

GRAND RALLY BRINGS EQUALITY AND REPLAY

Mackey the Hero

SHEER misfortune, I most firmly believe, prevented the Town adding further to their laurels, although they earned a lot of glory for their magnificent rally that enabled them to force a replay at Blackpool.

I have already said that I believe if Hancock had not been injured there would not have been a replay at all, for Blackpool would have been beaten, and I base that view on the fact that already the Town forwards had shown that they could more than extend the clever Blackpool defence.

The injury meant that part of the Blackpool left flank was freed from a considerable source of trouble, and therefore able to egg on the forwards to attack.

I place much of Mackey's success to the fact that he is now giving closer attention to the visiting extreme winger, although there were times on Saturday when he saved his goal again and again at close quarters by his strong and resolute tackling and sure kicking.

I still hope to see Smith also peg down the opposing winger more closely, although he is rather a long time doing it. Nevertheless, considering the strength of the opposition he did very well indeed, as, in fact, all the team did, playing as they were, with the odds against them for over eighty minutes.

On various occasions I have tried to point out what in my view was a lack of team understanding in the Town defence. Blackpool had no such weakness, for such flaws as were discovered were found out by individual players of the Town proving more skilful.

I took stock of the fact that with every clearance by a Blackpool defender the whole team moved forward as one man.

It was not merely that the backs and halves came out and left Town forwards in offside positions, but the fact also that the half-backs raced on as well to join their part in the attacks. Frequently Nelson faced a row of forwards like a Rugger pack.

Fellowes and Finlayson often have this half-back policy, of course, but they do not get back again with the same celerity. I wish they did. It would make a world of difference to the efficiency of the team. With the same speed and skill in the attack, and this additional feature in defence, no team could stand up to it.

Do not think I am "blowing" on the team. They have done grandly; they are the best team we have ever had, I feel sure, but there is room for improvement still, especially in tactics.

THE INCREASED PRICES

THE attendance at the Cup-tie was a sufficient reflection upon the raising of the prices, and now it is all over as far as this game is concerned, I can say that I hope the directors will not make such a drastic increase on the Lane Stand side again.

The doubling of the prices could be understood up to a point, but even for this game I do not think there should have been any increase except for the purpose of raising money, and if that was the only reason it should be made dear to the supporters.

To double the price for any part of the ground for any match, if the Arsenal, Spurs, Chelsea, or any team likely to have a few thousand followers, requires justification, but for a game in which the visitors can bring only two or three hundreds, I do not think it is wise to increase at all.

A GRAVE MISTAKE

TO treble the prices of any part, however, is asking for trouble, and the appearance of the "Bobbies" Stand showed most emphatically that it was a grave mistake. I said from the beginning that it was a mistake, and that was confirmed by the fact that two wings were empty, and there could have been many hundreds more accommodated in the centre block.

I am not prophesying that there will not be the same action again, for it was not my comment that appeared at the end of the report on Saturday, but I shall certainly think it is very unwise. The game was worth the extra, perhaps, but if we could have everything that was worth having we should all be living in Utopia. People have to deny themselves to see League games at ordinary prices, just as they have to deny themselves visits to the big shows in town, simply because they could not afford to attend.

THE LONG VIEW

IT was so on Saturday, and I should think that if the prices had been kept at ordinary League rates, there would have been 20,000 present. Maybe not, but many regular followers stayed away because of the principle, and the danger is that those supporters may be alienated and their enthusiasm lost for League games, so that in the long run the move is a loser.

I do hope that every follower will content himself by agreeing that it was a mistake, and as there were evidently many protestants in a practical way, and that we shall not have further need to grieve about a board that has given the Town its best team, and raised the football reputation of the town very high indeed.

CUTS TWO WAYS

I SUGGEST this with every confidence, for you cannot twit the directors with taking a shortsighted view unless you are prepared yourselves to take the long view, and, after all, the big thing that matters is not whether you or I have been disappointed temporarily, but the welfare and advancement of the Club.

The attendance was 13,892, and the receipts £2,053. There have been much bigger crowds at League games this season, of course, and we shall hope to see them again.

WANTED SUNDERLAND'S SCORER

IT may surprise followers of the Town who are sceptical about the efforts to get new players to know that attempts were made recently to secure Cyril Tormby, the inside forward who scored one of Sunderland's goals at Southampton on Saturday.

During this week there have been further attempts at negotiation, in spite of the fact that there is this Cup-tie on Saturday.

THE INJURED PLAYER

MUCH discussion has been waged over the action of Mr. Ned Liddell in asking Hancock to remain on the field in the second half of the Cup-tie on Saturday, for it is well known that Mr. Liddell did so.

