

FOOTBALL NOTES.

(By CRUSADER.)

Brentford's followers are, I think, about the worst sportsmen I have seen this season. Although the Luton crowd is a long way from perfect and has often been criticised, I do not remember seeing it give such an unsportsmanlike exhibition as did the Brentford crowd over the accident to Jack Dunn on Saturday. The depletion of a side is always, to me, a matter of regret, for advantage in numbers is against the spirit of the game, but rejoicing at personal injury is the stamp of the pagan, if not worse. We are all agreed that Searby felt the weight of Dunn's foot, but if Dunn was in the process of being knocked out at the time, it is hardly likely that an offence can be charged against him. Dunn himself knew less about the affair than anyone, but, of course, the crowd knew most.

In spite of the greasy state of the ground, there was plenty of life in the game, and with the exception of the goals, honours were even, for while the "Bees" undoubtedly had the pull in the first half, the ten men for Luton shook up the home team to no little extent after the change of ends. The two goals Brentford scored came at the end of ten and thirty minutes respectively, Searby heading the first, and Morley shooting the second. Neither these nor the third goal, scored just before the end by Cartmell, were comparable with that obtained by Dodd just before the change of ends, and there is no doubt whatever that Dodd is earning his place in the team. I am not going to say that he is particularly clever, but he is scoring goals, and that is the main thing in consulting a League table.

The withdrawal of Hear from the forward line crippled its effectiveness in the second half. We missed centres from the extreme, and it meant that Roe did almost double work. I cannot pick and choose about the forward line, for I think all did very well, and I am sure that if Hear had been available for the forwards during that stormy time which the Brentford defence had in the middle of the second half, Luton would have won. Sid played very well indeed at back, as he had also played well in the forward line in the first half, and I think he is coming into shape very well, and is undoubtedly a much better player than when he first joined the "Blues" before the war. The star of the defence, however, was Elvey, and it will be noted with pleasure in Leagrave, that two village lads held the back division for the Town in the second half of this game.

Dick played a giant game, and his tackling and kicking were never at fault. Summers was also in fine form, and while he was fortunate at one period of the first half when the ball hit him after he had run out of goal, he saved many shots which might have been set down as good goals.

Of the halves, Rutherford was again a powerful figure, and although Searby was a troublesome handful in the early stages, the tall half-back had him reduced almost to impotence in the second period, and when the home inside trio got the ball in the second half they could not hold it long. Parker was solid and tricky, and I still think he would make a forward. Why not give him an opportunity at Chesterfield on Saturday? Urwin could not get the measure of the wily Hendren in the first half, and was frequently beaten, but he found the secret later, and by playing close on to him all the time, the Brentford captain got few centres across in the second half.

Roe was originally chosen to lead the forward line on the strength of an excellent display at Tottenham the previous Saturday, where he scored a couple of goals. Simms was to have stood down, but the suspension of Williams brought about his reinstatement, and he played quite up to his form in the Norwich match. The individual work left little to be desired, and before Hoar was taken out of the line there was evidence of better understanding than usual, and all the five did pretty well. Their best work, however, came in the second half. The speedy runs of Bookman, and the thrusting efforts of Simms and Dodd frequently carried the ball right into the home goal-mouth. Roe's clever footwork was too much for Rosier and McGovern, and Amos had frequently to foul Simms to stop him. Dodd showed a refreshing example in the way of shooting, and to any who would say that he was often off the mark there is the effective reply of the best shot and the best goal of the game. As I have so often said, a goalkeeper may save nineteen shots, but the twentieth may count in the score sheet.

Of the Brentford team, I liked best the intelligent work of Hodson at back, and although the old Oldham player was frequently beaten by the speed of Bookman, he saved his legs and the goalkeeper a lot of work by his judgment and resource. Rosier is a clever little player, but he was not good enough to hold Roe and Hoar, and he, more than any other, had cause to be glad of Hoar's retirement to the rear. Amos was the best of the halves, but spoilt much of his work by impetuosity. Morris and McGovern played quietly and stolidly, and helped the forwards a great deal. Hendren and Searby were the pick of the forwards, and the former is still one of the most polished players in the south. I thought he had a little tendency to gallery play, but he was quite the cleverest forward. Searby is a new youngster from Nuneaton, and, barring accidents, he will make a name. He is hardly likely to steer clear of accidents, however, if he does not curb his zeal. But, alas! he has red hair.

Mr. Marshall, of Kettering, is the oldest and best Southern League referee I have seen this season, but a colleague in the Press seats questioned one decision, and it is rather a curious point, and one which might well serve to test the capacity of referees at examination. Following a stoppage for injury, the referee was about to throw-down the ball, when Amos roughly charged Simms, who promptly retaliated and moved the centre-half for some distance. The referee had not released the ball, but he gave a free-kick against Amos, whom he had to caution later on. The questions are: Is the ball dead when in the referee's possession, and if so, can he legally give a free kick against an opponent when the ball is dead? Some problem that. My Press colleague held that the proper course was for the referee to reprimand the offender. My own opinion is that it is one of those questions which are left to the referee's discretion.