

# NOTTS COUNTY'S GREAT FIGHT

(By CRUSADER.)

At Luton on Christmas Day.

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| LUTON TOWN .....    | 2 |
| Roberts, Payne      |   |
| NOTTS. COUNTY ..... | 1 |
| Fergusson           |   |

Attendance: 18,000.

LUTON.—Dolman; Mackey, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Rich, Roberts, Payne, Dawes, Stephenson.

NOTTS. COUNTY.—Blyth; Mills, Feebury; Corkhill, McLenahan, Julian; Rickards, Chalmers, Gallacher, Ferguson, Fallon.

Referee: W. E. Ross Gower, Abbey Wood.

LUTON TOWN scored a great victory over Notts. County on Christmas Day after a thrilling struggle, in which the defence of the Midland side rose to great heights, and only in the closing stages were they compelled to lower their flag. Even then they strove desperately to restore equality, and the Town had to fight to the last second to hold what they had so gamely won.

It was a grand goal by Payne that enabled the Town to gather both points, and came six minutes from the end, but the Town had been the better side for a long time before then, and they would have been unlucky had they dropped even a point. Thus they completed the Old Year with a hundred per cent. points for their nine home games—a very fine performance. They could hardly have met foes more likely to despoil them of this record, for the County have a splendid record away from home, and strove might and main to take a point.

## EVEN PLAY

Play was fairly even in the first half, though the Town did rather the more pressing. Nevertheless, the County's attacks were fraught with grave danger, particularly from their right wing, where Rickards was always as hot a proposition as Smith could manage, and sometimes too hot, for Corkhill and Chalmers kept the winger well engaged.

Starting in lively fashion the Town had the County defence shaken in the first minute, and from Stephenson's centre Rich returned the ball for Payne to make a capital attempt to convert, but the ball went wide, and a second effort immediately afterwards brought about in similar style again found Payne just missing, the ball creeping over the bar.

## GALLACHER'S TILT

The Town kept up the pressure, and Dawes was applauded for a fine drive, and then we had what everybody wanted to see—Gallacher in action. It was not pretty, though, for he had a tilt at Dolman as the latter snapped up the ball, and the international did not like the rebound from the big goalkeeper, for he had another cut at him, with like result.

Play settled down to fast exchanges, the Town showing the neater style, but the County forwards now and then put in some pretty passing, which taxed the resources of the Town defence. To and fro the struggle went, and Mackey saved the Town goal by a magnificent tackle which dispossessed Fallon just in time, and Dolman cleverly saved a fine shot from the winger.

Gallacher showed cunning by the manner in which he served up passes, but Nelson gave him little rope, and the Town pressed hotly, but the County packed their goal admirably, and McLenahan scarcely left Payne's side for a moment.

## ROBERTS' GOAL

Twenty minutes of fast and thrilling play passed before there was a goal, but when it came it was worth seeing. Stephenson cut past Mills at great speed, and swung the ball well over to the right; Rich carefully nodded the ball to ROBERTS, who headed a grand goal amidst a welter of excitement and applause.

This served to stir up the County to greater efforts, and there was some looseness in the Town defence; the covering of the opposition was not good, especially on the right, and when Rickards and Chalmers got through the former lifted the ball into the middle; Nelson tried to block the ball, but FERGUSON managed to lug it past him and shoot hard and true into the net to equalise.

Exchanges became faster than ever, and each goal was in danger, with the Town doing the more attacking until the interval, which came with the score:

LUTON .... 1, NOTTS. COUNTY .... 1

Luton began in the same striking fashion as they had opened, forcing two corners immediately, and Blyth was tested again and again. The Town steadily asserted supremacy in midfield, but so tenacious was the resistance that they could not beat Blyth, though they were shooting quite well when they had the opportunity. Now and then the County raided, their wingers doing well, but for the most part play was in the County's half.

Rich was badly upset by Feebury and had to be carried off. It was not a deliberate foul, although rather rough and Feebury caught the winger's jaw with his fist as they fell. Still the Town persevered. Payne shot weakly after Dawes had made

an opening, and soon afterwards put in a storming shot which missed by inches.

## HOT STRUGGLES

Rich came back, and there were hot struggles in the County goalmouth. Then in a quick breakaway the County nearly scored, Rickards snatching the ball right across for Fallon to rush in and head against the post, though Dolman was on the spot. To this the Town replied with greater pressure, and many corners were forced, and Stephenson had to be assisted from the field through injury as he tried to turn into the net a centre by Rich.

Payne again just missed with a brilliant drive, and then the Town attack was rearranged, Dawes going centre-forward, with Payne and Roberts in their usual positions. Rich bored through and was about to shoot when brought down by three opponents and an appeal for a penalty kick was negatived. Roberts, who was playing grandly just missed with a magnificent effort, and Dawes again went close.

## THE WINNER

Six minutes from the end Stephenson, who had returned, sent the ball forward, and Dawes raced clean away from the defenders, and from the goal-line lifted the ball in front of goal; PAYNE dashed up and beat Blyth and McLenahan for possession and headed the winning goal. It was a characteristic effort from Payne, and sent the crowd wild with delight.

The County, who had been wasting time as much as they could, now found time precious, and bent all they knew to breaking down the Town defence, but they were foiled smartly, and the Town did the more attacking right to the end, which came with victory well won.