The circumstances were that Hancock was hobbling about, unable to do any good, and passes were being made to him to no purpose. He came across the field with the intention of retiring from the game, but returned to his place after Mr. Liddell had spoken to him.

Many supporters felt that he was rather an obstruction to his colleagues than otherwise, and I confess that at the time I thought the other forwards would probably have been better without him.

A FINE POINT

BUT a fine point is raised, and I give Mr. Liddell's reason as it was given to Hancock: "If you can only stand then they (opponents) will have to keep an eye on you, but if you come off they know you're not there and don't have to trouble about you."

That was good logic, and is often acted upon and rightly. The trouble was that the Town players failed to recognise that Hancock was helpless, and they paid him as much attention as did Blackpool.

Had Hancock managed to have paved the way for a goal, as he nearly did on two occasions in the first half, the manager's advice would have been applauded.

WOULDN'T LIE DOWN

"MISS GRACE FIELDS should for-sake Rochdale Hornets and dedicate one of her old songs to Luton Town," said "Spectator" in the "Blackpool Gazette" on Monday.

"For, resembling the principal character in her famous ballad of earlier

In the very cold January morning yesterday, nearly 100 supporters of Luton Town, including Councillor Chas. Jeyes and Horace Hewson, directors, travelled on the 5.18 a.m. excursion train to Blackpool for the F.A. Cup-tie re-play.

day, the men of Luton, in the Third Round Cup-tie, on Saturday, were presumed by 13,000 people to be dead and yet in spite of the premature issue of the death certificate, would not lie down. It was as near an approach to a miracle on a football field as I have seen for a long time.

"Three reasons compelled a replay at Blackpool on Wednesday—the first in the town since, on a February afternoon in 1925, West Ham United were defeated 3-0.

"I tabulate them in the order of their importance:

- (1) The barn-storming courage of the Southern Section team, who, immediately after being reduced to 10 men, converted a 3-1 deficit into a 3-3 draw at a time when it appeared to be merely a case of waiting for the 90-minute whistle.
- (2) The profligate rejection of chances by the Blackpool forwards for half an hour in the second half—and even earlier in breakaway, too—during a period when the Town were in retreat, punch-drunk, and almost raced out of the game.
- (3) The stampeding during the last amazing 15 minutes of a Blackpool defence which for an hour and a quarter had faced Luton's hammer-and-long attack with a nearly undisturbed composure and with all the resolution which was the Town's chief quality."

EXETER'S VISIT

THIS has to be written before the result of the replay at Blackpool is known, but whatever the result there it is to be hoped that the Town players will get a tonic that will sharpen them for the game with Exeter on Saturday.

Exeter are low in the table, but have shown signs of revival, and have not played badly away from home. With the Town team almost certain to feel something of the strain of their mid-week game, the visitors will look forward to putting up a strong effort to deprive the Town of their hundred per cent points record at Luton.

Still, Exeter were due to play Northampton in a League game yesterday.

A KEEN FIGHT

IT is bound to be a keen fight, for the visitors will have acquired more confidence as a result of their Cup-tie success over Oldham, one of the strongest sides of the Northern Section, and that victory cannot be regarded very lightly.

The City have won only once away from home, when they beat their neighbours of Torquay in the second away game of the season. However, they picked up a point at Aldershot, Watford and Bournemouth, and their heaviest defeat was at Shepherd's Bush, when they lost by four goals clear on Christmas Day.

Exeter's failures at home have put them in an anxious position, for they have been beaten five times at St. James's Park, and the Town were among the victors.

I think the Town are better now than they were then, and if they recapture their form as against Cardiff and the Palace, they should improve their goal average, provided all are right from yesterday's match.

FIGURES

HERE is a summary of the meetings of the clubs since the entry to the Football League, and it will be noted that the Town have a big advantage, and have won the last six games off the reel at Luton, as well as the last three at Exeter. Only once have the Town failed to score against the City at Luton, and that was when certain players let the team down very badly in 1929-30, when the championship might well have been won.

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	Pts.
At Luton	11	6	3	2	24	18	14
At Tottenham	10	0	9	1	11	45	1
Total	21	6	12	3	35	63	15
Results at Tottenham have been:							
	F. A.				F. A.		
1926-27	1	4	1931-32	2	5		
1927-28	0	2	1932-33	0	0		
1928-29	1	4	1933-34	2	6		
1929-30	1	4	1934-35	1	5		
1930-31	2	6	1935-36	3	9		

WE WANT MORE COALS

IN spite of these figures, I am bound to repeat the warning that this game must not be taken too easily. The Town must make every effort to win every game by as big a margin as possible.

because more than ever it appears as though the championship may yet be decided by goal average, and we have not the best in the Division, though if the forwards continue their fine play of recent games we should be in that happy position before the end of next month.

