

Town Did Everything But Score Goals

Fulham Have The Luck And Scrape Home

FULHAM 2
Higgins, Keeping

LUTON TOWN 1
Redfern

FULHAM.—Turner; Bacuzzi, Keeping; Evans, Hiles, Tompkins; Higgins, Worsley, Rooke, Woodward, Arnold.

LUTON TOWN.—Coen; King, Dunsmore; Finlayson, Nelson, Roberts; Clark, Redfern, Billington, Connelly, Stevens.

Referee.—S. Hadley, Leicester.

IF MATCHES WERE DECIDED on a points basis for the quality of play shown, LUTON TOWN would have won with plenty to spare at Craven Cottage. They taught FULHAM a lesson in polished football, but lost because goals failed to come despite the number of their attacks.

LACK OF PUNCH in the forward line was the main reason for the defeat. In every other phase of the game, the forwards were well-nigh perfect. Raids were engineered with skill and ingenuity, but the required finish was lacking.

ONCE AGAIN, fortune seemed to be looking the other way as far as the Town were concerned, and Fulham will never gain a luckier win than this. They did not shape like League leaders, and, in the first half, were completely overplayed.

IT WAS DURING THIS PERIOD that we saw Luton at their best. They played delightful football, and yet, although they were always threatening goals, 34 minutes had passed before they managed to take the lead.

REDFERN WAS THE SCORER, and he headed a grand goal from a corner by Stevens. If Luton could then have kept Fulham on the run, and gained another goal, then the game would have been in their pockets.

INSTEAD, THEY SEEMED CONTENT to keep ahead, and the result was that, towards the interval, Fulham were allowed to come into the game. They obtained the equaliser in lucky fashion. For one thing, the half had lasted 1½ minutes over the 45 when the ball was put into the net.

THE ATTACK BEGAN with a free kick that seemed harmless enough until Nelson, in an attempt to clear, gave away an unnecessary corner. Arnold placed this beautifully, and HIGGINS dashed in to bundle the ball through as Coen went up to it.

ALTHOUGH NOT QUITE REACHING the standard attained in the first half, the Town again played well after the interval, and had slightly the better of the exchanges. Still a goal did not come, and it looked as if a draw was a certainty.

THEN, MIDWAY THROUGH, the unforeseen happened, and Fulham took a lead which they did not deserve. This, too, came as the result of a corner, and,

after Coen had punched away, Tompkins returned the ball into the goalmouth for KEEPING to head through.

ONLY A FEW MINUTES PREVIOUSLY, Keeping had moved into the forward line from his usual position of left-back. The injury which he had been nursing for the past fortnight had recurred, and he took over the outside-right berth. This caused a general rearrangement of the Fulham team.

LUTON FOUGHT HARD for an equaliser afterwards, and yet it rarely looked like coming for all their pressure. They should have had a penalty when a defender prevented a certain goal by Billington by punching the ball off the centre-forward's head.

THE REFEREE, although well up with the play, missed the incident, and refused to listen to appeals, or to consult a linesman. This was the crowning blow to Luton's hopes of success. At times, only Coen was left in the Luton half of the field, but the home defence held out.

THE CHANGES IN THE TOWN TEAM, which involved the return of King and Roberts, proved an unqualified success. King, in particular did well, and he faced the most dangerous winger on the field in Arnold. By close marking, he managed to shut out the International for the bigger part of the game, and his positioning and quickness in recovery were other good points in his play.

DUNSMORE GAVE one of his best displays since joining the club, and played a big part in the Town's first-half supremacy. He broke up attack after attack, and used the ball well. Roberts, too, fitted in finely, and his eagerness for work stood him in good stead.

ON THE OTHER FLANK, FINLAYSON showed a noticeable improvement, and some of his footwork was first class. Nelson, however, was not up to his usual standard, and there was a decided falling off in his play in the second half. Coen did not have a lot to do, for the home forwards' marksmanship was little better than Luton's.

CONNELLY WAS THE BEST of a very clever attack, and he kept play open. There was less individualism about his methods, and both he and his colleagues reaped the benefit. Redfern, too, was a brilliant schemer, but his slowness detracted from an otherwise splendid display.

IN THE MIDDLE, Billington was a trier, and played some excellent football. His one fault was that he was a little slow in getting in his shot, and missed one or two possible chances through it. The wingers were not quite good enough, although each put in some very effective work, and Stevens was quite an able deputy.