

OPPONENT OBLIGES

BRISTOL BACK SCORES FOR LUTON

THAYNE'S LEAGUE DEBUT AS LEADER

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN 1
(Roberts, own goal)
BRISTOL CITY 0

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

BRISTOL CITY.—Dolman; Roberts, Hick; Morgan, Pearce, Brinton; M'Gurk, White, Bungay, Turner, Calney.

Referee.—A. A. Horwood, Kingston-on-Thames.

AGAIN the need for effective finishing in the Luton attack was demonstrated, but I should not blame Thayne for the lack of goals. I am not going to say that Thayne proved the man to fill the breach until Ball was back to his best or that he was not good enough for the position. Many spectators thought he did very well, and that he did not get the right sort of support from the other forwards; many thought he should not have been there. I think the spectators were justified in giving him his chance, and it so happened that he ran up against a defence that set out with one paramount intention—to stop the other forwards at all costs.

DESERVING OF CENSURE

From a spectacular point of view, Bristol provided a hard game without much skilful football. They were a team intent upon beating the opposition, and they did it so well that they could rightly claim that their scheme answered well. They were not concerned with good football, but with winning, or preventing the other side winning. At times the tactics of some of them were deserving of censure, and one wonder should have been ordered off the field, and doubtless would have been had it were Horwood detected the very dirty play that laid out Thayne late in the second half.

Always vigorous, the City put up a fight that would have been praiseworthy but for descent by one or two of them to foul play. It was hard luck for them that the goal scored by the Town was an accident, and that they were inferior in the matter of skill in all departments except defence. Even in the back and middle lines they did not produce the style shown by the Town, for generally they were booting the ball high and hard without regard to the service of the forwards, who, however, at times showed excellent understanding and good speed.

The City will never get very far with this type of game; it is nothing like the football usually used to expect and get from former teams; it might be called negative football, since its main intent was obstruction without regard to construction.

GRAND DEFENCE

The Town were not so well together as in previous games. There was good understanding generally, but the flank halves did not put up their usual game, and a good deal of work was thrown on Nelson and the backs. They played grandly, and Smith was surely coming back to his best. At times I found the tubby, little M'Gurk a tireless fellow, but his kicking was cleaner

and better, and he covered up nicely in his turn when it was required of him.

Nelson played splendidly again, and Mackey was in great form, his judgment in tackling and his sure-footedness were never better. Nelson's headwork was a feature of the struggle, and he also contrived to assist his forwards.

Finlayson suffered from a rap on the ankle, and in the second half moved up into the forward line, with Roberts falling back and Crompton going to inside-left. The changes did not make for efficiency, but they were necessary, and it was just as well that there was nothing worse. Fellowes was rather patchy, being somewhat slow in recovery, but his assistance to his wing was very good, and Stephenson was a very live force in the attack.

FORWARDS DISCUSSED

Thayne I have referred to; I still think he could be developed into a very strong leader; now and then he made really bright touches, but usually found his colleagues were not in position to receive. He fought tremendously hard and withstood a lot of buffeting with his customary pluck and fearlessness. Crompton was not disposed to take so much of the rough stuff without reprisal, and he did not get the worse of his duels with Hick. Martin put in much good work in approach, and so did Roberts, while Stephenson was right on form, but out of luck with his finishing.

DOUGHTY DOLMAN

So much more of the game did the Town have, however, that the visitors were saved again and again by the skill of Dolman. At least four or five wonderful saves were made by the goalkeeper, and it was not his fault that a goal was scored. That mishap was due to Roberts, the full-back, who was afraid of the dash of Thayne. Roberts and Hick kicked with great power, and tackled strenuously.

Pearce was next to Dolman as the saviour of the side. He did not trouble about his forwards at all, but was content to play the third-back game. Many times he held up the attack almost under the bar. Brinton and Morgan gave their forwards nice support at times, and were quick on the ball.

Of the City attack, M'Gurk was quite good when he was well plied, but Turner struck me as being the most useful, and Bungay was a fair leader. The wingers got the ball across well, but the inside forwards had very few shots, and Coen had nothing very exacting.

NOT VERY THRILLING

The game was not very thrilling, for although the first half was played at a fast pace, the forwards were cut off from goal when they got the ball inside the penalty area. There were more narrow escapes at the City end than at Luton's, though on one occasion Coen failed to grasp the ball as it came over from Calney, and there was a man-sized rush, in which two or three shots looked bound to find the net, but defenders got in the way.

Stephenson and Crompton frequently dropped the ball into the City goalmouth.

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and desperate measures only barred the Town, while Dolman made brilliant saves, notably from Martin.

THE ORPHAN GOAL.

The only goal came after 14 minutes. A pass was sent up the middle from the right, and Brinton tapped the ball back to ROBERTS, the City right-back. Thayne was chasing fast, and although the full-back had time to clear, he preferred what he thought was the safer move of sending the ball back to his goalkeeper; unluckily, he was also trying to keep an eye on the rush of Thayne at the same time, and did not notice that Dolman had advanced from goal, so that when he tapped the ball back there was no hope for Dolman, who had come right out and was within a yard or so of the full-back.

For the rest of the game it was hammer and tongs—and sometimes tongues. The Town never had much in hand when the City were on the move, but for each City onslaught there were two by the Town, and with better finishing, or a less desperate opposition, there would have been a much larger margin of victory.