

TOWN'S SMASHING WIN AT NORWICH

Forwards Play Irresistible Football

(By CHILTERN)

NORWICH 0
LUTON TOWN 4
Finlayson, Roberts (2), Vinall

NORWICH CITY.—Hall; Halliday, Flack; Robinson, Burke, Proctor; Edwards, Coleman, Ware, Furness, Church.
LUTON TOWN.—Dolman; King, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Ferguson, Connelly, Vinall, Roberts, Stephenson.

Referee.—Mr. P. S. V. Reed, Rayne's Park.

The bogey of relegation is no more as far as Luton Town are concerned. They wiped out completely any fear of a return to the Third Division by a smashing victory over Norwich City at Carrow-road.

The margin of four goals in their favour was no exaggeration either, and actually, had it not been for grand goalkeeping by Hall, and bad luck that attended several scoring efforts, the score might have been greater.

The Town gave a brilliant display from the start, one which I do not think they have equalled at Kenilworth-road this season.

The curious part of this season has been that Luton have reserved most of their best displays for opponents' grounds, and the Norwich people were wondering long before the end why a team that could play the dazzling football the Town produced should be in the bottom half of the table at all.

REWARDED FOR THEIR FAITH

They were not alone in that, for those Luton supporters who made the journey, and I saw quite a few, were more than rewarded for their faith in their favourites.

It is really amazing that a team can put up some of the drab shows we have seen at Kenilworth-road, and then pull out form that would have beaten the best team in the Division.

However, there is no need to dwell in the past, and I want to give as much credit as possible for a great victory.

If anyone asked me what struck me most about this game, I should say it was the wonderful teamwork of the Town side. Every player was out to get the best for his side.

They helped each other, and from the beginning worked as a well-organised machine, whereas Norwich were eleven ragged units.

ALL PULLED TOGETHER

In the last few weeks, teamwork has been lacking, but they all pulled together on Saturday, and each department backed up the other.

From the start, the Town had this game in hand, and there was never a minute when I had any real fear that the City would win a point.

Actually, they were never in the game with a winning chance from the time when FINLAYSON gave Luton the lead with one of the finest goals I have seen this season.

It came direct from a free-kick, given for hands quite thirty yards out. Fellowes and Finlayson tried the old dodge of running at the ball together, and I have never seen it succeed before.

They ran up together, and Finlayson booted the ball hard for goal. It flew through the air at a terrific pace, and Hall scarcely saw it until it had rebounded from the roof of the net.

He certainly was never within two feet of it, and no goalkeeper in the world would have stood a chance of saving it.

WON THE TOSS

For once, Luton had the luck to win the toss when there was something to be gained by it, and they had the advantage of a strong wind.

Yet, the curious part was that they scored only one goal with it, and three against it. However, at the interval, they deserved to be at least three goals up, for play was continually in the Norwich half.

I lost count of the number of corners that were won, and Dolman did not have one direct shot to save before the interval.

When the City broke away, they were speedily repelled, and hard though Coleman and Furness worked, they never got anywhere against a Luton defence that showed unexpected solidity.

TWO GREAT SAVES

Two great saves by Hall prevented Roberts and Finlayson adding to the

lead. He leaped right across the goal to punch out a cross drive from the former, while when Finlayson put in another pile driver, he just managed to divert the ball on to the post.

Vinall and Stephenson also had splendid efforts saved, while several shots missed the target by inches.

At the interval I had some doubts as to whether the Town's lead was big enough. These were not brought on by anything Norwich had done, or had promised to do, but by the fact that Luton would have to face the wind.

However, they proved to have no foundation, for although the City certainly had a bigger share of the game than they had in the first half, they seldom looked likely to get the ball in the net.

RAIN MADE IT BETTER

Midway through the half, there was a quick shower of rain, and this improved matters for Luton, for the ball got heavy, was easier to move against the wind and easier to control.

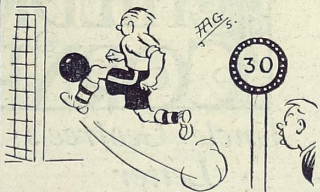
The Town changed their tactics in the second half. Whereas before the interval all five forwards had been up the field, the inside men now dropped back to help the half backs, and they relied on quick breakaway as their method of attack.

This policy proved a good one, for every time they broke away, the home defence was in difficulties. For a time, it enabled Norwich to press quite steadily, but when Luton moved up, they were far more dangerous, and it was at the Norwich end that goals always seemed likely to come.

ROBERTS INCREASES

Hall was still a far busier man than Dolman, but half an hour of the second half had gone before the lead was increased.

The goal was worth waiting for, and it was quite as good an effort as Finlayson's. There was a sharp attack on the left, and Stephenson slipped the ball inside to ROBERTS, who calmly side-stepped Burke, and taking careful aim



from the edge of the penalty area, rammed the ball into the net.

Hall was again completely beaten, and it was a glorious goal. After this, the Town played what was probably their best football of the match.

The forwards kept the ball low, and on the move, and they swept through the Norwich defence as if it was not there.