The Town Reserves had a holiday on Saturday, and they certainly had an opportunity to learn something in the matter of combination.

A HARD TEST

THE Reserves' test will be harder than ever on Saturday, for the Town Reserves are due at White Hart Lane, where the 'Spurs' second string have scored a lot of goals. I am sure that if the Town are able to field this side they will put up a good show, and perhaps bring off their first Combination victory at that place.

At least we shall look for a better result than last season, when nine goals were credited to the 'Spurs, who have a penchant for starting at electrifying pace, and if they once succeed they take a lot of holding.

FIGURES

HERE is the summary of the meetings between the teams in the London Combination:

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
At Luton	11	6	3	2	24	18	14
At Tottenham	10	0	9	1	11	45	1
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Let's whisper to the Town Reserves again that the first eleven had never won on the Palace ground at Selhurst until last Saturday.

DIRECTORS ILL

IT is good news that Mr. E. Mouse, the member of the Town Board of Directors, is now making progress, although rather slowly, towards recovery.

The operation he underwent was a complete success, and it only remains now for Mr. Mouse, who is in the Bute Nursing Home, to regain strength.

Not such good news is to hand about another football director, Mr. Baylis, of Brighton and Hove Albion, who has always had a very warm interest in Luton, and especially since his sons are in this district.

Mr. Baylis was formerly a director of Reading for many years, but on removal to Brighton he was immediately invited to join the Club's directorate.

Mr. Harold G. Baylis tells me that his father is very ill, but is bravely sticking it, and if Brighton do not move to the Second Division he hopes it will be Luton.

We shall reciprocate that hope.

LOCAL APPOINTMENTS

HENRY PEARCE, the local referee, has reason to feel well pleased, for he has been appointed linesman for the Derby County v. Brentford Cup-tie. Henry was a long time coming to the front, but since doing so he has made good headway, and none better deserves it, for he is working very hard for the advancement of junior football, too, and these are the young men that merit consideration.

Another local referee, Mr. Percy Stevens, has been honoured by the Southern Counties Association, for he has been appointed to take the Amateur Championship final between Herts and Middlesex on Saturday.

It appears that Bedfordshire is coming into the limelight a good deal in the higher official circles, for Councillor Albert Ansell is getting a number of ticklish jobs in his capacity as a councillor of the Football Association.

LOCAL PLAYERS

H. BUSWELL, the Hitchin Town and former Windsor and Eton inside forward, has joined St. Albans City, and played centre-forward for them in their A.F.A. Cup-tie last Saturday.

J. CUNNINGHAM, a local lad, who earlier in the season had a trial with Leighton United, recently figured at outside left for St. Albans City Reserves, for whom P. Lovell, the ex-Robin Hoods player, still keeps goal.

LEIGHTON UNITED gave a trial to "Bunny" Ward, late of Luton Spartan and Biscot Sports, and who is brother to their old left-winger, Ken Ward, at Berkhamsted last Saturday. He put up a splendid show at outside-right, and looks like becoming as good a winger as his elder brother.

RON QUINCE, who served Waterlow's South Midlands League team so well the last few seasons, has taken up a business appointment in London, and will no longer be available.

I HEAR THAT SKEFKO, the Luton League (Division I) team, have in Gordon Skinner a centre-half back who would do well in higher circles. As a matter of fact, there are several local boys who would do some of the senior amateur clubs a good turn, such as Ken Brazier, the old Toddington Rover, who has proved to be the best inside forward that Leighton United have had for some seasons.

THERE IS EVERY POSSIBILITY that R. Murphy, the Hitchin player signed by Luton Town, will be playing for either Letchworth Town or Vauxhall Motors in the near future.

TWO FORMER LUTON TOWN footballers' sons are figuring in local football—Dave Richards' boy playing for Luton Old Boys, and Bill Jennings' son, who recently had a run out with Leighton United.

LEITCHWORTH TOWN state that they are likely to entertain a Luton and District League representative team for a game before the end of the season.

YOUNG SPORTSMAN'S DEATH

LUTON CLARENDON CRICKET CLUB and members of the Old Modernians' Club have grieved this week over the passing of Stuart Emerson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Emerson, of 31, Cambridge-street, Wellingborough.

Alf Emerson was a rare football enthusiast, although his business as a hair-dresser in Luton prevented him enjoying it as fully as he wished, but he served for many years the old Wednesday Football Leagues, and both he and Mrs. Emerson and their two sons were well-known and highly respected.

Some time ago they moved to Wellingborough, but they have never lost their love for the old town, and are here as often as they can get.

