

Fine Team Spirit Turned The Newcastle Tide

MOST spectators left Kenilworth-road on Saturday convinced that the age of miracles is not yet over. Not for years can there have been a match in which such a transformation took place.

That second half rally had to be seen to be believed, and it proved beyond any possible doubt that the team spirit of this Luton team is absolutely 100 per cent. Anything less than that simply could not have achieved this amazing result. Team spirit, and sheer determination not to be beaten, allied with unquestionable skill, brought the football sensation of the season. If there is one certain thing in this uncertain world, it is that this game will be remembered and talked about for a long time to come.

Smoothness Of United Machine

WHEN the teams came off the field at half-time the match looked as good as over. Newcastle's machine had functioned with such smoothness that they were comfortably placed with three goals in their pockets.

This was despite the fact that the Town had had quite a share of the play, and had given the Newcastle defence a number of shocks, chiefly when Hugh Billington hit the post.

However, the beautiful controlled passing of the United attack, plus the capacity of the inside trio to take chances, had put Luton in a nasty position.

Real Out-Of-The-Book Stuff

EACH of the United's goals was well worked for, and splendidly taken, and Shackleton's effort rightly brought down the house.

That was sheer football; real out-of-the-book stuff.

In fact, the whole Newcastle team played with such assurance and verve that on their first half showing it seemed that it was only a question of waiting until the beginning of May before they gained their First Division status.

It was brilliant play in conditions which were far from conducive to football artistry.

Trying Time For Defences

DESPITE all this, the Town never deserved to be three goals behind.

Their defenders had a trying time in the thick mud in front of the Oak-road goal.

It was impossible to turn quickly, and the Newcastle inside forwards reaped full advantage of it.

I fancy, too, that there was just a touch of what, for the want of a better word, I shall call "Newcastle-itis."

Maybe the reputation of the visitors had something to do with it, but the fact remains that the defence was inclined to attempt to cover up too much, with the result that a gap was often left in the middle of the field.

The difficulties under which the Town defence had played were clearly visible when the teams changed round.

It was the Newcastle defenders' turn to flounder in the mud, which was a good deal thicker at this end than it was in front of the Kenilworth-road goal.

All Goals Were Scored At One End

THE Newcastle defenders were able to turn no more easily, and it is a pointer that all seven goals were scored at the Oak-road end.

Explanation is that the pitch drains that way, and conditions were a good deal more trying at that end.

Apart from that, what brought about the miracle? Several newspapers have made a good deal of Manager George Martin's talk to the players at the interval.

This is not an unusual occurrence, for the astute George studies every move of the opponents during the first half of every match, and then goes into the dressing-room and points out the weaknesses which can be played up.

"Games Are Won On The Field"

ON Saturday he did the same thing, but he was probably the only one on the ground who thought the situation could be retrieved.

He pumped for shock tactics in the form of all-out attacks, but the

main thing he told the Luton lads was that they must be up to meet every ball.

George firmly believed that one goal would start an avalanche in favour of Luton, and Gager and his men came out in the second half with an early goal as their first aim.

However, George modestly refuses the credit which has been given to him: To me, yesterday, he said, "All the talking in the world does not win games. The boys have got to do that on the field."

Waugh's Goal Paved The Way

THE boys certainly did it, and the way they did it must have led Newcastle to think they were facing a completely new team.

How good it was to see Billy Waugh entering the list of scorers with a brilliant goal.

It is said that there is a reward for virtue. I should call this a reward for persistency.

That goal set the Luton team alight, and their display for the rest of the match out-did the form produced by Newcastle in the opening phase.

It was terrific, rip-roaring stuff, with every player pulling his weight and putting every ounce of endeavour into it.

Writing Was On The Wall

WHEN Daniel nodded in the second from one of those perfectly-made Duncan corners, Newcastle must have seen the writing on the wall.

If they did not, then it was there in great red letters when Billington tore through the mud to put the scores level.

How the crowd behind that goal swayed as his delighted colleagues hauled the mud-covered centre forward out of the slush.

There was a spell when Newcastle threatened to snatch the lead again, and the biggest shock the Luton fans had was when Horace Gager appeared to fist out the ball.

Driver's First "Home" Goal A Beauty

OPINION seems sharply divided on this point. It looked to me as if contact had been made, but there are many who swear that he did not touch the ball, even though he shaped to do so.

The Newcastle players thought it was "hands" and induced the referee to consult a linesman, whose verdict was a corner.

So, we breathed again, and Luton went back to hammering the United defence.

When Alan Driver scored his first goal before the home crowd seven minutes from the end, I thought for one agonising moment that it was not to be allowed, though for the life of me I could

The referee seemed to take a life-time before pointing to the centre of the field, and it was as if the Newcastle defenders were rooted to the spot with stupefaction.

