

BRILLIANT TEAM WORK

SMASHED MILLWALL'S LAST HOPE OF PROMOTION

GRAND GOALKEEPING KEPT DOWN THE SCORE

BY CRUSADER

LUTON TOWN 5
Hancock, Roberts, Payne,
Stephenson, Finlayson
MILLWALL ATHLETIC 0

LUTON.—Coen; King, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Hancock, Rich, Payne, Roberts, Stephenson.

MILLWALL.—Burke; Smith (E), Inns; Day, Wallbanks, Forsyth; Thomas, Burdett (K), Steele, McCartney, Smith (J).

Referee.—T. Smith, Atherstone.

Jubilant indeed were the followers of Luton Town on Saturday night. That the colours of old rivals had been lowered was one pleasing factor; a difficult obstacle, probably the most formidable home game, had been overcome; but quite as pleasing as anything was the team's return to the magnificent teamwork, fighting spirit and skilful combination that lifted hopes very high early in the season, but had sagged too often this year.

Millwall moved in rather different style from their tradition, though there was still the old courage and determination in defence. There was nothing hectic about the attack. Passing was often delightful, reminding us of some of the pretty but ineffective football some of the Town's differently constructed attacks have shown, with finishing—well, not to match.

SPORTING GAME

This was a clean, sporting game in every way; there were one or two fouls, but nothing very serious, and apparently every player was whole when he returned to the dressing-room, although Forsyth had been in the wars quite frequently and met with several minor mishaps.

What one liked about the play of the winners was their directness. Now and then, but not too often there were pretty little frills, but on the whole it was the quick pass and the nippiness that well-nigh demoralised the Millwall rearguard in the second half.

GREAT GOALKEEPER

We have seen good goalkeeping this season, thanks to the safety fence that has hedged the goal, but I am quite convinced that we have not seen a better custodian than Burke.

Miraculous saves we often hear about, but I think it is a neater compliment to say of Burke that his coolness and sound judgment were the features of his play; he never lost his bearings, but marked the prospective flight of the ball so well that he foiled some of the best shooting we have had for many weeks.

Millwall's backs and halves worked splendidly in the first half, and even when they were doomed to defeat they never ceased trying, but they were almost run off their feet after change of ends, and the stamina of the Town team was remarkable.

STEADY IMPROVEMENT

For a time the Town forwards and halves appeared to be quite slow, but steadily came into their best, and out-paced and outwitted badly a defence that had seemed too solid and well-balanced to give away five goals.

Of Millwall's eleven I liked the sturdiness of the rearguard, which had no reason to feel disgraced by forfeiting more goals than in any previous game this season. Not in any game had they conceded more than two, but in this the score against them would have been near double figures but for the excellence of Burke.

Forsyth was a plucky and desperate worker at left half, and the forwards frequently displayed great skill in their passing and generally speed of combination. Unluckily for them they found the Luton defence in superb form.

TOWN DEFENCE

Coen had comparatively little to do, but twice I thought he might have ventured from his goal a little earlier to take an overshoot pass. This is always a debatable point, I know, but if there is proper understanding with the other defenders it should thwart many a danger move. Not that one would grumble about Coen; I think he will keep his job now for some time.

King put up a brainy exhibition, and was a nice foil to the dash of Smith. King's anticipation freed the Town defence from some awkward situations in the opening period. Smith had quite as much as he could manage in Thomas, but when he played well up to him was usually master. It was when he allowed the winger too much room that things happened.

BRILLIANT SKIPPER

Nelson again gave a brilliant display. His judgment was admirable and one felt intuitively again and again that the ball was his even when the evidence was the other way. The Town skipper not only conformed to the ideal of a stopper in general, but often opened out the game by his bright passes.

Finlayson was at his best, supporting the attack magnificently, and Fellowes was just about as good, though at times his passing was faulty in the first half. Both flank halves rendered great support to their attack.