Goals simply had to come, and ten minutes from the end, ROBERTS got another. It was rather a curious point. Vinall did the spadework, and lobbed the ball over from the right.

It dropped near the foot of the near post, and as it bounced up, Roberts headed it past Hall from close range.

VINALL SCORES AGAINST OLD COLLEAGUES

The Norwich crowd were enjoying the football quite as much as the Luton followers, and from the cheer that went up when VINALL scored the last goal, anyone would have thought the City had scored.

It came as the result of an all-along-the-line movement started by VINALL himself. He gained possession again, and passed to Roberts, who returned it.

Vinall got the ball under control quickly, beat Burke and made no mistake from the region of the penalty spot.

That ended the scoring, the only other incident of note was an injury to Connelly a couple of minutes before the end.

The inside right hurt his ankle in a tackle, and although the injury did not prove serious, no chances were taken, and he was carried off.

Stephenson did the manual labour, and it was rather amusing to see him walking with Connelly slung over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes.

REMARKABLE WIN

So the Town ended their away programme in a blaze of glory. It was a remarkable win in more ways than one, and although the Norwich people were

rather apologetic in their explanation that the City had given their worst display of the season, they did not fail to commend the Town on their display.

Luton really did play wonderful football at times, and the forwards looked like the line that has scored more goals than any other team in the country.

Norwich were frequently played to a standstill, and a better defence than theirs would have had to yield to this irresistible form.

NO GAPS IN DEFENCE

If the forwards looked the part they have played this season, the defence certainly did not look as if it had conceded 85 goals.

There were no gaps, the positioning was a hundred per cent better, and the wingers were given little rope.

Dolman was better covered than either he or Coen has been this season, and there were no mistakes at close range.

Despite the high wind, the hard ground and the light ball, the Town players put fewer passes into the air than I have seen for some time.

They kept the ball low, hit it often, and generally kept play open by keeping it on the move. There was much less of the fancy play that does not bring results, and more of the "get on with it, go for goal" variety.

REFRESHING DISPLAY

It was a refreshing display altogether, and although I was not really surprised at the win—I never am when the Town play away—I was surprised at the completeness of it.

They made their opponents look a poor side, and that is one way of judging the football ability of a team.

It is a pity that the whole of the Luton supporters could not have been there to see the display, especially the last 15 minutes, which, if not quite so exciting as the closing stages of last week's match, produced infinitely better football.

Yes, this match was won by sheer skill and hundred per cent teamwork.

As has probably been gathered already, Dolman had quite an easy time, and it was not until the second half that he was called upon to save anything difficult.

He made several clever catches, and when he saw that it might be unsafe to catch the ball, he made no qualms in putting it over the bar immediately.

SMITH IN FORM

Smith was the better back, and had his best game for some weeks. He was as good as anybody in the defence, and that is high praise.

His marking was much improved, and it was only on rare occasions that I noticed that Edwards was given undue room. He was quick and accurate with his tackling, and his kicking was first class.

King, whilst not quite so successful, was quite effective, and his quickness in recovery enabled him to keep a grip on Church. His kicking was the weakest part of his play, and there could be a good deal of improvement here.

HALVES THE STRONG DEPARTMENT

The halves were the strong department of the team, and to say that they held up such talented inside forwards as Coleman and Furness, and practically blotted them out of the game is almost enough praise.

Nelson never allowed Ware to come into the game, and I do not remember the centre-forward taking one shot at goal. He could never make anything of the tall centre-half, who probably had as easy a match as he has had this season.

He completely dominated the centre of the field, and probably appreciated the added strength behind.

Finlayson was again a star artist, and his shooting overshadowed even his immaculate footwork. With any luck at all, he might have had three goals in the first half.

Both he and Fellowes were of inestimable value to the attack, and also

did valuable work in defence. The latter was more like his old self, and showed a great improvement.

SUCCESS OF VINALL

What pleased me most among the forwards was the success of Vinall against his old colleagues. Things have not been running his way lately, but he came back to his best with a bang.

Burke marked him closely, but that did not prevent him from opening out the play grandly, and he was far more direct than has been his wont. If he could serve up this play consistently there would be no worries about the centre forward position.

His success was reflected in the play of the others, and the line was always a live force.

Next in the line of pleasure come Roberts's two goals. He has had so much bad luck with his shooting recently that he must have despaired of finding the net again this season.

However, he showed that he still knows the way to goal, and it was good to see. His general play was good, too, and he and Stephenson were always a problem for the City defence.

The left winger, too, was in one of his best moods, and he had the measure of Halliday from the start.

FERGUSON A TRIER

Ferguson, as usual, put all he knew into his play. He is a trier all the time, and there is much to admire about his play. Quite reasonably, he could have expected better support, for when he did get the ball he usually contrived to make an opening.

Connelly was perhaps the least effective of the five, but he cut out a lot of the unnecessary fancy work.

He did best in the second half, when he fell back quite often to help the halves, and generally did a lot of work that was useful.