

TWO FOR RENNIE

GILLINGHAM BEATEN AFTER HARD GAME AT LUTON

Two Penalty Kicks

(By "CRUSADER")

LUTON TOWN 4
GILLINGHAM 2

LUTON: Harford; Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Pease, Martin, Tait, Rennie (A.), Anderson.

GILLINGHAM: Holland; Jackson, Lester; Forbes, Collins, Kidd; Mills, Scott, Raleigh, Bethell, Liddle.

Referee: Mr. J. H. Allen, London.

BETTER games than that of Saturday have been seen on Luton Town ground this season, but the supporters of the home Club had the satisfaction of seeing Gillingham well and truly beaten after a hard struggle. There was more energy and keenness in the play of the Town than usual, and though there were not a few mistakes, they could be excused in view of the satisfactory result and the increased liveliness of the team generally. Shortly, the team work was better, and in that respect there was not much difference between the sides and in the ultimate the success could be attributed to the extra bit of skill of the Town. It was quite refreshing to see a visiting goalkeeper tested so frequently, and it can be said that the Gillingham custodian saved his side from a crushing defeat. On half-a-dozen occasions he managed to get in the way of shots that would have beaten a less resourceful goalkeeper, and, as a team, the visitors could be satisfied that they had played well, even though they were denied any tangible reward.

RENNIE SCORES

Gillingham gave us an earnest of their intentions from the kick-off, for a flying attack was made, and Harford was in action within a few seconds of the start. The Town goalkeeper seemed to be rather more alert than his colleagues, and that was well, for the visitors might easily have snatched a goal, thanks to the nippiness of Mills and Raleigh. When the Town replied Tait looked like going right through, but Collins brought him to a stand with a foul, and McGinnigle should have done better with the free kick. Instead of making opponents get the required ten yards from the ball, he took the shot with Scott almost on top of the ball, and that probably had a lot to do with his shot flying high over the bar. However, the Town were showing some mettle, and after good work among the halves and forwards, an attack on the left was rewarded. Fraser had gone right up, and the defence was drawn to that side when he tapped the ball across, and RENNIE coolly lifted it over the heads of a crowd of players, and it fell into goal just beyond the reach of the goalkeeper, who was evidently unsighted when Rennie made the effort. The effects of the tonic were seen in the play during the next few minutes.

GOALKEEPERS WORRIED

Gillingham's forwards were very active, the wingers making good use of the ball when it came their way, and there was a very nice understanding among the inside men and the halves, the passing showing understanding of each other's play, and Liddle, especially, had plenty of the ball and gave a lot of anxiety when he sped along the wing. Harford had work, though not so much as Holland, and whenever near goal Raleigh was noticeable for his eagerness to have a shot. Harford, however, had recognised this, and was always ready. Collins was a tower of strength in the Gillingham defence, for he was often behind his backs, and once Jackson fell back on to the goal-line and booted the ball away when a forceful bit of work by Tait robbed Holland after the goalkeeper had come out to save. Anderson might have scored had he taken more careful aim, following a very fine move by Kean, which had the defence in a tangle. The little left-winger was giving Jackson any amount of trouble, and the referee had a word for the Gillingham defender when he tripped the harassing opponent.

LUTON 1
GILLINGHAM 0

Tait had been crippled during the first half, and he went to outside-right on the re-start, Pease coming inside, with Rennie at centre and Martin inside-left. This was no particular hardship to the Town, for they at once went through, and Tait had very hard luck after a splendid effort, for he passed inside, and Pease crashed in a terrific shot, which had the goalkeeper beaten all the way; indeed, it appeared that a goal had been scored, for the ball hit the underside of the bar and seemed

to fall behind the line, but the referee made no sign, and the ball was scrambled away. The Town were going great guns, however, and Martin, after some manoeuvring in midfield, sent the ball up the middle for RENNIE to accept, beat Collins and score the second goal with an effort typical of his old centre-forward days.

TWO PENALTIES

Mills was the big factor in Gillingham's first success. He went away, and a hard drive at goal struck Mackey and went for a corner kick. Kean was coming through for the clearance when the ball rose from the hard ground and he handled. The referee promptly gave a penalty kick, and MILLS took the shot and easily beat Harford. Collins' fine work nullified many attacks by the Town after this, and Holland also was frequently in action. There was an appeal for handling against Jackson when he got the ball away after Holland and Pease had collided and the goalkeeper had lost the ball, but the referee shook his head. Then came a nice movement on the Town left, Anderson being tricky, and as Rennie took possession a defender handled, and though pressure had to be brought upon the referee to consult the linesman, he did so, and a penalty kick was awarded. McGINNIGLE took the shot and scored easily. Immediately Holland brought off a wonderful save from Rennie, who drove in a grand shot, and the visitors got away again. While the Town defenders were appealing for offside, RALEIGH snapped up a pass, and, working into position, had Harford beaten all ends up with a fast drive.

ISSUE SAFE

Gillingham came again, and the Town defenders had their work cut out to hold them in check, and when Kean fell and hurt his knee and had to go off, things did not look too promising. However, he soon returned, and, after being cautioned by the referee for returning without permission, he hobbled about, but did good things when the ball came his way. Mackey was in the picture with strong work, and Kingham also delivered his goal from swift attacks on the left. Then a long pass found Rennie, who went away on the right, rounded Collins, and then drove the ball across goal, where Martin, shooting first time, should have scored, but the ball went wide. However, Tait ran through just afterwards, and ANDERSON, slipping inside, received the ball and from an awkward angle scored the fourth goal and made the issue safe.

PLAYERS

Harford kept goal well, and had no chance with either shot that scored, while Kingham and Mackey were on form, and played strongly all through. They had plenty of work, for the visiting wingers had the ball quite a lot. At half, McGinnigle found the hard ground something of a handicap, and against a very lively inside trio he worked very hard, though with not quite so much success as usual. Kean and Fraser played finely, their support to the attack being all that could be desired, and they had no small part in the success. Rennie played finely, one of his very best games. It pleased his critics to see him dash about a bit, though it could not be said that his work was any the more effective because of that. What did matter was that he had confidence to beat an opponent at close quarters, and whether at inside-left or centre-forward, he was the most prominent. Anderson responded well, and undoubtedly is making secure his place in the side. Martin's only fault again was his lack of shooting ability, for he initiated many good movements; Pease did not have a good first half, but was very useful in the second, and Tait did better work at outside-right than at centre-forward, and the question arises as to whether his knee is really sound again, for he has never touched his old form.

THE OTHER LOT

Holland was a fine custodian, but his best helpmate in defence was Collins, who played a splendid game at centre-half, as a third back. His forwards did not get much help from him, but the defence had to thank his big frame and hard work for relief from many dangers. The forwards were the best part of the team, and played really well. Indeed, with a better half-back line they would give any defence a trying time. Mills and Liddle did very fine work on the wings; Scott was tricky, while Raleigh was a forceful leader, with a powerful shot in his boots.

Spectators: 5,447. Receipts: £294 10s. 3d.