They Will Remember Luton

WHAT a moment that was! Alan will score many more goals for the Town, but none he will score in future will be so gladly hailed or so valuable as this one.

The ball was booked for the net immediately it left his foot, and it was a goal worthy of the occasion.

So Newcastle United joined the ranks of such as Barnsley, Tottenham and Burnley, promotion aspirants, who have cause to remember the stern fighting qualities of Luton.

On this second-half form, no team in the Second Division will live with them. The Town deserved their win, and in the end Newcastle were played right out.

Wingers Responded Eagerly

THE first half fades into oblivion in the face of the happenings after the interval.

With every Luton man moving to the ball and hitting it hard and accurately the Newcastle defence was split wide open.

Full advantage was made of the drier patches on the wings, and Billy Waugh and "Dally" Duncan responded eagerly and gallantly.

Duncan was positively brilliant, both in approach work and finishing, and Waugh found that a winger is a far more dangerous proposition when he brings the ball inside the back. He never

For The Records

LUTON TOWN 4
Waugh, Daniel, Billington, Driver.

NEWCASTLE U. 3
Bentley, Wayman, Shackleton.

Luton Town.—Bywater; Cooke, Beach; Soo, Gager, Gardiner; Waugh, Daniel, Billington, Driver, Duncan.

Newcastle Utd.—Swinburne; Craig, Graham; Harvey, Smith, Wright; Milburn, Bentley, Wayman, Shackleton, Pearson.

Referee: G. C. Appleyard, Rotherham.

Attendance 25,410.

knows when he is beaten, and he put up a great display.

Driver A Great Raider

SO did everybody else in this thrill-a-minute second half. Alan Driver hit his best with a bang, and was always a great driving force in the Town attack.

His strength, ball control and clever passing began raid after raid, and it was only just that the winner should fall to him.

He continually bored his way through a faltering defence, and it was obvious why the Town had thought it worth-while to pay their biggest-ever fee for him.

Hugh Billington played a tremendous part in the win, too, and this was his best display since his recovery from injury.

With any luck at all, his tally would have been at least three, and with Billington back in this form, we shall not want for goals.

Wing Halves Played Their Part

MELVILLE DANIEL fitted into the line finely, and his forceful play did much to help in the revival.

At the same time, let us not forget the part played by wing halves, Soo and Gardiner. Soo was superb in everything he did, and was continually making opening for the men in front. His attacking genius was there for all to see.

Gardiner, on his return to the team, emulated Soo in the second half by the way in which he plied his wing with passes.

He saw to it that Duncan was kept well supplied, and his promotion was well-merited.

Beach Was A Hero

Defence was Doug Beach, who played under the handicap of an ankle injury.

Not that he gave any sign of it during the match, but after-

wards the medical verdict was complete rest from training for the whole of this week.

It is hoped that this will enable him to take his place in the team at the Hawthorns next Saturday.

Beach is one of those who never acknowledges defeat, and he has put up a long string of excellent performances. Sufficient to say that he added another to his consistent record.

Gager Was A Casualty

A CASUALTY was Horace Gager, who injured a thumb in the first half, and does not yet know how it happened.

Yesterday it was so badly swollen that he had to go to hospital for examination.

He did well against the dangerous Wayman, and constantly broke up the Newcastle attempts to regain the initiative in the second half.

Billy Cooke had an unenviable task against the very accomplished Shackleton-Pearson wing, and earned admirers for his grit and pluck.

He shut out Pearson effectively in the second half when his tackling was hard and his marking close.

Another Big Crowd

AS far as the three shots which passed him, are concerned, Leslie Bywater comes out with a clean sheet, and he made some excellent saves.

None was better than the spectacular catch he effected from a corner late in the game.

If he can exercise a little more judgment on when to leave his goal, he will be as safe a goal-keeper as there is.

Once again there was a big crowd—25,410—and many people have asked me why the gates were closed at nearly 1,000 less than the figure attained when the Spurs were here.

I hear that quite a number of would-be spectators were shut out but there seemed to be room, particularly on the Kenilworth-road terrace.

However, decision to close the gates now rests in the hands of the police, who, no doubt, had their own good reasons.

Unhappy Day For Reserves

THE Reserves, without Brice and Sanderson, had an unhappy time at Charlton, where they were faced by at least six players who have held regular places in Charlton's League team at one time or another.

Although Luton scored first when Lee's shot was diverted into the goal, Charlton gradually piled on the goals, and were thoroughly masters of the situation long before the end.

Lake and Morrison were the it not been for the work of the latter, the score against them might have been even heavier. As it was, it reached eight.