

FROM THE FOOTBALL FIELD

LUTON'S NEW FORWARDS.

The outstanding feature of interest in Luton Town's games on Saturday was the first appearance of four new forwards in the Blues' colours. Two took part in the Southern League match at Selhurst and two figured in the reserve team at home, one being a professional whom the club has signed, and the other players on trial in connection with the directors' desire to build up a respectable side for next season. The professional signed is Harry Higginbotham, a Scottish junior international who was playing for St. Mirren at the time he joined the Army in season 1917-18 and occasionally assisted Fulham while in khaki. South Shields signed him up this season and he started the season in the first team but was dropped some time back, and it is entirely due to his own inclinations that he has sought a change of clubs. He has played outside-right for South Shields, but is understood to prefer inside-right or centre, and on Saturday his position was inside-right. The identity of the player at inside-left must for the time being be concealed under the name of "Newman." All that can be said is that he is a time-serving soldier with a considerable reputation in Army football. He will not be demobilised until this season has ended and is not likely to be available for further games this season, but both he and Higginbotham are expected to turn out in the postponed home match with Queen's Park Rangers this evening. Both players are of the right stamp of build and their display on Saturday created a favourable impression.

The two new men in the Reserves' team were both soldiers who are awaiting demobilisation. F. Barrett, who played centre, is a local man who used to be with the Amateurs and has done a tremendous amount of scoring in Army football and also scored thrice when the Amateurs met the Town Reserves a short time back. J. Fairclough is an inside-left who played in the Lancashire Combination before he joined up and was in the same Army team as David Williams in France. Barrett showed plenty of go-ahead dash but little method, and his display was nothing like so stylish as that of Fairclough, who passed with experienced judgment and in a quiet way did very useful work.

CRYSTAL PALACE REPEAT LUTON VICTORY.

Apart from the exclusion of Roe and Hill to make room for the new inside forwards, the return of Rutherford at centre-half in place of Brandon was the only other change in Luton's team on the old Croydon Common ground at Selhurst. Crystal Palace also had two changes in the forward line and one at half-back, the teams being:—

Luton.—Summers; Elvey, Dunn; Urwin, Rutherford, Parker; Hoar, Higginbotham, Simms, Newman, Bookman.

Crystal Palace.—Anderson; Little, Rhodes; Barber, Bates, Feebury; Bateman, Conner, Menlove, Green, Whibley.

Referee: Mr. F. Heath.

The playing conditions were ideal in every respect, and before 10,000 spectators Luton started in a style that gave their supporters present great hopes. They set up a rousing pace and the forwards played such smart football that they were seen to much greater advantage than the homesters for the greater part of the first half-hour. Both Bookman and Hoar made good use of their speed, Hoar, in particular, playing brilliantly and frequently giving Rhodes the slip. The right wing gave the Palace defence many anxious moments, but their work was resolute, and Alderson in goal was very safe in dealing with anything that appeared dangerous.

Once the Palace forwards got going they proved a much more dangerous combination, the centre and the left wing working particularly well together, and in the last quarter of an hour of the first half they thrice met with success. One of the Luton defenders failed to clear a forward pass some forty yards out, and, snapping up the chance, Green ran through and scored with a shot which Summers managed to touch but could not hold. Five minutes later Menlove added to their lead with a brilliant individual effort, and just before the interval Whibley met a centre from the other wing and scored a third with a great drive. Early in the second half Menlove scored yet another goal for the Palace. Luton retaliated vigorously, and both Newman and Simms had shots charged down, but Higginbotham seized on the return at close quarters and succeeded in netting. The Blues were not, however, able to follow up this success. For the most part the Palace were most aggressive and nearly all the incident centred round the Luton goal, Summers making numerous fine saves. In the last five minutes there was another Luton revival, and Alderson had to clear from Newman, Simms and Rutherford, but the Palace upheld their superiority and the final score was

Palace 4, Luton 1.

Curiously enough, this was exactly the result of the first meeting of the teams at Luton in November, and the Palace victory, following on another achieved in the week, gives them second place in the League table. Luton, on the other hand, have dropped to second from the bottom in consequence of Newport and Northampton both winning on Saturday. A victory over the Rangers to-night will bring them level in points with Newport and Northampton and still give them a game in hand against the Cobblers. ●