievement. It is hard to define, perhaps, but I think it is that essential driving force we call personality. The defence seemed to be stiffened, and the fact that for the first time this season opponents failed to score, confirms that opinion. It was not the change of goalkeeper, for Mittell would probably have dealt just as well as Harford with all that was aimed truly at the target. Possibly the choice of Mackey as captain had something to do with it, although one must not overlook the fact that two shots by the City hit the woodwork. The missing vitality seemed to be in the middle line, and its effect was felt in the attack. Was it the absence of Fred Kean? In the Town's games for the last two years, win or lose, Kean's personality has been a bigger factor than most of us appreciate, and though he has not always been in international form, his very presence has invigorated the side. On the changes made in the team the supporters were singularly uncritical, though, in general, they were approved before the game. Afterwards the supporters were not so sure, and at the end, were agreed that the trouble lay in the middle line. Every player did his best, and there was no abject failure. The play had quality, but lacked consistent inspiration—fire. At times it seemed that the players were simply undertaking a perfunctory job.

LACKING A PLAN

Before the game, Mr. Bob Harrison, the City manager, told me that the team had suffered most atrocious luck on the field, and half prepared me for something of a surprise. Well, the City were just an ordinary, hard-working side. Here and there was a bright spot, but while they infused much more dash into their game, they had not the skill of the Town, either individually, or as a combination. They will not remain in such a lowly station, but I fear they will not rise very high in the table. Unless the Town find that determination and energy we have seen in other teams, we shall not be far above them at the end of the season. The players had the skill, but there was often an absence of co-operation and understanding in the attack and in the middle line, and no definite plan of campaign.

In the first half play was quite interesting, and the City defenders had to fight grimly to keep down the score, but there was a marked deterioration in the second half, and the crowd became bored by the frequent faults—passes astray, poor positioning, and worse marksmanship. To say this when a team wins by three goals clear may seem rather harsh, but everybody will agree that, on the run of the play, the victory should have been much more pronounced while there could be no complaint of misfortune, since the City should have made their mark on the score sheet, considering their chances.

ANDERSON HAPPY

The early exchanges promised well, and it was a great stroke of luck for Anderson that virtually his first kick at the ball brought a goal. Rennie sent the winger away with a clear field, and the ball was dropped perfectly into the middle of goal, and BELL was present to head through. The encouragement was reflected in the play of Anderson throughout. By open play the City strove hard to get on terms, but their goal had the narrower escapes, twice the ball being within a yard or two of the line, and none able to give the much-wanted touch. On the other hand, Harford must have heaved a sigh of relief when a terrific shot from Homer banged the upright and new off at a tangent. The ball struck the post at such an angle that an inch to the inner side and a goal must have accrued. Brown did not wait for encouragement, and was cheered for effective work, but the thrill of the game came when MARTIN

by wonderful footwork, for a distance of thirty yards, coaxed and tickled the ball past player after player, and then completed the effort with a well-placed ground shot to which Scattergood dived in vain.

ESCAPES

The most troublesome of the City attack was Loftus, and he gave Brown many problems that the half-back could not solve quickly enough, and with Bowen as enterprising as ever in his career, the Town defenders had their work cut out. Nevertheless, the Town were making more chances, and giving Scattergood a great deal of anxiety. The goalkeeper made a great save at full length from Bell; Anderson should have scored from a pass by Pease, but sent the ball over the bar; Fraser dribbled through and Scattergood twice proved too quick for Bell when the latter raced in to take a pass. At the other end Heale missed a good opening by getting his foot right underneath the ball; Bowen twice shot close, and on another occasion found Mackey's weight too much. Kingham held up Scriven as the winger was running in hard, and just before the change of ends Harford raced out almost to the corner flag to get the better of a duel with the City left-winger.

LUTON TOWN 2
BRISTOL CITY 0

The second half seldom provided anything as entertaining as the first. The City made the pace, and the Town's activities in the City half were confined to raids on the wings. Anderson was given many more opportunities than Pease. From one quick dribble by the left-winger, the ball returned over to Rennie, but his shot was too high. Loftus was playing brilliantly, his initiation being remarkably fine, and Brown had to do a lot of ball chasing without reward. McGinnigle had his work cut out to get square with Bowen, and for a long spell play was in the Town half. When Fraser had livened up things a bit, Rennie gave Bell a great chance by pushing the ball neatly through the middle, and the centre-forward dashed clear, and had a great chance, but as Scattergood came out, he shot high, and the goalkeeper touched the ball, which in any case would have gone over the bar. The Town improved a little, and there was an appeal for a penalty when Pease, almost under the bar, was brought down by Birks.

SCATTERGOOD BESIEGED

Then came a siege of the City goal, and Scattergood saved in magnificent fashion, while the City players packed the goal. The goalkeeper got the ball away time after time when it seemed impossible, and was loudly applauded for his skill and courage. Then there was another lapse, and play deteriorated into a booting of the ball from one end to the other. The Town had the better chance still, and when Martin took a pass from Bell and ran close in, there seemed no possibility of failure, but he shot straight at the goalkeeper, from whom the ball rebounded, while later, a wise bit of work by Brown brought an assault in which the ball was sent to the left, and Anderson beat the defence and came almost to the goal post before turning the ball inside, but there was no one up to give the finishing touch. In another attack the Town won a corner, and Pease paced the bag-kick well; Martin tried to shoot, but the ball skidded off his toe to EELL, who sent it into the net. The City played hard for a goal, but failed to get through.

THE PLAYERS

Harford did his little very well; Kingham and Mackey played soundly, kicking and tackling strongly, and little fault could be found with them. Fraser put up a grand game, and was the best half back on the field. McGinnigle did not have one of his best days; he was not in the picture nearly so much as usual. Brown did some good things in attack, but met a tarter in Loftus, and it was well that Kingham realised the need for extra effort. There was no commanding figure in the middle of the field for the Town, and a lack of understanding in the line generally. Pease got less work by half than usual, and he was again well watched. Brinton rarely leaving him. Undoubtedly this wing missed the service of Kean. Martin vied with Loftus in skilful footwork, and if his shooting were as good as his dribbling, he would be a match

winner always. Bell scored twice, and justified his inclusion. He was usually in the neighbourhood of goal during pressure, and had an eye for a chance. For once in a while Rennie forgot to serve Pease with those long, slanting passes which mean so much to the winger, and he was not on form as a marksman, but he and Fraser made Anderson. The little winger rose to the occasion admirably, and this game should do him a lot of good. He was confident in facing opponents, could beat an opponent, and his centres were well gauged. He will have his work cut out to hold the position, but has made a good start. Unfortunately he pulled a muscle and suffered lameness.

CITY'S BEST

Scattergood played a great game, and Roberts and Birks were hard-working backs, rugged rather than artistic. Brinton was a polished half-back, very clever in defence and attack. Of the forwards, Loftus was outstanding. He played himself almost to a standstill, foraged, manoeuvred, and passed accurately, and no player on the field, except Scattergood, deserved greater praise.

There were 8,831 spectators, and £492 8s. receipts.