

A FLUKY GOAL

OR LUTON WOULD HAVE WON AT BRISTOL

EXCELLENT TEAM WORK

(By "CRUSADER")

BRISTOL ROVERS . . 1 LUTON TOWN . . 1

ROVERS. — Ellis; Pickering, Donald; Wallington, McLean, Murray; M'Nestry, McKay, Smith, Harwood, McCambridge.

LUTON.—Preedy; Mackey, Reece; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Bell (S.), Martin, Cook, Stephenson, Russell.

Referee.—Mr. E. R. Westwood, Walsall.

ALL Bristol was set for the Rovers' first victory when we arrived on Saturday afternoon. Three hours later a crowd of 12,000 left the Eastville enclosure in very subdued frame of mind. The tribute they paid to Jack Ellis, the new goalkeeper the Rovers secured from Wolverhampton Wanderers to take the place of Preedy, who was guarding for Luton, was the best compliment they could pay to a team that had deserved to win. Even the most biased supporter of the Rovers agreed that a draw was a good result, but others readily agreed that the Town had been unfortunate, since they had, on the run of the game, merited both points. While the Town had their hard times, particularly in the second half, when the wind increased appreciably and the players found the ball very difficult to get away from the danger zone, undoubtedly the skill of Ellis prevented the Town from recording their first success.

GOOD CLEAN STRUGGLE

Both clubs have provided better football, perhaps, but it was a good, clean game in every way, and very different from the experience the Town had at Cardiff on the previous Monday. Such infringements as demanded the attention of the referee were technical, and although he deemed it necessary to speak to one player—a Town player—the offence was due to the sunlight, which prevented the onender getting a clear sight of the ball, which was very high, and his elbow caught an opponent's face. However, Mr. Westwood, a good referee in general, is inclined to demonstrate his position somewhat forcibly, and that is by no means the worst fault of officials. He handled the game well, and possibly his firmness made the game more enjoyable from the spectators' point of view.

MARTIN ON THE MARK

There was an earnest of the Town's intentions very soon, for the spectators had hardly settled in their positions before Martin had two shots at goal which were diverted by Pickering and Donald respectively, the former kicking wildly behind his goal. Soon afterwards Martin hit the bar. Then Cook had a fierce shot which banged into McLean, and it was clear that the Town were all out. So were the Rovers, and they got near enough to Preedy for the burly Smith to foul the goalkeeper. Russell was well fed by Fraser and Stephenson, and twice he dodged past defenders, and on the second occasion threatened to go right into the goalmouth, but was eventually overpowered. M'Nestry and McKay caused a flutter of excitement, but the latter shot past, and later the Rovers' captain spoiled more good work by M'Nestry by delaying his shot.

ELLIS'S FINE WORK

From end to end the ball travelled at great speed, the backs of both sides being well employed, and there was a real thrill as Cook darted through to challenge the goalkeeper, but Ellis was a fraction of a second too quick. The Town had to defend hard for a brief spell, but when they resumed attacks, winging the ball about well, they gave Ellis a lot more work than fell to Preedy. A spectacular move by the home left was foiled to Mackey close in, and for a few minutes the Rovers kept the ball in the vicinity of Preedy, who made good saves. Nearing the interval there was a great onslaught by the Town, and Ellis saved grandly from Russell who was shooting with tremendous power, and the long passes from wing to wing, in which Bell was conspicuous, had the Rovers on the run. Cook made another grand effort, and Ellis went full length to turn the ball behind. So the interval arrived without score.

ROVERS nil, TOWN nil.

The Rovers restarted at a great pace, and for some minutes there was a keen duel between their attack and the Town defenders. Preedy saved again and again, and although there was nothing very difficult among the shots he had to take, the Rovers were persistent enough to raise the hopes of the crowd. In a sudden thrust by the Town, Cook burst between the backs and it seemed as though he could not fail to score, but he shot straight at Ellis, who had advanced from goal, and though there was plenty of powder behind the effort, a placed shot would have been more effective. Following this escape, the Rovers attacked fiercely, and Preedy made splendid saves. Several corners were forced, and the Town goalkeeper punched away in fine style. The backs kicked a grand length against the strong breeze, and finally brought relief.

A GRAND GOAL

Midway through the second half Mackey and Reece both came well up the field while the halves and forwards puzzled the home middle line by quick passing, and this open play eventually brought a goal. It was a grand pass by Stephenson that sent the ball ten yards beyond Pickering; Russell gave the back two or three yards start and beat him for pace; without hesitating a moment, Russell swung the ball right across goal; Cook could not get to it, but BELL tore in at full speed from the wing and from twelve yards' range, flashed the ball past Ellis at lightning speed. It was a grand goal, and the crowd cheered to the echo when they had recovered their breath.

AND A FLUKE

There came a fine tussle, the Rovers going all out, but the Town fought back with great spirit, and they were far more dangerous when they got on the move. The Rovers' halves and backs were over-kicking their forwards, and so Preedy was not worried very much, as he had time to take the ball when it was on the target, and at others could calmly watch it travel behind. In another rush to the other end, there were two or three corners, and following one of these Russell cleverly hooked the ball over his head, but Ellis, with admirable judgment, had anticipated the move, and took the ball all right. The equalising goal came unexpectedly, and after the game, George M'Nestry told me that it was a very lucky thing, and it was questionable if it should have been allowed. The ball was apparently out of play at the

touch line, but Wallington retrieved it, and by a big kick sent it right into the goalmouth; Preedy was in the act of punching out when Smith charged him over; the ball brushed someone's head, apparently SMITH'S, and fell behind him; to me it seemed as though it struck Tom Mackey's feet and glanced into the net, but the Town players say it struck the upright. The appeals for a foul were disregarded, and so the scores were level.

