

CLASHES WITH COVENTRY

LUTON TOWN UNLUCKY TO DROP TWO POINTS

NELSON MAGNIFICENT

(By CRUSADER)

AT LUTON ON SATURDAY

LUTON TOWN	1
Payne	
COVENTRY CITY	1
Bourton	
LUTON.—Dolman; Mackey, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Hodge, Martin, Payne, Roberts, Stephenson.	
COVENTRY.—Morgan; Astley, Smith; Frith, Mason, Curtis; M'Nestry, Lauderdale, Bourton, Lake, Liddle.	
Referee.—W. Walden, Nottingham.	

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AT COVENTRY ON MONDAY

COVENTRY CITY	0
LUTON TOWN	0
Coventry team as above except Elliott for Mason.	
Luton team as above.	

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LUTON TOWN'S clashes with COVENTRY CITY did not definitely clear up the question of promotion, and not until Saturday, when Luton visit Queen's Park Rangers and Torquay visit Coventry will the issue of promotion be solved.

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IN THEIR HOME MATCH Luton should have won by a considerable margin on their first half performance alone, for they were



NELSON

attacking almost continually, and the visitors owed a great deal to their strong defence, and especially their goalkeeper, Morgan, for their immunity from defeat.

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LUTON BEGAN BRAVELY, and the visitors were penned in their own quarters save for occasional raids, in which their wingers were prominent. Hodge and Stephenson made thrilling runs, and were well supported by their inside men, but every shot at goal was covered either by a City back or by Morgan. The goalkeeper saved finely from Fellowes, while shots from Finlayson, Martin, Stephenson and Hodge went close.

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MORGAN SAVED at full length following brilliant work by the Town left wing, and the goalkeeper was on the ground when Martin fired wide. Payne led his forwards well, but was well watched by Mason. Once Smith headed out from under the bar when Morgan was beaten, and there were many corners for the Town, who pressed persistently. M'Nestry also saved his goal when Morgan and the other defenders were beaten following a flag-kick.

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EVENTUALLY the pressure was rewarded when Martin sent an overhead kick into the goalmouth, and PAYNE shot as the ball fell, and it passed low into the net at lightning pace, the goalkeeper having no chance. Now and then the visitors got away, and Dolman twice saved nicely, but for the most part the Town were on the attack, and the visitors' goal should have fallen three or four times before the whistle went for the interval.

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LUTON FADED a good deal after the change of ends, and seemed inclined to preserve their lead rather than to attack and strive to increase it. This gave the City an opportunity to show their paces forward, and they did so to some time, the Town defence often being in danger, and none too safe. However, Dolman was always on the premises when required and made good saves.

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NELSON also did good work, and frequently spoiled the efforts of Bourton to break through. M'Nestry also was very often in the picture, and made many raids from the left flank, once missing the goal by a narrow margin. Stephenson was not so conspicuous, but Roberts did fine work, and several times the Town forwards pressed hotly and came within an ace of further success.

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COVENTRY it was that scored, however, and the goal came as the result of a very bad mistake by the referee. Finlayson was meeting the ball and facing his own goal when fouled from behind by Lauderdale. The referee gave the free kick the other way, and as it was taken BOURTON fouled Nelson, but the referee failed to see the offence, and the City leader hooked the ball very cleverly into the net.

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LUTON re-asserted superiority after this, but the effort came too late. Again and again they swept through the City lines, but the visitors concentrated on defence, and kicked anywhere for safety. Morgan made grand saves, and just before the final whistle he saved at full length a header from Roberts when a goal seemed a certainty, and the end came without score.

AT COVENTRY

LUTON fielded the same side at Coventry on Monday evening, but the City had to make a change, Elliott coming in for Mason at centre-half. There was a record crowd for a Third Division game, and play was exciting from start to finish. Luton had the better of the game, and, as on Saturday their first-half exhibition entitled them to a lead at the interval, but they failed to press home their attacks against a very powerful defence.

