

FROM THE FOOTBALL FIELD.

"VIGILANTS" GOSSIP.

TEAM-BUILDING PROBLEM.

Team building has been engaging pretty well every follower of Luton Town football during the last week, but we seem to be no nearer the fulfilment of everyone's desire for a winning Southern League team. The truth is the directors have been a trifle unfortunate in the forward talent relied upon. The players expected to fall into the inside wing positions have not shown adaptability for those particular positions, and the outside wingers most counted upon have not been available. If Hoar and Seymour could have fallen into the outside positions straight off difficulties would probably have been considerably eased. To this extent the directors must be sympathised with, but the frequency with which changes have been made all through the line must necessarily have had a bad effect. The line I would like to see is Seymour, Roe, Simms, Williams and Hoar—not tried once and then turned down, but persisted with for a fair trial. Players cannot be expected to do themselves justice if they are not given a chance to settle down anywhere.

As things have gone no one can pretend to be surprised at the outcry for new forwards, and this is certain to increase if, as I hear, Hoar's permanent appearance in the team is likely to be long delayed. The club are already advertising for first class inside forwards, but supporters must recognise they first have to be found and then have to be paid for. The withdrawal of support is not the way to secure an improvement in the team, and the gate at Saturday's Reserve match was the reverse of encouraging.

DISASTROUS EXPERIMENTS.

For Wednesday evening's match with Merthyr the directors made enough changes to satisfy the most pronounced grumbler, but the results were the reverse of satisfactory. Dunn's injury in the Cardiff match brought in Fred Hawkes at back, Bowler was given his first Southern League trial at centre-half, and there was another new forward line. Seymour made his first appearance, and had as partner H. Ford, the Clarence player, so highly spoken of. Simms was restored to centre. Hoar's absence brought Hensman back to outside left, and his partner was B. Jones, a junior up from St. Helena on trial. Seymour was the only real success of the front line. He was prominent in nearly all the Luton attacks, but Simms alone showed any adaptability at all in making use of the openings he presented. It was, of course, a trying ordeal for the two young amateurs, and they can hardly be blamed for failing to rise to the occasion.

Although Merthyr led after the first two minutes they were lucky to be in that position at half time. Still, the second half was only two minutes' old when they repeated the dose, and, after this, they were the only team in the picture, and Luton's 4-0 defeat was a really sound beating for which no excuse can be found.

FORWARDS AGAIN FAIL.

After the inglorious display of Wednesday, there was not much hope of any success at Shepherd's Bush, but the team as selected carried more confidence. Unfortunately Dunn had not recovered from the effects of his injury, and, to make matters worse, Rutherford developed a severe chill on Friday night, and on Saturday morning was confined to bed. This put the officials in a dilemma, for there was only just sufficient time to get F. Hawkes to London and a scurry round to find a substitute for the South Eastern League game. Neale was given the preference over Hensman at outside left, but the fact that the local man was not quite sound had something to do with the decision. On the strength of a good show at Watford, Simms turned out at inside right for the first time in a Southern League match, and Williams occupied the centre position. As Bowler had not fulfilled the expectations formed on his display with the Reserves at centre half Urwin took Rutherford's position, and Bowler played in what is understood to be his proper post. The Rangers were not called upon to shuffle their team about to the same extent, although they, too, were without one of their regular backs. Blackman had got in the wars against Brentford, and Wingrove was substituted.

Since Luton visited Shepherd's Bush on the last Saturday in April there has been a considerable amount of banking done, but the London County Council prevented the building of the proposed stand, although all the steel work is on the ground ready for erection. It is fortunate for the club the weather has been fine of the whole, for there is no shelter of any kind on the ground, and a wet Saturday will mean a big financial loss. The Rangers' officials were, therefore, pleased to learn the L.C.C. engineer had approved the plans, and the work is to proceed forthwith, although it can scarcely be finished before Christmas. Among those present to greet the Luton players was Lieut. Tremlow who played several fine games with the Town while sta-

tioned at Houghton Camp. He has just been demobilised and promised to assist the club if required within a few weeks, when he returns to the South after spending his vacation in the North. The crowd would number quite 9,000, although area available for spectators is so limited, and if the present form of the Rangers is kept up it is difficult to see how the club will manage to accommodate all their supporters on the Loftus-road ground. The teams turned out as follows:

Luton: Summers; F. Hawkes, Elvey, Bowler, Urwin, Parker; Grimes, Simms, Williams, Roe and Neale.

