

DEFEAT AT CHARLTON

Luton Forwards Play Well But Defence Weakens

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN put up a splendid fight at Charlton on Saturday, but they had to acknowledge defeat. There can be little doubt that the reason was the weakness in defence, for the rest of the side played remarkably well and held their own against the powerful Charlton side. The absence of Reece, Mackey and Thayne was a great handicap, and there also had to be taken into consideration the fact of the hard struggle against Chelsea in mid-week. The team were vanquished, but not disgraced.

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THE conditions were not conducive to comfort, either for players or spectators, because there was a sharp breeze, and

the Town had to face this and a misty drizzle. In the early stages they were the more threatening side. Stephenson, specially, shining. However, Wilkinson was a very active opponent, and often had the Town defence in trouble, and it was through him the first goal was scored, for he got across a centre which Allen feinted to play and then let go for BOULTER to accept and convert.

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THE game was hotly contested, and both goals underwent assaults, with the Town frequently menacing Bartram's charge, but two sound backs faced them, reinforced by Turner, who scarcely set foot outside his own penalty area during the match. He hung on to Ball like a leech, and there were many tussles between the pair. Crompton went very close two or three times following good work by Fraser and his wings, and eventually the Town equalised. Fraser initiated the movement, and Crompton swung the ball into the goal-mouth for Ball to nod it backwards, and ROBERTS was at hand to shoot into the net.

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CHARLTON soon replied, their right wing especially being dangerous, but they were rather lucky to score the second goal. There was a mix-up in the Town goal area following clever work by the home right wing, and the ball went across to the left wing, when it should have been stopped, and HOBBS, from close quarters, took possession and scored from close range. After this there was warm work at either end, and Charlton's goal had as many escapes as the Town's.

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THE Town right wing had Oakes in difficulties, and he was compelled to give away a corner. Crompton took the kick and BALL leaped up as it came across and beat all the defenders with a wonderful header, the ball going into the net like a flash. There was much vigorous play, and names of players were taken, following a lively episode in the Charlton goal-mouth, but the teams crossed over on level terms.

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THE Town attacked hotly on re-starting, and Bartram and his backs were kept busy for some minutes, but they played well. Twice the Town forwards seemed certain to score, so close to the line did they get the ball, but a determined defence prevailed, and Charlton relieved. There was a dash along the wing by Wilkinson, and he slammed the ball across the goal; the Town players appealed for offside against Hobbs, who was alone in the vicinity of Coen, but the referee paid no heed, and the winger tried to score, but the ball went off his foot to ALLEN, who netted.

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CHARLTON had their work cut out to hold the Town forwards, who were playing strongly, and Bell and Roberts went very close with fine efforts, while Bartram made good saves. Whenever the home forwards got going, however, the Town defenders appeared to waver, and, following a rush by the left wing there was a scrimmage in the Town goal-mouth, from which BOULTER scored the fourth goal.

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TO the end the Town never gave up hope, the forwards and halves struggling hard all the time, but they could not beat the sturdy defence again, and Charlton were having the better of the game in the closing stages, and only fine goalkeeping by Coen prevented them adding to their lead.

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CHARLTON ATHLETIC 4
(Boulter 2, Hobbs, Allen)

LUTON TOWN 2
(Roberts, Ball)

CHARLTON.—Bartram; Smith, Oakes; Harris, Turner, Dodgin; Wilkinson, Robinson, Allen, Boulter, Hobbs.

LUTON.—Coen; Kingham, Smith; Brown, McGinnigle, Fraser; Crompton, Bell, Ball, Roberts, Stephenson.

Referee: D. G. Kirby, Coventry.