Stuart played Rugby football and cricket for the Modern School, and later played football for the Old Modernians and Luton Rugby F.A., and cricket for the Clarendon, and he was a very bright and even-tempered lad. His death took place last Thursday, and the interment was at Luton on Tuesday, the funeral being attended by many of his old colleagues of the playing fields.

A HARPENDEN NOTE

ON Saturday I had to refer to the departure from among us of an old Harpenden sportsman, Ben Jarman.

Now I hear that another of the old stalwarts of Harpenden football of the old days, Fred Church, has lost his mother, who has been ill for a long time.

Freddy has been a regular follower of Luton Town for many years now, first team and second team, and I am sure he has the sympathy of a host of friends.

FOR YOUR BENEFIT

FOR an interesting little story I commend Ralph Cox's tale of the visit of the Beds County A.A.A. team to Cheltenham for the Inter-County Cross-Country Championship.

The famous Cheltenham race-course was used, although the County team did not emulate the feats of Golden Miller on the course, they did better

there than he did at Aintree, for they went through with the job.

Still, turn to the Athletics column and you will be interested.

A GULL STORY

"AT Lulworth Cove," says Llewelyn Cowys in the "Manchester Guardian," "there is a notable old fisherman named Levi Miller who seldom goes out in his boat without a pair of herring gulls settling on the gunwale to 'holla' for the guts of the fish he catches."

"On one occasion these birds fought so desperately over the head of a pilchard that the old man feared they would kill each other, and leaving his pots and his oars went to separate them, pulling them apart by their webbed feet, as an old market-woman might separate a couple of truculent barnyard cocks."

THE HIGHWAY CODE, OR STAND AND DELIVER

F.A. CUP—THIRD ROUND
LUTON v. BLACKPOOL
Gate: 13,892, Receipts: £2,053.

EVERTON v. BOURNEMOUTH
Gate: 35,468, Receipts: £2,221.

Well PAID, Luton!
FRANK E. HEATHFIELD,
Anstee-road, Luton.

A JUST GROUSE

Dear Sir—I paid 3s. for a grandstand enclosure ticket to see the game between Luton and Blackpool. Well, I consider I did not get a fair chance of seeing the game. Being only 5ft. 6in. high, I always arrive early and get to the rails, and did so on Saturday, only to find some people seated inside the ground in front of the rails, perched up so high that people 6ft. high could not see over them. In fact, anyone who paid 7s. 6d. did not have so good a seat. Whoever was responsible for seating these spectators so high up prevented about 500 spectators seeing the game properly.

I understand that it was suggested by a gentleman who goes to every game at Luton that if it were necessary to have seats on the ground, they should be kept low. He had some hopes, as did I.

Well, perhaps some people came un-stuck last Saturday, as it was no necessary for anyone to be inside the ground. Do you think they got mixed up a bit? Perhaps no one knew how many tickets were sold.

On the stand enclosure when we had had rain a lot of water lies about. I wonder if he thinks a broom would do it good. —Yours, etc.,
A. G. CHESHIRE,
1, Victoria-street, Dunstable.

"EMPTY PLACES IN THE OLD GRAND STAND"

Crusader,—Well, on Saturday the local supporters showed the directors of Luton Town just how far they can go in the matter of dictating. As you so nobly championed their rights to raise the fees, especially on the "Bobbies' Stand" (?!) I suppose you are included.

You have been a football reporter long enough to be able to stand it, but, as a regular supporter, I think things should be fair from all views.

Why did the "Luton News" photographers miss the scoop of the season? I am certain the directors would like to have a reminder of their wisdom. We have been told often about certain photos that hang in the board room. Wouldn't one of the Bobbiers' Stand (?) on Saturday make a beauty?

But perhaps their view across the ground has made a lasting plate on their memory. The "Bobbies' Club" Committee, if they really did pass the increase, have done the club an injury, as many members are quite sore about it.

Now for a note on the game. Why blame Nelson for not winning, for that is how your report read to me on Saturday night? Blackpool were a good team, and showed us how the third back game could be beat. When they attacked up the middle, there were always their forwards in a line, but the man with the ball used to run towards the Luton centre half, and if Nelson failed in the tackle, or proposed tackle for there were times when he was alone with the odds 3-1, then the ball was sent to an awaiting opponent, who quite a number of times had good openings to score.

We all know Nelson wasn't up to form, but there was no need to rub it in. Couldn't the blame be shared by others?

Personally I have nothing but praise for a gallant performance with 10 men. Well, I don't expect you will print all, if any of this letter, but I hope to read your next report, and find that Sunderland are coming to Luton, and that the Lane Stand is once more the "Old Bobbiers' Stand".—Yours, etc.,
"EVERY WEEK SUPPORTER."