

FORWARDS GIVE MOST POLISHED DISPLAY YET

Clark's Part In A Splendid Victory

By **CHILTERN**

LUTON TOWN 3
Clark (2), Connelly
SWANSEA TOWN 2
Bamford (2)

SWANSEA TOWN.—Moore; Lawrence, Emmanuel; Harris, Simons, Lloyd; Richardson, Paton, Bamford, Olsen, Millington.

LUTON TOWN.—Coen; Smith, Dunsmore; Finlayson, Nelson, Loughran; Clark, Redfern, Vinall, Connelly, Roberts.

Referee: G. S. Blackhall, Wednesbury.

At one stage the Town were walking through this match, and it seemed only a question of how many goals they would score. There were few who thought that Swansea would be able to make such a fight at the end, but they made a rally that might have brought them a point.

They twice reduced the Town's lead of 3-0, but it was desperation rather than skill that enabled them to come so near to saving a point.

However, if they had snatched a goal, and they came within inches of doing so, the result would have been a sheer travesty of what actually occurred.

As it was, the score in no way reflects the superiority of Luton, and they might well have set up something approaching a record score.

MOST POLISHED DISPLAY SO FAR

There had been much head-wagging about the changes made in the team, but this victory is the best possible answer to any and every criticism.

Luton gave their most polished display, if not their best display of the season, and the first half reminded me of the old Southern Section days when the Town used to ride rough shod over their opponents.

The opening period showed the forwards in such a light as we have not seen previously this season. They were the complete masters of the situation, and their approach work would have done credit to any team in the land.

Redfern and Connelly were both arch-schemers, and with Vinall also carrying on the good work, the inside trio simply made hacks of the opposition.

TWO IN NINE MINUTES

A none too safe defence was shocked to the core by two goals in nine minutes, and it took them the remainder of the half to get back any degree of confidence.

CLARK began it all by scoring after having been in the Town's League team for exactly five minutes. It was a grand goal, and proved that this youngster has more than ability in his feet; he has something on top as well.

Vinall and Redfern between them did the spadework, and Clark was left with a clear opening. He got the ball under control beautifully, and immediately took aim for goal.

CONNELLY HEADS THE SECOND

It was more of a lob than a shot, and it completely beat Moore, who could only stand and watch it sail over his head and into the top corner of the net. I rejoiced with Clark and his colleagues, for I have been one who has advocated his inclusion.

Even better was to come, for four minutes later the Town were two goals up. Redfern won a corner, and this was placed perfectly by Clark for CONNELLY to beat Simons to it and head into the corner of the net.

So many corners have been wasted by Luton this season that it was rather astonishing to see anything tangible coming from one. Clark has a knack of dropping them plumb in the goalmouth, and this is going to be an asset to the Town in the future.

CROWD WERE DERISIVE

To be so far in arrears so early in the game took a lot of the stuffing out of the "Swans," and it brought derisive cheers from the 7,000 or 8,000 faithful who were attracted by neither the International nor the Rugby match on a ground not very far away.

For the rest of the half the crowd were treated to an exhibition of class football from the Luton attack, and how their pressure failed to bring more goals will be an everlasting mystery.

Every other minute seemed likely to bring further discomfiture to the home side, but somehow or another the ball just would not go into the net. It is perfectly true to say that Luton did everything but score, and equally true to say that they should have had some-

thing like half a dozen goals at the interval.

LUCKY TO ESCAPE SO LIGHTLY

That may sound ridiculous or exaggerated, but it is neither, and the Swansea people thought themselves very lucky to be only two goals down at the interval.

Had the finishing of the Luton forwards been up to the same standard as the approach work, the "Swans" would never have had a chance to fight back, but I am not going to dwell on shortcomings.

Yet I must mention that Roberts had the opportunities to make a name for himself. It may have been that playing in an unaccustomed position had much to do with his lapses near goal.

Only on two occasions in the first half did Swansea look like scoring, and on each Coen got his side out of a nasty hole. He made one brilliant save from a free kick, and afterwards a quick piece of thinking enabled him to clear when a situation was developing into something ticklish.

SWANS SHOWED PLENTY OF GRIT

Outclassed though they were, Swansea always showed plenty of grit and fight, and throughout I had the feeling that Luton could not afford to let up for a minute. How accurate this was



was proved by subsequent events.

The second half began in much the same way, with Luton simply slashing their way through a defence that had improved quite a lot. Finlayson had some cruel luck when he drove in a terrific shot from 25 yards that crashed against the underpart of the bar and rebounded into play.

CLARK NETS AGAIN

It would not surprise me to know that the ball passed over the line, but reward was not long delayed, for Connelly veered out to the left and lifted in a high centre that CLARK nodded past Moore.

