

DULL GAME AT GILLINGHAM

AMATEUR SCORES ON FIRST APPEARANCE

Luton Make a Record

(By "CRUSADER")

GILLINGHAM 1
LUTON TOWN 1

GILLINGHAM: Holland; Forbes, Lester; Johnson, Barrat, Kidd, Mills, Scott, Nicol, Raleigh, Liddle.

LUTON: Harford, Mackey, Reece; Kean, McGinnigle, Fenn, Tom, H. Kitchen, Bell, Hutchinson, Anderson.

Referee, Mr. G. R. Allen, London.

GILLINGHAM is not a particularly bright place for visiting teams. The ground is not made for the class player and it seems inevitable when Luton are due at Priestfield-road that there should be either wind or rain. On Saturday there was a capricious breeze that at times appeared to be blowing directly into one goal, but a minute later was the other way, and it played tricks with the ball. In addition, the players were worried because when the ball hit the ground they did not appear to know which way it would turn. This was especially so with the Town halves and backs, who were often at a disadvantage until they began to copy the methods of the home defenders, who gave the ball

plenty of heat, with apparently little regard to direction. To make matters worse, although there was less rough play than we have experienced at Gillingham, there was much more whistle than in any two games we have had this season. Players were annoyed at the frequency with which the referee intervened, and he apparently took into consideration complaints that were not in the interest of the players.

KITCHEN'S GOAL

The game was spoilt to a very large extent, and in the second half none would have been disappointed had the time passed twice as rapidly, for there seemed little prospect of either goal falling again, and the football generally was poor stuff, except for individual efforts. At the start there was a lot of big kicking, and when the Town opened up a movement the ball usually went astray. Bell was unlucky to turn the ball wide after he had burst through, and the spectators became very excited twice when Scott got into contact with Harford, but each time he was well offside. Kitchen was seen attracting attention by neat touches, and the first thrill

came when Mills slipped across and seemed to have the goal at his mercy, but he lifted the ball yards over. When the Town scored after twelve minutes KITCHEN was the marksman, but had the chance as a result of play all along the line. Tait took a pass and drove the ball across goal; Bell raced for it, but Holland just managed to foil him; the ball went straight to the inside-right, who shot on the run without hesitation, and Holland had no chance.

THE EQUALISER

Gillingham forced the pace, their rushes being robust, and they served their left wing with long passes. However, Harford was not greatly troubled, and there seemed little prospect of the lead being wiped out. On the other hand, Tait was given a fine chance when Bell beat Forbes and drove the ball across the goal, but it ran awkwardly for the winger, who could not get it under control properly, with the result he shot hurriedly and well over the bar from three or four yards' range. Mills nearly brought about the downfall of the Town goal by slipping after Fraser and robbing him while the Town left-half was trying to bring the ball to the ground. On the first occasion Nicol had a good chance, but Reece was too quick for him. A minute or two later there was a similar chance, and this time Reece was not quite quick enough, and NICOL drove in a sharp, ground shot. Harford managed to get his hand to the ball, but the spin carried it beyond him and just over the line. Harford saved at full length just afterwards, a very fine effort, following a period when none of the Town defenders appeared able to do the right thing. To the interval, play was chiefly kick and rush, with Harford having a lot more work than Holland, for the Town attack came unstuck when near goal. Half-time:

GILLINGHAM 1

LUTON 1

Play was very dull in the second half, and the biggest smile in the first twenty minutes came when the Town left wing were getting away, and a spectator bawled "Offside." The whistle sounded as though in response to the solitary appeal. Gillingham continued to use their left wing, and Liddle was always a danger when in possession, but Mackey paid him close attention, and in one fierce onslaught the left winger was knocked off. Gillingham fought hard, but the Town defence was generally well on top, and Harford did not have a great deal of exacting work. When the Town got going, Forbes, Barrie and Lester lost no time either in tackling or clearing, and Forbes was none too gentle in his dealing with Anderson. There was a thrill in one movement when Hutchison shot the ball up the middle, and Bell, without hesitation, took the ball on the half turn and dashed it into the net, but the whistle went for offside. Try as they would, neither side could master the defence, and play was in midfield most of the time, and the crowd showed their opinion of play and players in the usual way.

WARM WIND-UP

Nearing the end there were better efforts from the respective attacks. Kitchen, who continued to do neat work without hurry, made a clever pass for Tait to race in and shoot near, but Holland saved. At the other end Nicol and Raleigh could make little of Mackey and Reece, and the latter once kicked the Town back, but apparently apologised while the referee was talking to him. The official also had a word with Nicol, Mackey, Reece and Kean, and it appeared from his gestures that he was ordering Reece off the field, but it transpired that it was only a threat, and the Town back afterwards said that all he did was to claim that the ball was out of play. In one quick thrust by the home team Liddle and Mills gave Nicol a chance, but he shot wide, and another bright bit of work by Kitchen brought a terrific shot by Tait, which Barrie, close in goal, was glad to head over the bar for a corner. In a further rush by Gillingham, Harford saved at full length from a crowd of opponents, and then a goal seemed certain when Anderson slipped right through the defence; had he tapped the ball across with better judgment Tait must have scored, but the ball swerved away from the latter, and when he retrieved it and passed, Hutchison shot behind. It was a relief when the whistle went for the last time.

A RECORD

This was the nineteenth point gained from away games, and is a record for Luton Town, the previous best being eighteen.

Harford did his work well, and Mackey and Reece got through a deal of work with credit. They, like the half-backs, were frequently puzzled by the tricks the wind and ground played with the ball, and these factors made the work of the defensive departments appear less sound than was actually the case. McGinnigle did well again, and Kean and Fraser tried to play class football with less success than was deserved. The forwards were not so good as usual, as could be well understood. Tait was a worker on the extreme right, but somehow seemed out of place, and Anderson did not get a lot of chances, Forbes playing right on top of him. Bell was as assertive as ever, and Hutchison the brains of the line. I was much interested in Kitchen, and the fact that he scored the goal for his side should give him much encouragement. He has clever feet and a quick wit, while he showed plenty of confidence. With a little experience and a bit more weight he will make good.

GILLINGHAM

Holland was safe in the home goal, and there was not much to choose between the backs. Alec Forbes, the former Town half-back, will probably do better as a full-back, for he has a strong kick, and tackles with any amount of energy. Barrie was a useful half-back, but Kidd was the cleverest. Arthur Mills did not make a brilliant show, but his quickness in coming into the middle to receive from the left wing was noteworthy. Scott was the pick of the inside forwards, but Liddle was probably the best of the forwards.

There were 4,400 spectators.