The forwards did not move uniformly in the first half. The attack seemed rather lop-sided, with the left wing a bit laborious and the right wing rather uncertain, but once together and keeping the ball on the move there was no holding them.

PAYNE DRAWS THEM

Payne, as usual, was the objective of the obstructive work of two or three Millwall defenders, and too often he was lacking a colleague standing by, or there would have been more trouble in the first half for the visiting defence. His passing was good, and he drew defenders out of position for the benefit of his colleagues.

Roberts again played a great game, and it was a joy to the crowd as well as to his mates when he smashed home the second goal. Stephenson owed much of his success to his partner and to Fellowes, and the winger was a rare thorn to the Millwall defence.

RICH'S PART

The inclusion of Rich did not immediately spell success. He was slow in getting the ball on the move, and passed badly in the first half, but he lent a lot of dash to the line in the second half, and he and Hancock got on very well together. The latter worked hard again, and some of his nippy moves threw the

Millwall defensive organisation out of gear.

Four Smiths were playing: Millwall had a couple, and Luton one, and the other was the referee. All did very well, and the official was certainly a tremendous improvement on the previous Smith who appeared in a similar capacity at Luton.

THE GAME

The Town made the pace, and Payne was slow in taking advantage of a cute pass from the left within a minute of the start, and was robbed. Millwall had a full share of the game, and gave rather more trouble to Coen and company than was happening at the other end. Indeed, the visitors might have scored from a centre by Reg Smith had the opposite flank pair been alert.

FIRST GOAL

King was prominent for safe work in defence, and then the Town began to make things hot for the Millwall rear-guard, and after Burke had saved well from Roberts he had to throw himself across goal to keep out a shot from Stephenson; he could but divert the ball, and HANCOCK raced in and put the ball into the net.

Rich only just failed to turn through a fine pass by Payne, and Stephenson was foiled in the nick of time by Wallbanks. Forsyth did the same a minute later, and repeated the performance when Payne was boring through.

Burke saved grandly from Stephenson, and then Wallbanks beat down a centre from the latter, but the appeal for a penalty kick was unheeded, and half-time came with the score:

LUTON	1
MILLWALL	0

Stephenson had the visitors panicky soon after the resumption, and then Rich made a splendid drive which was only a few inches too high.

Hancock and Rich were well together in another move, and the ball went over for Payne to send out to the left, where a slick bit of work by Stephenson enabled ROBERTS to dribble inwards quickly and wind up with a magnificent shot which struck the bar and fell into the net—a very fine goal.

Millwall were compelled to concentrate on defence for a long time. Their forwards continued to work hard when they got the ball, but had little assistance from the rear. Payne drove in a tremendous shot which Burke saved in wonderful fashion at full length, and then got to another difficult handful from Roberts.

HURRICANE OF SHOTS

Millwall's goal was subject to a hurricane of shots in another storming assault, and how the ball was kept out was a mystery, but there was no respite, and finally Smith (E) deliberately used his hands to stop a shot from Roberts.

A penalty kick decision was not arguable at all. Payne took the shot, but Burke went down to the drive and the ball rebounded from him; PAYNE rushed in and fired home a lightning shot with the left foot.

AND MORE

Still the Town maintained the aggressive, and from Rich's pass Payne headed backwards over Wallbanks' head, and STEPHENSON, darting in from the left sent in a fierce low shot which Burke was powerless to save.

Burke saved at full length again in grand style from Roberts, and Inns booted the ball off the line as Payne headed in from a corner. Another penalty kick should have been given when Roberts was badly brought down within a few yards of goal.

Millwall made only spasmodic efforts, and were easily held by the Town defenders, who also took part in forcing attacks at the other end. Once M'Cartney tested Coen, who caught a fast shot, but play was soon at the other end, and after Payne had just missed with a grand shot, FINLAYSON scored with a very fine effort from twenty-five yards range.

Attendance: 18,300; receipts, £1,119.