

PAYNE'S PART IN GILLINGHAM'S DEFEAT

KENT COBS WERE A HARD LOT

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN went a step nearer reaching the Second Division last night when they beat GILLINGHAM at Kenilworth-road. A keen game was expected, and the visitors could scarcely have put up a more determined fight. The Town had to fight every inch of the way, and the 13,028 spectators (receipts £716) had some scares before Luton eventually left the field winners. Gillingham proved a virile, forceful team; they used their weight and the side flung pass to good effect. Luton had a lot for which to thank Payne. He not only scored four goals, but was always working out openings for his colleagues. He gave a brilliant display, and must have impressed some of the high personages of the F.A. who were present.

Gillingham kept going until the last kick, as is proved by the fact that they reduced the lead in the final second of the match. The Town can now be content that they have passed their hardest home test, for they have had a sterner struggles at Kenilworth-road this season.

Hancock showed a noticeable improvement, especially in the second half, and Stephenson also did well. Nelson was as sound as ever, but the defence was frequently rattled by the sharp attacks of the visiting forwards. Coen kept goal well, and there was no serious deficiency among the others, though King and Smith gave the wingers rather a lot of trouble.

Luton were by far the more scientific side, and some of the forward work was brilliant, but they found the Kent side more than useful.

Gillingham won the toss and defended the Kenilworth-road end. Swinging the ball about from the start, their right wing had Smith all at sea, and Wilson put in a left-foot shot that passed right across the Town goal.

The Town broke away, and Stephenson forced a corner, Payne heading into Whitelaw's hands.

It was obvious that Gillingham were out for kick and rush tactics that would sweep the Town off their feet. For once they got as good as they asked.

After five minutes Stephenson snapped up a pass and shot the ball forward for PAYNE to take in his stride, beat Ballsom and tap the ball into the net as Whitelaw came out.

STRONG GILLINGHAM TACKLING

Gillingham promptly set about recovery. A wide centre from the right was met by Watson, who again headed into Coen's hands.

FINLAYSON MAKES IT TWO

The Town were making progress when the referee got in the way of a beautiful pass by Finlayson to Stephenson. A corner followed, and from this there was a scuffle. After two or three shots had been barred, Ballsom cleared off the ball-line with Whitelaw beaten.

The ball was returned, and FINLAYSON, who had moved into the middle, dribbled cleverly through. With a beautifully placed shot all along the ground he beat Whitelaw all ends up.

When Gillingham attacked again Hartley snapped up a ball that was too high for Nelson's head. He got in a shot that Coen tipped over the bar.

PAYNE GETS SOME "STICK"

Fellowes swung the ball well out to the right. Payne raced after it and beat Lester to it.

He was bowled over, but got the ball to Hancock, who was badly tripped by Lester right on the penalty line. From the free kick Dawes had a good chance at close quarters, but shot tamely behind.

Payne raced through again and centred right across goal. There was no one up to take advantage of the pass.

Gillingham were giving Payne some "stick," but he was holding his own pretty well.

Smith smartly held up the right wing, as did Nelson a moment later.

PAYNE'S DOUBLE

During another scrum just outside the Gillingham penalty area Hopkins kicked wildly behind his own lines. The flag kick was cleared.

Following a rush by the Gillingham left wing, Dawes sent Hancock away with a natty ground pass.

The winger squared the ball across goal, and as Whitelaw and Armstrong both went for it, PAYNE darted through and tapped the ball into the net.

Whitelaw was knocked out in the scrimmage, evidently having received a kick on the head when he dived at full length. He resumed after attention.

A good deal of the sting had gone out of the visitors. The Town defence was positioning better than in the early stages.

A great run by Hancock elicited applause. He beat Lester very cleverly, raced clean through, cut in and centred squarely. Armstrong kicked the ball behind just in time, and the flag kick was cleared.

A scrimmage followed, and from this

the ball was got away. By forceful play Gillingham beat the Town defence.

While King was lying prostrate from a heavy collision after the ball had hit him at the back of the head the visitors did a bit of sharp passing, and DUNCAN took an easy chance to shoot past Coen into the net.

