

# TOSS OF A COIN

## FIRST OF MANY MISFORTUNES IN LUTON'S CUP DEFEAT

By CRUSADER

LUTON TOWN fought gallantly enough in their Cup-tie with MANCHESTER CITY at Luton on Saturday, but they suffered a series of misfortunes that proved too big a handicap when they turned round for the second half of the match.

PERHAPS the most important factor was the luck of the toss. There was a high wind, and it blew directly into the Kenilworth-road end, and Marshall, the City skipper, did not hesitate to take advantage of it.

KEEPING THE BALL ON THE GROUND neatly, the City forwards were aggressive from the start, but they had few opportunities for shooting, although they were clearly bent on shooting as often as possible. The City inside men engaged in a bout of passing, and eventually Herd tried a speculative shot from thirty yards, and the ball travelled about a yard wide, with Coen watching it closely.

TOWN HALVES SHOWED UP WELL in subsequent exchanges, and prompt tackling kept the City forwards at bay. Heale and Brook made attempts to bore through, but first Nelson and then King proved the obstacle. Several free kicks were given against the City for tripping, and once the Town were pulled up as Vinall and Roberts forced a way through, and the referee awarded a free kick, Stephenson banging the ball against a row of opponents when Fellowes' free kick was headed out.

CITY'S LEFT WING forced two or three corners, but these were got away, although Brook always placed the ball well. Ferguson also gave trouble to Barkas, and made him yield a couple of corners in quick succession, but the City defenders got the ball clear, and Swift was very safe.

COEN PUNCHED OUT a corner taken by Toseland, who was giving Smith plenty of anxiety, and then each goalkeeper had to save in turn from sharp attacks, the Town doing very well in spite of the strong wind against them. However, the City took the lead after 16 minutes. Herd and Toseland, with the help of Percival, drew the Town defence, and the ball was whipped across goal; the Town

defenders evidently expected an offside decision, and the referee raised his hand as if to whistle, but did not do so, and HEALE shot low and true, Coen just being too late to smother the ball.

THE CITY gave the Town defence a severe time following the goal, but whenever a Town forward appeared to be getting dangerous, down he was brought, and the free kicks were never much use, even when well placed, and for a change Vinall tripped one of the visitors. It would have been more to the point if there had been some hard shoulder work.

CONSIDERING that they were playing against such a strong wind, the Town had much of the play, and the City forwards did not often give Coen hot work. Swift did not have anything very difficult, but he came out with fine judgment on several occasions and managed to take the ball. However, the City forwards played very clever football at times, and deft back-heel passing by Heale and Doherty won applause.

CITY'S SECOND GOAL was attended by a streak of good luck. The Town defence was again drawn over to the City right, and the ball was banged across to the opposite wing; Brook met it and shot it hard into the goalmouth; Finlayson was there, and blocked the ball at full stretch, and before he could recover, DOHERTY was on the spot, and simply tapped the ball into the net. That was the usual way with the City inside forwards, and in contrast to those of the Town, for one was usually well at hand to help Heale at close quarters.

FLUSTERED by this second goal, the Town defenders became rather wild in their work, but Finlayson and Nelson did splendidly, holding up several attacks, and Vinall and Roberts also dropped back to assist the halves. However, that meant that any raid by the forwards was more easily frustrated by the City defenders. Coen made two or three good saves, but there were few good shots at either end.

THIRD GOAL to the City came in the most extraordinary fashion. Nelson collared the ball as it came up the middle. There was no one to bother him unduly, and he could easily have kicked the ball to any part of the ground, but clearly he was moved to do the wiser thing, and send it back to Coen. The goalkeeper, however, raced out of goal without making any sign, as far as one could judge, and he was within a yard or two of NELSON when the latter kicked the ball back into the empty goal. Coen was the more at fault for rushing from goal in that fashion, but Nelson should have known that his goalkeeper was at home before putting the ball back.