ROUSING ROUND-UP

There followed a real tussle. Cook twice handled the ball when he might have kept his head and got through, and the Rovers returned to the assault. They had more zeal than skill in their use of the ball, but there was a cry of disappointment once when M'Nestry raced in to meet a pass, but the pace of the ball beat him. Then the Town made a grand finish. Cook lammed the ball over from close range after very fine work by Bell and Martin; Fraser and McGinnigle staved off an attack, and the latter sent his wing away; Martin secured, and he and Bell went through, and from the pass, Stephenson nearly knocked Ellis off his feet. Then Bell concluded another good movement by lifting the ball over. Kean put his attackers on the move again, and Stephenson snapped up a pass and, after tricking McLean, drove in a magnificent shot which appeared certain to score, but Ellis brought off a marvellous save by diving at full length. Then Russell swept past the defence and wound up with a shot that the goalkeeper hardly saw until it crashed against the bar and rebounded beyond the penalty area. A moment later, the left winger dribbled in again, but his shot did not carry the same pace, and Ellis saved, so the game ended without further score.

DOMINANT HALVES

The run of the play was even, but I think the Town were deserving of the points, because there was no fluke about their goal such as tainted that of the Rovers. Their team work was excellent. They were definitely better at half-back and full-back, for whereas the Town intermediates found their forwards with neat passes, the Rovers' trio usually kicked the ball so hard that the forwards had to fight for it. All three halves played splendidly, and McGinnigle blotted out the man I feared would be the chief trouble—Smith. Fraser had a warm handful in M'Nestry and McKay, the former being the best of the home attack. Kean was usually too good for his opposing pair. Mackey gave of his best, and his kicking was strong and sure, and he tackled well, although not putting into his job the liveliness of Reece, who again did great work. Preedy was sound in goal, and made good saves, even though he had nothing like the severe task that fell to Ellis.

FORWARDS

The left wing had more work than the right, and Russell, in spite of bandaged ribs, gave a fine exhibition. Stephenson plied him with clever passes, and the inside left was a rare trouble when he had the ball under control. Martin was cool and methodical as ever, and his footwork was of the best. Bell again played finely on the wing, though having fewer chances than usual. Cook was not a huge success on his first appearance, but I liked the way he faced up to the backs, and he certainly had several good shots, and was twice a bit unlucky not to score. He got up well to the high centres, and bothered the backs a lot, but he should not use his hands to gather a ball when challenging for possession. He merited another run, for it requires time to become accustomed to match play with new colleagues.

Ellis was the mainstay of the Rovers. The backs got somewhat flurried at times, and the halves failed so often that a lot of work was thrust upon the backs. M'Nestry put up a good game against his old mates, and is playing as well as ever.

GREYHOUND RACING

LUTON STADIUM, DUNSTABLE ROAD.
Luton. Registrar and Judges: C. A. Saunders. Timekeeper: A. W. Saunders.
Starter: C. Ashby.

SATURDAY NIGHT

WEASEL had not won before, and succeeded on his thirteenth appearance.

COMET had the amazing run of twenty-six losers, and he also was neglected in the market.

CREAM was a good winner, though Town put up a good race.

OVIS a much better dog than he looks, but he almost ran past himself in winning in this class.

SQUEAK had a tough struggle to beat the game Lido, but is a good hound, and will win again.

Old PRONTO should have been the favourite in this race, as his running showed.

SAM raced away from the field and gained a hollow victory.

I. (375 yards).—1. WEASEL (Trap 1); 2. Red King; 3. Radio. Also: Cocoa, Joyful, Oakland. 4 l., nk. 24.60.

Prices: 2 Radio; 9-4 Joyful; 4 Oakland; 6 R King, Cocoa 7 WEASEL.

II. (375 yards).—1. COMET (Trap 3); 2. White Pepper; 3. Mary. Also: Robbo, Quantock, Billy Plover. 1 l., 1. 23.60.

Prices: 9-4 Quantock; 3 B. Plover; 4 Mary; 6 W. Pepper; 7 COMET; 10 Robbo.

III. (500 yards).—1. CREAM (Trap 1); 2. Town; 3. Post. Also: Pastures New, Wise Peggy. 3 l., 1. 29.80.

Prices: 13-8 CREAM; 7-4 P. New; 11-4 Town; 6 W. Peggy; 8 Post.

IV. (375 yards).—1. OVIS (Trap 6); 2. Common; 3. Blossom. Also: The Wizard, Beauty, Garry. S. hd., nk. 23.80.

Prices: 9-4 Blossom; 11-4 Wizard; 6 OVIS, Common, Beauty; 10 Garry.

V. (500 yards).—1. SQUEAK (Trap 4); 2. Lido; 3. Call Boy. Also: Tiddles, Newark, Milko. Hd., 2 l., 32 secs.

Prices: 7-4 Milko; 5-2 Lido; 5 C. Boy, Tiddles; 11-2 SQUEAK, Newark.

VI. (375 yards).—1. PRONTO (Trap 6); 2. Hartfield; 3. White Starch. Also: Storm, Loopy, Wanderer. 1 l., 2. 24 secs.

Prices: 9-4 Wanderer; 3 Hartfield; 7-2 PRONTO; 9-2 W. Starch; 6 others.

VII. (375 yards).—1. SAM (Trap 3); 2. The Rand; 3. Little Marvel. Also: Lorna, Mystic Maid, Blue Vinny. 8 l., hd. 24.60.

Prices: 2 L. Marvel; 11-4 SAM; 4 Rand; 5 others.