

LUTON FORWARDS IN EXHIBITION GAME

Pluck Availed Little For The Rovers

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN 3
Stephenson, Roberts,
Billington

TRANMERE ROVERS 0

LUTON: Coen; King, Dunsmore;
Finlayson, Dreyer, Roberts; Burgess,
Redfern, Billington, Connelly, Stephen-
son.

TRANMERE: Lewis; Obrey, Jones;
Davis, Walkden, Flowers; Thomas,
Travis, Buckley, Cassidy, Roy.
Referee: B. Ames, Redditch.

Tranmere Rovers have had so many gruelling experiences that they will count their visit to Luton as one of the normal steps in a dreary mile, but they should remember with some respect the generosity of the Town team.

I do not remember a more one-sided game for years. Even the famous Easter Monday game when Joe Payne scored his ten goals was not so one-sided as this, for there were many occasions when the Rovers threatened very seriously the Town goal, whereas in this match Tranmere Rovers never made more than two or three real threats, and those were in the first half.

Coen probably had his laziest game since he joined the club, and not once was he in difficulties.

IN DIRE STRAITS

On the other hand, the Rovers' defence was often in very dire straits, and the reason the margin did not exceed three was due in general to the fact that the Town forwards were disinclined to make such strenuous scoring efforts as would have been the case against one of the leading teams.

What can one say about such a game? Indeed, if it were not for the sake of the several thousands of supporters of the club who are loyal in summery weather or when the team is entertaining some famous opposition such as the Arsenal, it would hardly be worth writing at any length.

INDIVIDUAL CRAFT

Skill in finesse, delightful individual craft in the attack were to some extent discounted by the innocuous nature of the opposition, and before an hour had passed it could rightly be said that some of the Town team were almost down to walking pace. They were enjoying individual bursts, and it was more like a pleasant Saturday afternoon of physical fitness exercise than a real football struggle.

Surely Tranmere must have had a better side than this to have won promotion, but then if one glances at the manner in which Barnsley are galloping to promotion it could well be accepted that Northern Section football is a lot below the standard of the Southern Section.

"THE PONTOON INTEREST"

Connelly and Redfern chiefly, but all the forwards made rings round the

opposing defenders, too many rings at times if they really desired goals, and it was not surprising perhaps that supporters who had "a pontoon interest" in the Town wanted to see a few more goals and told the players so in the second half.

A satisfactory feature of the Town forward play was the success of Burgess, making his first appearance as a member of the League side. I expressed the view last week that this lad would not let the side down if he were given a chance, and he proved that on Saturday. This match would do him a lot of good, and should have given him confidence for the future. Redfern also played much better than I have seen him for some time, though I would have liked Burgess to get more of the ball in the second half.

CONNELLY'S CRAFT

Connelly did some truly amazing things. There were times when he waltzed round opponents as though he were on a dance floor, though now and then he over-did it, of course, and lost the ball. Still, he gave Stephenson some work, and they could have done an awful lot of damage if they had been out as strenuously as in normal games. Billington seemed to be off colour at times, and was neither so energetic nor so purposeful as usual, and it seemed to me that he must have been feeling the effects of his slight bout of the 'flu. However, he got his usual goal, and that gave the supporters a lot of pleasure.

FINLAYSON BRILLIANT

At half, Finlayson gave a brilliant exposition, some of the work in getting the ball under control and the disposal of it being superfine. Roberts also was a powerful attacking half, and Dreyer had a fairly comfortable afternoon, though he was always alert.

At back, Dunsmore again put up a polished exhibition. He must be about the best back in the division, and with King up to his best, too, the defence saved Coen the trouble of really earning his bonus.

THE ROVERS

Little could be said about the Rovers' forwards, though Thomas and Roy seemed to have big possibilities at times. Both got the ball over well when they had reasonable chances, but the inside men were not much good as marksmen, but perhaps they have been too accustomed to assisting the men in

the rear rather than assisting their colleagues.

The middle men were moderate, though Walkden played hard, and Obrey and Jones both kicked and tackled well and never gave up. Lewis was a good goalkeeper, as he ought to be with the practice he must have every week. Two or three times in the second half he made wonderful saves, and was not to blame for the shots that beat him.

THE GOALS

After a few skirmishes at either end the Town settled down, and repeated assaults were only just foiled. After sixteen minutes a free kick was given against the Rovers right on the penalty line. STEPHENSON took it, and a tremendous shot flashed into the net, Lewis being hopeless to do anything but watch its swift flight.

Many hot assaults followed, and ROBERTS increased the lead with a very fine shot from nearly twenty-five yards' range, rushing up to take his chance after several efforts by the forwards had been blocked.

The only goal of the second half came five minutes before the end when Redfern sent Burgess away to centre, and there was a short, sharp tussle in the goalmouth before BILLINGTON forced the ball past Lewis into the net.