

LATE GOALS BRING SMASHING WIN

Swansea's Stalwart Defence Collapsed

BRILLIANT GOALKEEPING BY WELSH INTERNATIONAL

By CRUSADER

LUTON TOWN	5
Connelly 2, Ferguson 2	
Stephenson	
SWANSEA TOWN	1
Olsen	

LUTON TOWN: Dolman; King, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Ferguson, Connelly, Vinall, Roberts, Stephenson.

SWANSEA TOWN: John; Wright, Emmanuel (T); Warner, Simons, Lloyd; Lewis (I), Lewis (H), Emmanuel (L), Olsen, Lang.

Referee E. L. Davies, Wincanton.

Never was there any question as to the better team. Even the most ardent Welshman who came to shout for the Swansea side would admit that concerning the general run of the play, the highlight of the match was the grand goalkeeping of John, the Welsh International goalkeeper. Again and again he retrieved the situation for the visitors, and it was largely due to his skill and ability that the issue was in doubt until five minutes from the end.

Having said thus it must be admitted also that once more the Town did not show the efficiency in team work that could satisfy the supporters. The game should have been won at half-time, but while we have forwards who cannot consummate clever midfield work owing to their dilatoriness in front of goal we shall have this admission, reluctantly though it may be made.

TOO CLEVER

On the point of individual skill I yield to none in admiration of Connelly, and in other circumstances one would find great pleasure in the manner in which he schemes and outwits, but while knowing how much there is at stake, knowing that the difference between victory and defeat means something like an epoch in the history of the Club, it passes my understanding that there should be so much that is trifling and frivolous, and actually dangerous to that history in his play.

To Vinall and Roberts, in spite of their numerous failures in front of goal must be awarded praise for constant endeavour, for real fight for the ball, and while both were in the habit of trying to do too much individually, and failing in marksmanship, they were less blame-worthy in this respect than Connelly. If the last-named had shown consistently throughout the game the determination and thrust that he put into the last quarter of an hour he would have made the game safe long before.

When he kept right up with the attack, and introduced the vital dash in front of goal we saw the attack a real live force. It was an encouragement to the men with him and to those behind him, and it is to be hoped that he will maintain this quality from start to finish in future, and strive to be useful rather than ornamental. He is a great craftsman, and in my view is sacrificing his talent.

STEPHENSON SOUND

Of the other forwards Stephenson again played very well indeed, and most of the goals came from his sound work, while Ferguson, although he still falls below the standard of an accomplished winger, showed that he has possibilities, and the big thing about his play is that he keeps on working all the time, and is usually on the premises when there is a chance. That is why he has scored so many goals. He missed chances in this game, but so do all forwards, yet he notched a couple, and men who score goals can be forgiven omissions.

Apart from his lack of shooting Vinall held the line together better than usual, and if John had been less efficient possibly we might have seen both the centre-forward and Roberts get a goal or two.

CLOSE WORK

Generally there was rather too much close work between forwards and halves, but Finlayson and Fellowes played very well again, the former being somewhere near his best, and they gave their forwards plenty of chances.

Nelson was again the reliable man of this department, and held the inside forwards of Swansea remarkably well, and he had a fair amount of scooting out to the wings owing to the defects in the work of King and Smith.

One cannot overlook the fact, however, that it is largely because the flank halves are apt to move too far ahead to be able to recover quickly that upsets the back division. There is no compactness, and many times the Swansea forwards were in a line with only one or two opponents to bar the way. Quick recovery in the middle line would be of immense value to the backs. The kicking was not very good, though there was a reason for that, and a good excuse, because forwards on both sides found difficulty, as well as defenders, in kicking accurately.

Dolman's penalty save was an easy thing, but he brought off three or four magnificent saves, and he looks as though he has regained his place in the team.

Taking the display all round, however, the team was greatly improved. There was more forcefulness, better fighting spirit, and it was the stamina and rugged determination of the team in the closing period that broke the opposition.

Unquestionably the Town forwards would have done much better but for the fact that the watering to which the ground had been subjected—and it was necessary—had left the going very slippery on top, and firm underneath, and the players found great difficulty in keeping their feet in the penalty area.

