

Luton Town's First Defeat At Home

Defence Must Show Improvement

By CRUSADER

LUTON TOWN suffered their first home defeat when they went down to **WEST HAM UNITED**. The Town had more of the game from the territorial aspect, but the visitors made better use of their chances, and their wing forwards were too skilful for the Town defence.

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EACH SIDE ATTACKED in turn at the start, and each conceded corners, and Coen had to go full length to save from Fenton. The visiting wingers were troublesome, and Dunsmore was twice penalised for pushing Foxall. It was from the second free kick that the first goal accrued. Finlayson headed out Bicknell's kick, but Fenton chased and secured, returning the ball to the middle for **MACAULAY** to head into the net.

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THEN IT WAS CONWAY'S TURN to save his charge, and within the space of a few minutes he brought off many wonderful saves, notably from Stephenson twice and a header from Connelly. Several corners were forced, and the Town came very near scoring, but Conway evoked applause by a great save from Billington.

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KEPT BUSY, the visiting goalkeeper saved again and again, but finally was beaten and the scores were brought level. A move on the Town right was partly checked, but Finlayson followed up and gained possession to lift the ball into the goalmouth; Billington cleverly nodded it past Conway as the goalkeeper rushed out, and **STEPHENSON** darted in and managed to get the ball into the net.

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MOST OF THE DANGER to the Town goal came through the flying raids of Foxall and Morton, who gave much concern as they beat Dunsmore and Smith, but Coen had not so much work as Conway. In front of the "Hammers'" goal, however, there was usually a company of defenders, and several shots struck opponents. Redfern once headed well, the ball glancing by off the upright.

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LOUGHRAN saved his goal, and Smith also brought off a splendid tackle just when the visitors looked like boring through, and Morton and Foxall again and again turned the ball into the goalmouth, and Nelson did fine work in

getting it away, and at half-time the scores were level.

LUTON 1
WEST HAM 1

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THE TOWN gave a lot of trouble to the "Hammers'" rearguard when the game was resumed, but suddenly there was a long clearance, and Fenton went through, only to be stopped by Coen, who dashed out and threw himself at the forward's feet and collared the ball.

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BILLINGTON was frequently in the picture, and once was illegally charged when he was racing after the ball, but the appeal for a penalty kick was declined. Then Redfern dribbled through brilliantly and passed accurately for the centre-forward to take the ball in his stride and shoot hard right away from Conway, but the ball struck the post and went behind.

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A PERIOD OF RATHER SCRAMBLING PLAY FOLLOWED, and although the Town continued to hold the upper hand generally, there was always much menace in the raids of the visiting wingers, who dribbled cleverly and passed neatly. Conway had to be on the alert all the time, and once Connelly was only just wide with a good effort from Billington's pass.

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THE "HAMMERS'" ATTACK had a quiet spell, but the inside forwards managed to give their defensive colleagues a lot of assistance, and then the attack came into life, with Foxall and Morton doing the damage. They gave the Town defence a lot more than they could manage, and Loughran was knocked out after he had held up an attack and was setting his forwards going. He had to be assisted from the field.

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STEPHENSON fell back and matched his speed with that of Foxall, but the visitors repeatedly attacked, Morton doing wonderful work, Coen and Smith in turn prevented him scoring only by courageous work, and then the attack died out.

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WITH FIVE MINUTES TO GO, Foxall got clear on the right, and as Nelson came over to tackle he slipped the ball into the middle; **SMALL** snapped it up, and went through to shoot a nice goal, Coen having no chance. Although the Town made strenuous endeavours to force an equaliser, they were beaten back, and the visitors nearly scored again just before the final whistle.

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COEN KEPT GOAL as well as could be desired. Smith played very well on the whole, although he had more than he could master in Morton. Dunsmore had his worst match since turning out for the Town, for he could not hold Foxall. Nelson plays as well as ever, but had to leave the defensive position too often. Loughran did fine service until injured, but Finlayson did not have a good match. Billington was the best of the forwards, although all were triers, and Clark had a fairly good match.

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FOXALL AND MORTON were the most dangerous of the "Hammers'" attack, and the latter was the best forward on the field. The inside forwards were just moderate. The "Hammers'" flank halves were nippy, and combined well with their forwards, while Walker (R.) played a strong game at centre-half. The backs were not too sound, but they had better understanding than the Town's pair, and Conway was a grand goalkeeper.

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LUTON TOWN 1
Stephenson

WEST HAM UNITED 2
Macauley, Small

LUTON — Coen; Smith, Dunsmore; Finlayson, Nelson, Loughran; Clark, Redfern, Billington, Connelly, Stephenson.

WEST HAM—Conway; Bicknell, Walker (C.); Corbett, Walker (R.), Cockcroft; Foxall, Macauley, Small, Fenton (B), Morton.

Referee—G Dutton, Warwick.