CITY CONTINUED TO HOLD THE UPPER HAND to the interval, but the Town, especially Payne and his wingers, were prominent with raids, and Fellowes several times assisted his wing to break through, but always Swift was in a comfortable position to receive anything that came his way. One save, however, was excellent, if very fortunate, for the goalkeeper dashed out and met Payne as the latter shot, and the ball squirmed behind for a corner, the flag kick, like all the others, being dealt with safely by the City defenders. Heale just failed to put the City further ahead on the stroke of the interval, and at long last the referee had a word with Percival for tripping.

THE TOWN RESUMED the second half as though they would soon draw level, and the City's defensive plans were evidently reconstructed now that they had to face the wind. Attack after attack was launched. Roberts dallied before taking his shot after beating the defence, and Swift made a save when at full stretch. The City leader and wingers were waiting for raiding opportunities, but they did not get very far, the ball being driven well back into the City territory.

PAYNE WAS WELL WATCHED, usually being in the centre of a crowd of opponents, but once he fought a way to the ball, secured, and then flashed in a grand shot which would have beaten any goalkeeper less physically endowed than Swift. The goalkeeper just managed to send the ball over the bar. Smith was crippled for a time, and then King was badly damaged in a collision, and had to be carried off the field. He returned after ten minutes, and played at outside-right, Finlayson going to full-back and Vinall to right-half.

STILL THE TOWN PRESSED HOTLY, and Payne several times endeavoured to carve a way through. Marshall and the backs never gave him any rope, however, and the other Town inside forwards were never near enough to help him force matters. Stephenson did good work, making many bright contributions, and he got the ball over very well, but the City defence was compact, and worked without flurry or hesitation.

CORNERS CAME ON EITHER FLANK, and Fellowes raced in and headed over from a flag-kick by Stephenson. It was nearly all Luton, and the City forwards were rarely over the half-way line. When they did manage to trespass into the Luton half, they were never able to extend Coen very seriously. During one assault by the Town, Payne was close in when he was charged in the back and brought down heavily, but the appeal for a penalty kick was unheeded.

TOSELAND SHOT WIDE after the City left wing had made headway and the Town defence was left open, and then there was hectic work in the City goal-mouth, where Payne and an opponent who had kicked him almost came to blows. The referee was unsighted, or there must have been a penalty here. Still the Town persisted, and Stephenson twice broke through and shot hard, once just missing and a second time sending across the goal, and Swift flung himself across and made a wonderful save.

MORE CORNERS FOLLOWED, and Nelson rushed up and headed once, but the ball struck a defender and rebounded. The City defence was harassed continually, but kept cool and kicked and tackled strongly. Just before the end PAYNE met a centre with his head, and, beating Marshall and Barkas, headed forward, and as Swift dashed out, the centre-forward went on and headed over the goalkeeper's head into the net.

LUTON LOST because their defence was unbalanced in the first half. Two goals arrears at half-time would not have been too bad, but three was altogether too big a margin, and the forwards were not at all together well. Payne and Stephenson were the most dangerous, and all the others worked hard, but without much success, and there was no combination worth mention.

FINLAYSON was as good as any middle man playing, and Fellowes did better work in attacking than in defence, while Nelson played a splendid pivotal game, and met with much success in spite of the skilful passing and dribbling of the City inside forwards. Coen was not reliable, though he made many fine saves in the first half.

CITY OWED A LOT to the steadiness of their defence. Swift was a grand goalkeeper, his judgment being sound. Dale was the best back on the field, and at half Marshall played a cool and cautious game. Nearly all the City defenders never hesitated to use hands or to trip when beaten, and the same spirit was noticeable with one or two forwards. Doherty was extremely clever in his footwork, but apt to be peevish, and Herd never revealed the much-vaunted marksmanship. Toseland did not have a lot of work, but he was speedy. Brook and Heale were the two most dangerous forwards in the match, and although the former did not score, he came very near it in the first half. Heale was a very clever leader, and distributed with coolness and craft.

MANCHESTER CITY ..... 3  
Heale, Doherty, Nelson (own goal)

LUTON TOWN ..... 1  
Payne

LUTON TOWN—Coen, King, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Ferguson, Vinall, Payne, Roberts, Stephenson.

MANCHESTER CITY — Swift; Dale, Barkas, Percival, Marshall, Rogers; Toseland, Herd, Heale, Doherty, Brook; Referee—A. W. Stralunge, Bristol.