

JUST HOME

LUTON SQUEEZE BOTH POINTS FROM BRIGHTON

FINLAYSON THE STAR

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN 2
(Fellowes, Martin)
BRIGHTON AND HOVE 1
(Stephens)

LUTON—Coen, Mackey, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Crompton, Martin, Ball, Roberts, Stephenson.

BRIGHTON—Thomson, King, Martin; Darling, McCarthy, Walker, Richards, Warren, Law, Smith, Stephens.
Referee—W. J. Lewington, Crondon.

It was refreshing to hear so many people say that they had seen a good match. For I expected quite a lot of grumbling, but followers took into consideration the conditions which were all against a good football. The town deserved their success, though there were times, especially near the end when I thought they were going to lose the advantage they had gained in the first half. That they should have won by a larger margin was obvious, but the finishing left a good deal to be desired in spite of the difficulties of combating the troublesome wind.

With the wind in their favour, the Town had much the better of the exchanges, but the manner in which the Albion forwards utilised the ball when they received it gave rise to more than a few quams, and it was surprising that after showing what they could do when they had to face the wind, they should be so hard pressed when they had its assistance. The Town players deserved credit for the manner in which they set about their work when they knew the conditions transferred the advantage to the opposition and it was an agreeable surprise to find them keeping the upper hand so consistently.

MACKEY'S DASHING WORK

In the early stages the Albion gave tit for tat, the town's swinging passes being countered with quick, short-passing movements, in which the Albion forwards exhibited much trickiness, and kept the ball on the ground nicely. Finlayson and Fellowes provided their forwards with plenty of work, but the close work of the Albion forwards and their dash when they got anywhere near goal caused thrills, and it was good to hear the crowd recognise the dashing work of Mackey, who had a hand in Stephens. Smith did none too well against the lively Albion right-wing pair, and from thence came most of the danger.

Thomson had to keep his eyes clear, for Stephenson and Crompton sent over good centres, and there were times when the Albion goal seemed bound to fall. Roberts fed Thompson splendidly, and the winger gave King a lot of anxiety, but the big back tackled well, even though his kicking was harder than it was accurate. Coen once raced out and just managed to get the ball before Stephens could reach it, but at the other end a number of corners were forced without success.

ALBION SCORE

Albion opened the scoring after twenty minutes. There had been a flutter on the right wing and the ball was slipped into the centre where Law got the better of Nelson and drove in a smashing shot, which had Coen beaten, but the ball struck the bar; Coen ran out, but STEPHENS was there first and directed the ball into the net.

The advantage was short-lived, for the Town set about their work in great style, and forced a couple of corners. From Crompton's second flag kick FELLOWES netted with a nice header.

HARD PRESSED

The Albion were very hard pressed after this, and with a little more coolness in finishing, the town must have taken the lead long before they did. Several times the ball skimmed across or over the goal, while Thomson made very good saves from headers, and once turned aside a powerful drive from Stephenson. Thomson had to handle on the average two or three times a minute, but did his work very well. However, he was eventually beaten, for after he had saved neatly a header from Ball, there was a hot attack, and several hard drives were intercepted by the packed defence until MARTIN got in one that could not be arrested.

In the last few minutes before the change of ends the Town pressed fiercely, and many shots went close, while Thomson saved well, and a fine drive from Fellowes from a free kick was only just wide. Half-time:

LUTON 2
BRIGHTON 1

The Albion restarted as though it was

only a matter of minutes before they were on level terms but Coen was not troubled, and the Town replied with strong assaults. So well did the Town play that the Albion left-back became rattled and free kicks were given against him, and he was rebuked by the referee for fouls on Crompton. Potter Smith, who had fallen back, also came under the notice of the official, and free kicks were awarded against him.

CHANCE MISSED

From good work on the right wing, Ball was given what looked like an easy chance close in, with Stephenson also close up. Somehow the ball eluded the centre-forward when he appeared to have the goal at his mercy, and Stephenson was so surprised that Thomson seized and cleared.

Now and then the Albion raided, but they were well held, much better indeed, than had been the case in the first half. At the other end, Roberts and Stephenson made a very fine movement which had the defence beaten, but Roberts shot wildly when he might have let Stephenson carry on, and the chance was lost.

HIT THE POST

Thomson had nearly as much work as in the first half, and did it very well, indeed, once saving brilliantly from Stephenson. Crompton and Martin centred many times, and Finlayson was prominent with splendid support for his wing, and often dropped across a good ball into the middle. McCarthy almost nursed Ball, and shots usually came from the wings. Thomson threw himself at full length to turn away one from Stephenson, and then Fellowes had dribbled right to the penalty line when he was brought down. Stephenson took the free kick, and drove in a shot which had Thomson beaten all the way but the ball struck the upright and rebounded.

LAST EFFORTS

The Albion caused anxiety at the Town end after a time. Richards and Stephens each going through cleverly, but their centres were turned back, and Coen had plenty of time to get to anything that came his way. The visitors strove hard, however, and, by dint of swinging passes to their wingers made ground, and Mackey and Smith defended well. Nelson also held Law pretty tight, but the young centre-forward was a handful. Near the end, the game was very hard fought, both teams going very close, and once a misunderstanding between Coen and Mackey proved all but fatal, the goalkeeper getting the ball from Stephens at the second attempt.

DEFENCE

Players did very well to put up such a game in trying conditions, for the wind played scurvy tricks at times.

Coen was safe, though there was some hesitation when Mackey expected him to come out of goal. Mackey once more proved that he is back at his best, and was the most reliable defender of the four backs. He did not wait for an opponent to take possession, but forestalled him, and his kicking was strong and well placed. Smith played his customary whole-hearted game, and followed up his colleagues well, more than once sending the ball well to his forwards.

Finlayson was the best half-back on the field, his clever placing of the ball as well as his shrewd tackling being of great value. Fellowes ran him very close, and his use of the ball was invariably advantageous to his colleagues. Nelson's slowness, more apparent than real, had an irritating effect at times, because he beat his men regularly at the tackle. It was in his desire to place the ball to his forwards that he was not so good.

The forwards played a fairly good game. Some of the work was clever, and there was little to choose. Fred Roberts made Stephenson more like the winger we had last season, and Martin and Crompton got on well together. Ball was earnest, but could not rid himself of the close attentions of McCarthy. The team played well together and with good understanding.

THE ALBION

The Albion perhaps owed a good deal to McCarthy, who was making his first appearance in the League side. He evidently played to his instructions in keeping Ball close company. Thomson, however, saved the Albion from a heavy defeat. King was the better back Martin losing his head against Crompton, Walker was a clever supporter of his forwards, and, in the front line, Stephens took the eye with his speedy threats, and Law played very well at centre-forward. 11,000 spectators.