A GRAND GOALKEEPER

Swansea might account themselves unlucky to lose by such a margin. I do not agree that there was not such a big difference between the teams as the score suggests. I thought the Town were quite five goals to one better, and that would have been proved to the hilt but for the heroic work of John, and the comparative failures of the Town inside forwards in the first hour.

It must have been a big blow to see a penalty kick fail so badly immediately the game started, but it was a very poor effort that Warner made with the kick, which was a correct decision. The visitors were a young lot; there were many players who should develop into the very highest class. I admired their pluck and their sportmanship, their ceaseless endeavour.

They cut out frills altogether, and went for goal, and Lewis (I) and Olsen struck me as being very useful forwards.

The halves were a hard working lot, with Simons, if beaten frequently by Vinall's superior height, the pick, while Emmanuel (T) did great work at full back, and John was as good as any goalkeeper we have seen at Luton for two or three seasons.

If Swansea escape relegation I imagine that they will be a more powerful side next season in this class, and if they have to be content with Third Division they should be well in the running for promotion.

THE PLAY

After a skirmish by the Town the visitors got away and Lewis (H) was going through solo when Fellowes brought him down unfairly, and a penalty kick was awarded without hesitation. Warner's kick had not much power behind it, and was directly in line to Dolman, who picked up and cleared, though he seemed astonished that his task was so easy.

Luton soon profited by the escape, and attacked fiercely, and after a hot tussle in front of goal Stephenson seized the ball when Vinall's shot rebounded and another drive crashed against the post. Play was very much in favour of the Town, though Swansea's raids were full of menace, but the ball hovered about Swansea's goal, again and again eluding the rush of a Town player anxious to send it into the net. Connelly had an opening that could not have been better had he made it just as he wanted, but he tapped the ball gently into the goalkeeper's hands.

Time after time the Town forwards and halves showed up the deficiencies of the sturdy Swansea lads, but failed badly when they came to grips with the last line of defence, but eventually there

was a decisive rush during a scrimmage in the goal-mouth when Roberts headed the ball out of John's hands before he could do anything with it, and in the struggle CONNELLY plunged in both feet first and forced the ball into the net.

The Town almost monopolised the play, and yet when the visitors got going they were dangerous, because their forwards combined very neatly, and Dolman made two grand saves. The Town goalkeeper was helpless when the visitors passed and repassed the ball all along the line, and OLSEN was left in position close in; he lost no time about shooting straight and true.

More trouble came from the visitors after this, but a minute before the interval there was a determined spasm by the Town forwards, and another hectic rush brought a scrimmage in the Swansea goal-mouth; STEPHENSON was right in the thick of it, and he managed to whip the ball in, a defender vainly trying with his hand to keep the ball out of the net, and then appealing for a penalty instead of a goal.

LUTON 2

SWANSEA 1

From the restart the Town dominated the play, and Swansea's goal escaped in extraordinary fashion. Only the wonderful saves of John prevented goals being scored by Roberts, Connelly and Stephenson, and so the game went on for some time. Now and then the Town forwards fell into the exhibition mood, and then just as surprisingly jumped out of it and were rattling away at the goal like an international side.

They found the international goalkeeper living up to his best, and it was simply amazing how he prevented shots from Roberts and Connelly from landing in the net. Only infrequently did the visitors trouble the Town defence, but when they did make a move there was no little anxiety.

THE ISSUE SAFE

John continued to defy the efforts of the Town forwards, whose work during the last phase of the game was of a standard they had not touched for many weeks, and against a less capable custodian they must have piled on goals, but there remained only four minutes for play when the issue was made safe.

The left wing started the movement, and there was a constant danger for Swansea before FERGUSON raced in to meet Stephen's centre and head the ball into the net.

Again the Town left wing bore through, and there was another perfect centre from the left, and CONNELLY tore in and head a great goal.

Keeping up the pressure the Town forwards had the visiting defenders run off their feet, and as the ball came from the left again FERGUSON came in to meet it and sent it home again with the visitors appealing for offside and the referee walking off the field, for this was the very last touch of the game.