

MAGNIFICENT DEFENCE PREVAILED

LUTON CONTINUE TO HEAD THE TABLE

(By CRUSADER)

MAGNIFICENT DEFENCE was the main factor in LUTON TOWN'S victory over SOUTHEND UNITED on the Southend Stadium ground. Everything was set for the closure to the Town's wonderful sequence of successes and, in the early stages, there appeared to be good reason for thinking that the United would start the New Year well, and give a setback to Luton's ambitions. It was not to be, for, in the end, the Town scored their fourteenth League success.

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BOYD scored the goal that gave Luton the points, and it was a further example of the opportunist character of the new centre-forward. The game had been in progress nearly forty minutes, with the most work falling upon the Luton defence. Jack Nelson hit the ball hard up the field; Roberts back-headed it towards the Southend goal; it struck Jim Nelson, and rebounded two or three yards from him: Boyd promptly snapped it up, dashed between the backs, and fired in a splendid low shot, which Mackenzie hardly saw.

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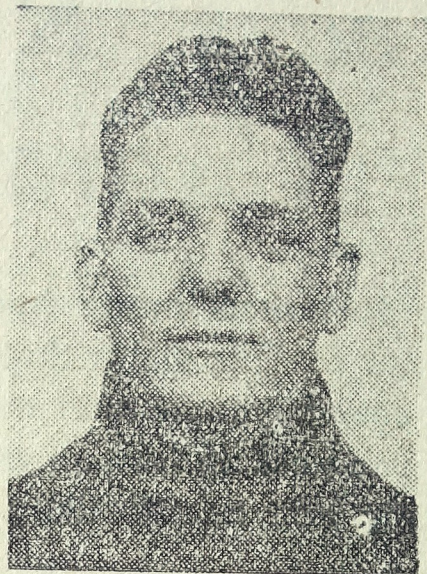
THREE TIMES Boyd had the ball in the net in the course of the game, on each occasion, his dash and quickness beating the home defence, but, on the other two occasions, he was given offside. The first decision none could grumble about, perhaps, but, in the other, the referee was certainly wrong, for Boyd dashed in to meet a square centre from Crompton, and the inside forwards had been behind the ball all the time. Had Boyd not been on the move, he could not have got behind the ball the pace that he did to send it flashing past Mackenzie. This was a real escape for the United.

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TWICE in the first half Boyd also had hard luck when he had beaten the defence, but could not get the ball out of the mud when all he had to do was to hit it past the goalkeeper. The other Luton forwards occasionally tested Mackenzie, but, as a rule, they were content to make openings for their leader, and all the line played with good understanding of the difficulties that faced the middlemen in tackling the very keen and assertive attack of Southend, which moved very well in the mud.

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SOUTHEND'S fault was the inability of the forwards to find a way past the Luton defence. That they did not have such an excessive number of chances as we were told during the week-end is proved by the fact that Coen had not so much to do as he had in either match with Notts County. The Southend forwards could work the ball all right, but too often their wingers, to whom the chances chiefly fell, were forced to shoot from acute angles. The inside forwards had to shoot hurriedly when they did get the ball anywhere in line with goal.



F. ROBERTS

EXCHANGES in the first half were in favour of Southend, but afterwards there was little in it, and, at times, the Town forwards and halves compelled the United to fight hard on the retreat, especially in the last quarter of an hour before the interval, and in the second half. But for the close and hard work of Jim Nelson, Robinson, and Turner in the second half, Boyd would have increased his tally of goals, and, as has been stated, he was unlucky to be deprived of a second goal.

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MACKEY. Smith, and Nelson played great defensive football and there were times when each moved forward to assist the attack, especially after change of ends. Finlayson and Fellowes were also prominent in attacking work, and Martin and Roberts returned the compliment by serving up good half-back obstruction when it was most needed. Boyd and Roberts were the best of the attacking line though all worked very hard, and Stephenson was out of luck.

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SOUTHEND will require a lot of beating on this ground. Their forwards were quick off the mark, and showed good footwork, while the halves were worriers and also took a turn in attack. Jim Nelson played a shrewd game, and was a fine general, and Robinson appears as good as ever, while Mackenzie was a safe goalkeeper.

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LUTON TOWN		1
(Boyd)		
SOUTHEND UNITED		0

SOUTHEND.—Mackenzie; Nelson, Robinson; Deacon, Turner, Carr; Bolan, Cheesmur, Stevens, Lane, Oswald.

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

Referee: G. Hamilton-Jones, Woolwich.