

Surprise Shot By Dawes Brings Luton Success

MANCHESTER UNITED FALL

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN 1
(Dawes)

MANCHESTER UNITED .. 0

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

MANCHESTER UNITED. — Breen; Griffiths, Roughton; Gladwin, Vose, McKay; Bryant, Murray, Mutch Baird, Manley.

Referee: W. P. Harper, Stourbridge.

To the numerous followers of Luton Town who groused about their play both in this game and in their struggle with the Villa one might well put the question:

"If you have cause to grumble about the winners what would you say if you were a supporter of the losers?"

As in the Villa match I am willing to concede that the visitors played classic football, but the points remained at Luton, and while recognising fully that the play of the Town can be improved tremendously in many departments, I am not going to withhold a handsome meed of praise to the Town players.

We shall not see cleverer sides at Luton, and we shall probably find points forfeited to teams that have not nearly the skill of the two teams that have suffered defeat here, but I am certain of this: When grounds are more suitable for football there will be a vast difference in the play of the Town, whatever their opponents may pull out.

HARD GROUND

Has it not been in the last three or four seasons that the hard grounds in the early weeks have found the team struggling hard to avoid defeat at the hands of teams that cannot approach these Birmingham and Manchester sides in the matter of skill?

Rain, rain, and more rain is needed to make the ground yielding; it is altogether too hard at the moment, and I am confident that when the mud is flying the team will show better individual work and better understanding.

I go so far as to say that Manchester United will find it harder to hold Luton in the return game in January than they experienced on Saturday at Luton.

This particularly applies to the left wing and to Payne, for the ball is not running right for them on these hard grounds. Not all errors are excusable, perhaps, but more are than the average spectator allows.

WHEN WINTER COMES

Luton Town will do well if they can hold their own with teams of such quality during these summer days. When winter really comes along I shall expect them to do much better.

Again there was a splendid crowd, and if such football can be served up consistently there will be no fall of attendance figures. Already have hopes in this respect been fulfilled, and the directors can rub their hands with satisfaction over what has happened to date.

Play was very clean, and only one Luton player had to receive an admonition from the referee but there were three or four of the visitors who came under his reproof.

STRONG HALVES

United's strength was in their middle line, and there was the additional advantage to them of the inability in the first half of the Town left wing to do things right. If Roberts did get in a decent pass Stephenson could not hold it, and, indeed, the latter had another very bad match, but he will get over this bad spell.

Of the forwards Dawes was always the most dangerous, and the manner in which he manoeuvred and shot was a striking example to the others.

Payne could not get the ball to run to his liking, but he did not receive the support to which he is accustomed, and Roberts could do little right in the first half, but did many fine things in the second, for he opened out the game in his old style. Hancock was working hard all along, but frequently his cleverness was brought to nought by clinging to the ball or turning back to beat a man when he should have given the quick pass or made a dash forward.

At half the Town were as good as the opposition.

Fellowes was a big power in attack, and did grand work, especially after the interval, and Finlayson also was more than useful in spite of his inability to recover at speed.

NELSON THE MASTER

The outstanding player, however, was Nelson, who again and again thwarted the puzzling moves of the United forwards, and time after time he baulked their marksmen when attempting shots from close range. This was probably the best game Nelson has played for Luton, and if he has played better anywhere else then he should have an International cap.

King found Manley a tough handful, and in several duels was worsted, but he came through a stiff ordeal with much credit, and Tom Smith also played one of his best games. When he stuck close to the mercurial Bryant half the punch of the United's attack was taken away, but the Town full back finds it difficult to keep position.

Coen had not a lot of difficult work, but such as came his way he did well, though on one or two occasions he was at fault.

MAGNIFICENT DEFENCE

The United defence was magnificent in every way. Breen is a magnificent goalkeeper, and Griffiths and Roughton were as good a pair of backs as we have seen at Luton for a long time.

Gladwin was the brilliant servant at half, for he plied his forwards with grand passes, and McKay was nearly as good. Vose deserved the many good



things that have been reported of him for the last two seasons.

Forward the approach work was very clever indeed, almost as good as that of the Villa, but the marksmanship was wretched. Manley and Bryant were more dangerous than their inside forwards.

FORCED THE PACE

United opened at a hot pace and threatened an early goal, but could not get in a shot, and the first escape was at the other end when Payne rushed through and shot on the run, the ball passing just wide. Dawes had made the opening, and that player continued to test the qualities of Breen and his backs. Payne was absent for a matter of ten minutes through injury, and in that period Roughton once cleared luckily from under the bar when Breen was an absentee from goal.

Nelson was doing sterling work in the Town defence, and regularly held up the United attack. At the cross-over the Town captain was given a special cheer.

Hancock just failed to meet a square pass across the goalmouth immediately the game was renewed, Fellowes having spurred through the defence. Coen's best save followed, Baird being the marksman, but after this there was a long period of pressure on the Town goal, and Manley once hit the post with a good shot.

MISS OF THE MATCH

Baird made the miss of the match when the Town defence was completely beaten, and the United forward had simply to tap the ball into the net, but from two or three yards out he lifted it over the bar when such a feat seemed impossible.

Roberts fired wide and Hancock headed wide, and then came the big cheer of the match.

THE GOAL

DAWES took possession just over the half-way line, ran on a little, and when the defenders were expecting him to pass forward to Hancock, who had raced up the wing, the inside right shot hard for goal; there was a rush of heads in the goalmouth, and Breen leaped across and flung up his arms, but the pace of the ball beat them all, and it landed in the top corner of the net. Breen caught his head on the post, and had to receive attention.

The Town held the upper hand for some time after this, and Payne went close, but in the closing stages United pressed fiercely in an effort to draw level. Nelson stood between them and victory twice, and when the final whistle sounded the game was well won chiefly because of the sturdy resistance of the defence.

SATURDAY'S GOLF

Leighton Buzzard v. South Beds.—Each team won four singles. Of the four-ball foursomes Leighton won two and halved one. Result: Leighton Buzzard 6½, South Beds 5½.