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PLAY WAS VIGOROUS, too much so at times, but the better football came from the Town, and the City defenders seemed to be content to keep their lines clear. Many times the ball was kicked out of play, and out of the field altogether, by the City backs, especially Smith, who was greatly troubled by the skill and pace of Hodge, who was well supported by Martin and Finlayson.

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ONLY AT RARE INTERVALS were the City dangerous, and then usually because the Town defenders were helping the attack, and the home forwards got the opportunity of breaking through. Nelson defended strongly again, and Bourton was given no scope at all, the danger chiefly coming from M'Nestry and Liddle. Once the corner missed badly, but the shooting was generally at the other end, and Hodge brought Morgan down full-length to save grandly at the foot of the post.

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IN A HOT SCRIMMAGE the Town goal escaped luckily, but there were more close calls for Morgan's charge, and Smith once kicked clear from the goal-line when Morgan was beaten. The home goalkeeper made fine saves, but Luton's pressure and their clever, open play kept the crowd at fever heat of excitement. Shortly before an interval there was a fierce attack and Morgan was knocked over as he saved, and there was an appeal for a goal as he rolled with the ball under him, but the referee paid no heed to the claim.

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MANY FREE KICKS were given against each side in the second half, when play was contested more fiercely than ever, and the Town, although they were virtually reduced to nine men by injuries to Martin and Hodge, still held the balance of attack. Mackey and Smith were frequently operating in the Coventry half, leaving Nelson to do the work of defence, but strive as they would, the Town could not beat Morgan, who kept goal well.

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M'NESTRY and Liddle were again the chief raiders for the home side, but they did not get many chances, and the most dangerous of the inside men was Lake, who worked very hard. Payne strove manfully to get in a shot or two, but Elliott tackled him promptly and never left him. Stephenson got through several times, but did not always finish well, and the work of Roberts was generally the harbinger of danger for the City.

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IT WAS TOUCH AND GO often for either goal, and in the closing stages both teams were tired out, but the Town were the more resolute, and the forwards and halves made strenuous efforts to get a goal, but all in vain, and the end came without score.

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DOLMAN further enhanced his reputation in both matches by his clean work in goal. His skill in catching the ball was a feature of his play, and, on occasion, he dashed out and frustrated opponents. He received great help from his backs, both Mackey and Smith kicking and tackling strongly especially at Coventry. There was a tendency in the Saturday game to get rattled, but this was overcome on Monday and, although at times, they were disposed to use their weight, it was necessary against a forward line that asked and gave no quarter.

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NELSON'S display in each game was magnificent and, at Coventry, he gave probably the finest exhibition of defensive half-back play that has ever been seen in a Luton game. He was the inspiration of the side, and again and again he sent his colleagues to the attack while he held up the City forwards by his brainy play and his strength. Finlayson did well in both games, and there could be no complaint against Fellowes, except that in the second half of the game on Saturday, he appeared to tire. At Coventry, however, he was back to his best form.

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PAYNE was so closely watched that his opportunities were few and far between. He was as plucky as ever, and always ready to challenge the powerful men in opposition. Martin was skilful and tricky, and Hodge had a very good first half in each game. Had he and Martin not been crippled in the game at Coventry, they must have won the match, for chances came their way when they could not hobble to the ball. Roberts was tremendous, has never played better, and worked and worried like a tiger to get a goal, or enable someone else to do so, and Stephenson often did brilliant things, but was unfortunate in his finishing.

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FOR THE CITY, Morgan proved a grand goalkeeper, and Astley was the mainstay of the side, while Smith played strongly. Mason did well, as also did Elliott at centre-half, but the cleverest player in the middle line was Curtis, who was in great form, and worked very hard all through the piece each meeting. M'Nestry was very dangerous when on the move, and so was Liddle, but of the inside forwards, Lake was the best. Little was seen of either Bourton or Lauderdale.

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The two games were notable for the poor refereeing.