That seemed to settle it completely, but in the next minute we were startled by a goal to the Swans. It was a completely unexpected success, but it gave the home team something to get hold of, and we saw something of the traditional fighting qualities of the Welshmen.

BAMFORD performed the seeming miracle when he somehow stole away from Nelson's grip, and burst through the defence with a through pass before beating Coen with a very well-placed shot.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SUPPORTERS

Then it was that we saw the other side of the Swansea supporters. They cheered continually afterwards, and with the crowd on their side again, Swansea fought like tigers.

Even so, they were never in the same town, let alone the same street, as Luton, as far as ability and craft went. Play was still mostly in Luton's favour, and it was a case of craft and brilliance against graft and courage.

The home forwards could never make much of the Town defence, chiefly because the methods they adopted were those of the kick and rush variety, and there was no one to make an opening.

BAMFORD GETS ANOTHER

I did not think they could possibly score again, but score they did, although it was a fortunate sort of goal. BAMFORD was again the marksman, but this time he fouled Nelson to gain possession, and was allowed to go on to beat Coen with a shot that the goalkeeper just touched.

That did it. The spectators went mad with exultation, but hard though the "Swans" tried for an equaliser, Luton were still immeasurably the better side, and there never seemed any great danger of a point being left behind.

There were a couple of last-minute scares, one when a shot from Harris flashed past the post, but Coen had it covered, and the second when Nelson

made a timely intervention after Millington had broken clean through.

THEIR LUCK WAS GOOD

So Swansea left the field still looking for their first League victory, and they could not complain about their luck in this match. The luck they had was good, for they were extremely lucky to escape so lightly.

Luton's form was a hundred per cent. improvement on that shown in previous away matches this season, and if this is to be reproduced consistently, they are going to make things extremely uncomfortable for most of the teams in the Second Division.

There was no weak spot throughout. The defence was solid, the halves destructive and constructive, while the forwards fairly scintillated.

CLARK'S FINE DEBUT

Clark had the most encouraging debut imaginable, and by the way he shaped he has solved the outside right position once and for all.

His two goals were finely taken, and he was distinctly unfortunate not to have completed a "hat trick." His general work was very good, too, and the inside men saw a good deal more of the ball from this position than they do usually.

Speedy, plucky and clever, he played like a seasoned player. His success was in due part to the splendid support he received from Redfern and also Finlayson.

For some time now it has been apparent that Redfern's ability deserved something better than the London Combination, and he showed in this match that he can be equally outstanding in League football.

REDFERN HAS COME TO STAY

At times, he was walking through the opposition, and his footwork was something to marvel at. He drew the defence with complete ease, and there is no doubt that he has come to stay this time.

The same remarks apply to Connelly, who is gradually ridding himself of the features of his play that do not make for progress. There were very few things that he did that were not useful. In this pair the Town have two of the cleverest inside men in the Division, and they should reap a handsome dividend in the future.

VINALL DID HIS SHARE

Vinall fitted into the scheme of things admirably, and he was ever a worker and a clever constructive player at the same time.

Two headers from him deserved to score, and he was unfortunate not to add to his quota of goals.

Roberts did very well at outside left, considering that it was the first time he had filled the position. He might have done even better if he had had more of the ball, especially in the second half, but things run that way.

His finishing could and should have been more deadly, but he is passing through the unlucky period that comes to most players when nothing goes right near goal.

LOUGHRAN IN TOP FORM

The halves were a strong trio, with Loughran playing as well as I have ever seen him play. He got through a tremendous amount of work, and was far less inclined to get out of position.

His sturdy tackling was most useful against a side that inclined to robustness at times, while apart from his work in defence, he continually used the ball to advantage.

Finlayson was back to his best, and he was ever a strong factor, particularly in attack. Again and again, he brought the ball through and set his wing in motion, and his footwork was again a feature.

NELSON—AS USUAL

The wing halves had time to go up and help the attack, for there were long spells when the defence had little or nothing to do.

Nelson was his usual self which means that he dominated the middle of the field. Although Bamford scored twice, no blame can attach to Nelson, who generally had the centre forward in his pocket. Both goals came from following up hefty kicks, and it is certain that the second should not have been allowed.

Smith had a great match, and scarcely put a foot wrong throughout. After the first ten minutes, Millington was kept strictly subdued, and Smith's kicking and tackling were of the highest class.

DUNSMORE CAME OUT ON TOP

His partner, Dunsmore, had the measure of Richardson, but was sometimes troubled by Paton, who proved a rough customer. Suffice it to say that Dunsmore came out top in everything, and that in the end, Paton was completely discouraged.

Coen had a light afternoon on his return to the team, but he did his share towards the success with two wonderful saves in the first half. If he had done nothing else, they would have more than justified his selection.