

BILLINGTON'S BEST BAG OF GOALS

Some Flaws Fore And Aft

By CRUSADER

LUTON TOWN 6
Stephenson, Clark
Billington 4

SWANSEA TOWN 3
Olsen 2, Meek

LUTON. — Coen; King, Dunsmore; Finlayson, Dreyer, Roberts; Clark, Redfern. Billington, Connelly, Stephenson.
SWANSEA—John; Davies, Emmanuel; Chedgzoy, Imrie, Tabrum; Williams, Meek, Bamford, Olsen, Millington.
Referee.—G. S. Blackhall, Wednesbury

Result would have better suited Luton Town supporters had the defence not been so easily beaten, for again we had the spectacle of the Town forwards riddling no mean opposition, while the defence showed a slackness that amounted almost to contempt for the opposition, the folly of which is demonstrated by the figure 3 to Swansea's goal credit.

It is beyond me to explain why the defence or the forwards should fritter away an advantage. The forward play at times was good enough for double the goals, but as is customary when the Town are meeting a lowly-placed club, in defence also there was an absence of the watchfulness that has foiled the more important guests.

A SPLENDID ENTERTAINMENT

That it was a splendid entertainment in spite of the conditions, cannot be gainsaid, and there were thrills enough to satisfy anyone, but such a result does not stimulate confidence in the team as a whole. Swansea had not forfeited six goals in any previous game this season, but away from home they had never scored more than a couple; at home their highest score had been three, and they had only totted up that number twice—against Bury, when they drew, and against West Bromwich when they won by the odd goal.

There is thus no great kudos for the Town defence, and it was only the fact that Coen made a splendid save from a penalty kick that thwarted Swansea of a fourth goal. No, the Town defence robbed the team of some of the prestige that would have been gained by running up such a score against a defence that has proved strong enough to hold some of the best attacks in the League.

THE MAIN FEATURE

Main feature of the Town's success was the play of the flank halves. They were far in advance of those of the opposition, and it was fine to see the manner in which Finlayson and Roberts set their vanguard into action, just as it was to see the craftiness of Connelly and Redfern, or the thrusts of Billington and the wingers.

I am not overlooking very good kicking and tackling by King and Dunsmore, and against the former I have little to say, for he always put all he has into the game. Of Dunsmore, however, I am bound to say that he took much of the gilt off his cleverness by emulating some of the tricks of Redfern and Connelly—with like result, the loss of the ball.

Dunsmore is probably the finest back the Town have had this fourteen or fifteen years, for he has pace and skill, a splendid length in his kicking, but he must drop this dribbling habit, for it leads to trouble as often as not.

Dreyer has held up some very hot forwards, but met his match in the sturdy Bamford, and much though I admire the sturdiness and the whole-

hearted play of the Town pivot, there are moments of real anxiety when he has to reach up for the ball against a robust opponent. However, he did his part quite well, and I would not blame him for the goals any more than I would Coen, who again kept goal splendidly, though he had not many opportunities of showing his best. Most of the work that came his way was from long range.

CRAFTSMEN

And what of the forwards? Well, there were times when they would have made gaps through a breakwater, but there were also many occasions when they were trying to bore holes when there was no possibility of success. When Redfern and Connelly were content to draw opponents and then open out the game they were simply delightful to watch, and from the mere aspect of entertainment these two were probably outstanding. They were far more effective in the second period when they released the ball to good purpose, and each gave his partner superb passes.

BILLINGTON'S DISPLAY

Billington led the line with great spirit and dash, and there is no doubt about his very high standard. One cannot estimate his value in transfer terms because I do not know of anyone connected with the club who has the slightest intention of listening to overtures in that direction. Imrie used his weight against him to some purpose in the first half, but the play of the inside wingers was not much help to the centre forward at that time. It was later they served him and the wingers better, and that was why Billington made his best individual total in the Town colours.

Stephenson now has more friends on the terraces than ever before. He was again a grand worker, and was ready to fall back and assist, and at times in order to put some energy and life into an attack that was disposed to be too deliberate he moved all along the front line. The way he made the fourth goal evoked tremendous applause, and deserved it.

Clark was good in patches. We must not forget that he is still a comparative novice to the wing position, but he did very good work, and there are plenty of clubs who would jump at the chance to take him for that position. He has youth and enthusiasm on his asset side, and made a very good deputy for Carroll.

TOUGH DEFENCE

Swansea's defence was tough. When the Town players were holding the ball close the visitors were good enough to pull through, but they were unable to find methods to check an attack that kept play open. But what defence is able to do so?

John kept goal splendidly. I would not blame him for any of the goals, although some of his compatriots were disposed to think he should have saved Billington's first. However, Billington was only a yard or two away, and it is luck that saves shots so close. Emmanuel was a very good back, but both he and Davies kicked and tackled strongly.

Imrie was a power station in the first half, and showed a good deal of skill, but in the second period he found Billington too fast and too elusive, and was not always fair in his behaviour.

The Swansea middle line left something to be desired, although every man put all he had into the game.

There was no little skill in the attack. Bamford was a very good leader, and Meek and Olsen often did clever things, and gave their wingers plenty of the ball, but they would not have done so well had there not been some latitude given them by the Town defenders.

CROWD LAUGHED

The rain had made the ground very treacherous, and the players were soon skidding about. The Town made the pace, and gave the visitors' defence plenty to think about in the early stages. John was lucky to divert the ball as Stephenson raced in to meet a pass from Billington, and then for a while the crowd had something to laugh about as first one pair of backs and then the other booted the ball hard from one end to the other.

THE PLAY

Connelly initiated an attack from which Billington shot past when he had beaten the defence, and Swansea opened the score after 16 minutes. Roberts fouled Meek, and from the free kick by Emmanuel the ball went to Bamford, who headed it out to the left, and OLSEN scored very cleverly.

Shortly afterwards Dreyer tripped Bamford in the penalty area, but Coen made a splendid save when he punched out Imrie's hard drive, and from this

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point the Town were the better side. They made many attacks, but STEPHENSON did most of the hard work that led to the goal, and he had the satisfaction of netting

CLARK scored the second four minutes later when Billington and Stephenson made an opening for him, and he had wisely closed into the goal area for the chance. Half-time:—

LUTON	2
SWANSEA	1

BILLINGTON BUSY

Luton restarted at top speed, and Connolly nearly got through in the first few seconds after an exciting dribble. The pressure was maintained and John made a grand save from BILLINGTON, but the latter scored after six minutes when he netted at the second attempt from a pass by Stephenson.

Luton continued to barrage the Swansea defence, and BILLINGTON scored again when Stephenson raced through and passed the ball squarely into the goal-mouth.

After mid-field play in which there was a lot of clever work by the Town inside forwards that came to nothing, BILLINGTON received from a free kick by King, and went through to shoot hard into the net, John making an ineffectual grasp at the ball.

SWANSEA'S RALLY

Then came the slackening off by the defence, and Millington got through to centre, and Bamford gave MEEK a pass in an easy position, and Coen was beaten. Again the visitors came on the left wing, and this time OLSEN took toll of a good chance, and it looked as though the visitors might pull the game out of the fire.

However, the Town set to with a will again, and after more fruitless assaults BILLINGTON scored the sixth goal when he slipped round Imrie after John had run out in a vain effort to intercept, and booted into the net.

Attendance: 11,264: receipts £633, 7s.