With the Town defence all at sea a wide pass went to Watson, who banged in a shot that struck the post and glanced into the net. The linesman, however, was flagging for offside.

Gillingham struck swiftly and vigorously again, and the Town goal had miraculous escapes. Coen was beaten, but Smith kicked off the goal-line.

LUTON TOWN 3
GILLINGHAM 1

On the restart the Town attacked on the left wing, and Stephenson forced a corner. From this there was a scuffle in the goal-mouth, and Hancock shot past Whitelaw.

Ballsom hooked the ball out when it must have been within an inch of a goal. The referee was right on the spot and ignored an appeal.

There followed another corner kick which swept right across goal, and Payne handled unluckily.

In another attack Dawes drove in a beautiful shot that Whitelaw saved at full length at the expense of a corner. This was cleared.

HAT TRICK FOR PAYNE

Play was warming up again now, and a fourth goal came, ten minutes after the re-start.

Following brilliant all-round play by the Town attack, the ball went from player to player, and finally Stephenson hooked in a centre which PAYNE dashed in to head into the net.

The Gillingham defence was beaten again, but as Roberts sent through Payne was waved offside.

A move on the Gillingham left had the Town defence completely beaten. Coen raced out and snatched the ball from Hartley's foot and cleared. It was a great save.

Gillingham attacked again, and after a scrimmage in the Town goal area Coen tipped over the bar.

PAYNE MAKES HIS TALLY FOUR

Following the flag kick Stephenson rammed the ball well out to the right, and Hancock beat the defence and gave Dawes a good chance, but he fired over the bar.

PAYNE, who had been edging to the right, took a pass from Dawes and smashed in an unstoppable drive that Whitelaw scarcely saw.

There was still some fight left in the visitors, and they gave the Town defence quite as much as they could cope with. We looked for another goal when Payne gave Stephenson a delightful pass. The ball rose just over his foot as he took aim, and then trickled behind.

A moment later Roberts put in a magnificent first-time shot that was destined for the top corner of the net until Whitelaw tipped it over the bar.

Hancock next broke through and banged the ball squarely across goal for Ballsom to deflect it from Stephenson just in time.

A fierce attack by the Town brought a corner. Whitelaw saved brilliantly from this, but a second corner followed Payne heading over.

Coen had to handle several times, but there was nothing serious about the demands upon him.

Payne made another good effort following bright work by Dawes and Stephenson. His header was just wide.

In a hot attack by the Town Whitelaw saved a pile-driver from Finlayson.

In the last minute, while Luton were waiting for the whistle, there was slackening in vigilance. As a result the Gillingham right wing beat a way through. HARTLEY banged the ball against the bar and it rebounded to him and he had only to shoot hard into the net.

LUTON TOWN 5
GILLINGHAM 2

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

GILLINGHAM.—Whitelaw; Ballsom, Lester; Randle, Armstrong, Hopkins, Dodds, Wilson (T), Hartley, Duncan, Watson.

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

TOWN OVERHAULING

NOTTS COUNTY

DIVISION III. (SOUTH)

	P	W	L	D	F	A
Notts County	38	21	7	10	69	48
LUTON TOWN	37	23	10	4	86	49
Brighton	38	22	12	4	67	40
Watford	38	18	10	10	75	50
Southend Utd.	37	17	10	10	74	55
Reading	37	17	11	10	68	55
Millwall	37	17	11	9	60	46
Northampton T	37	18	13	6	77	58
Q.P. Rangers	38	16	13	9	68	46
Bournemouth	37	17	13	7	57	52
Gillingham	38	16	14	8	49	62
Clapton Orient	37	13	12	12	46	48
Bristol Rovers	38	16	20	2	64	71
Swindon Town	36	11	15	10	64	63
Crystal Palace	38	10	16	12	55	56
Bristol City	37	13	19	5	54	66
Torquay Utd.	38	11	18	9	52	66
Newport County	37	10	18	9	60	87
Cardiff City	36	11	18	7	45	81
Walsall	37	9	18	10	53	80
Exeter City	38	8	20	10	50	82
Aldershot	37	6	22	9	45	75