Queen's Park Rangers: Merrick; Wingrove, Pullen; Broster, Mitchell, Baldock; Thompson, Birch, Smith, Gregory, and Donald.

The Rangers faced the sun, which was shining brilliantly at the start, but this condition did not prevail for any length of time, and the home players were not seriously handicapped in that respect. Within three minutes they were a goal up, and the "Blues" once more were faced with an uphill fight. It is curious that only once have they secured the lead in their seven Southern League games, and on that occasion not only did they retain it, but prevented their opponents from scoring. The goal was quite a simple affair, and made it appear an easy matter to net the ball. Gregory managed to shake off the attention of Bowler, and, slipping the ball out to Donald, the latter dropped it across nicely, Gregory hunting it into the corner of the net right away from Summers. From this point until right in the interval the Town promised to make a fight of it, and the ball was more often in the home penalty area than at the opposite end, but the final attempts lacked sting, and there was little method employed in working for real openings. It needed the stimulus of a goal to give the players confidence, and thus it was in the nature of a disaster when the referee failed to see a case of deliberate hands on the part of Pullen who fisted down a fast shot from Simms. The spectators openly chuckled, and someone shouted for all and sundry to him "Lucky Rangers." Unfortunately this was not the only mistake the referee made, and they all told against the "Blues."

Play continued to take place in the home quarters, and corner after corner fell to Luton, but nothing came of all the pressure, Merrick being well able to cope with everything that came to hand. A sudden breakaway two minutes before half time put the damper on the hopes of the little band of Lutonians present, for, although Thompson, who took the pass, was at least of couple of yards off-side, the referee paid no heed to Parker's loud appeal, and the Rangers' winger went clear away finally giving his partner a clever pass. Birch headed into goal, and thus the teams crossed over with the Rangers possessing a quite undeserved lead of a couple of goals. Interval:

Rangers 2, Luton 0.

Ten minutes after the change of ends the Rangers were four up. First of all Smith accepted a long pass from Baldock, and headed it by Summers, and then Gregory netted a pass from Thompson with a rising ball that struck the top of the net. Their last point was the best of the bunch, but Thompson got the chance through Elvey dallying a shade in clearing. For the next quarter of an hour the Town were overplayed, and it was only a stubborn defence which prevented further success for the Rangers. Eventually the Blues recovered their spirits and made an attempt to break through, but, as in the first half, they succeeded only up to a point, and could not force matters home. Roe had the best opportunity with only Merrick to beat. The goalkeepers came out to meet him, and Roe sent the ball about three yards wide instead of in the open net. A quarter of an hour before the finish Urwin retired with an injured foot, but the defence held out and no further goals were netted. Result:

Rangers 4, Luton 0.

Luton had the same old failing, a sad lack of scoring forwards. Naturally the absence of Dunn and Rutherford had its effect on the result, for Bowler, in particular, failed to hold his wing, but on the whole the defence were not to blame. Although Elvey invariably played on the left with Millwall he is still more effective in his proper position, and it is hoped Dunn will soon be able to resume his place. Urwin, until he retired, did finely at centre half, and Parker also played a clever game, this pair, with Elvey, proving the mainstay of the team in all emergencies.

Neale did better than in his first Southern League game, and, in the absence of Hoar, will doubtless get an extended trial. It is not so certain that Grimes is an improvement on Seymour, if the latter is now in condition. It is very unfortunate both for himself and the club that the Irish international has not been at all well since he came to Luton, but he reports himself on the mend, and should get an early opportunity of showing his ability. Simms is quite in earnest in an attempt to adapt himself to inside right, and he was not a failure, but when will he find his shooting boots? Williams distributed the ball quite all right, but lacks a trifle in trying the dash through.