

SOUTHERN LEAGUE

Queen's Park Rangers Defeated.

At Luton on Monday,

LUTON TOWN 2 goals

QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS 1 goal

We had the pill at Selhurst on Saturday, and the spoonful of jam at the Town ground last night. If we deserved to lose at Croydon, there can be no denial of the full right to the brace of points last night. They were most hardly earned, and the game was remarkable for the run of good fortune experienced by the visitors. Sid Hoar is developing a penchant for sending flagkicks direct into the net, but it will be a long time before he repeats the feat of last night, when two of his corner kicks passed into the net without a second player touching the ball, although there was a scrambling, hectic mass in the goal-mouth struggling to give the ball just the one touch necessary to call goal. It was poetic justice after this that the winning goal, ten minutes from the end, should come from one of Hoar's corners, Hill heading through as the ball came across right under the bar. Merrick had punched away a considerable number of these perfect corners, and what the tally against the Rangers might have been but for this young man's display one can hardly estimate. Not that the home forwards were in much better shooting trim, but that they were almost living under the bar at one period just before the end, and the visiting keeper made a series of remarkable saves, his display being spoilt only by a little outburst of temper against Simms when tackled with more vigour than decorum.

It was by no means a brilliant display of football, but there was plenty of excitement, and interest never lacked from start to finish, with the exception of a short period in the second half, when things got a little wearying after a series of Luton attacks had been repelled, but this was only a preliminary to the big rally made by both sides. Fortunately the Town got the goal, but in the mad rush the Rangers got up immediately afterwards it appeared that the Rangers must equalise again. There were wild scenes in the Luton goal, and the crowd cheered every kick which meant that danger was averted for the moment, and Summers made one wonderful save as he was on all fours when his fist shot out and returned a ball which would certainly have found the net. That assault beaten down, however, the Town packed on full sail again, and for five minutes Merrick kept goal in magnificent fashion, some of his saves being little short of miraculous, and it was this which kept the Town from running up a big score. The game finished in really great style, and the Town players well deserved the victory.

The play was curiously uneven from a departmental point of view. Comparing the manner in which the two defences met the attacks it cannot be said that Luton gave so solid an impression as that of the Rangers, and yet the players individually played splendidly. Summers some may hold to blame for the Rangers' goal, for Dunn could have cleared had he not responded to his colleague's call, as the keeper was in a direct line with the ball and had an easy chance to clear, but the moment the ball touched Summers Ramsey or Smith banged into him, and the ball flew into the net. Opinion was divided as to whether a goal should have been allowed, but the law is that the goal-keeper should not be charged unless he has the ball in his possession, and he certainly had not got it when Ramsey rushed into him. Possibly the referee thought that the Ranger sent the ball into the net, but he did not, for Summers was charged as the ball fell and it struck his chest and glanced through. It was certainly a case where the defending side should have had the benefit of the doubt. Summers kept goal splendidly, and he saved some really fine shots. Elvey was in great form at back, and his tackling was grand, while Dunn made no glaring mistake, although Ramsey gave him a powerful lot of trouble. Parker was again the star half, and he improves every match, while Urwin showed that he is as reliable at centre half as at right half. He had Smith comfortably controlled after the first quarter of an hour, and played well to the end. Fred Hawkes may lack speed, but he played with brains, and the dapper Donald was allowed few chances. The forward line was not a constitution to inspire confidence on turning out, but they deserved the warm praise they got at the end and during the game. Before the match it was a question how it should be arranged, for with Rutherford, Bookman, Higginbotham and Grimes all unfit, there was a real puzzle. So Sid Hoar crossed to outside left and let Tomlinson in at outside right, and Hill came in at inside right. Under the circumstances one could not expect combination of a high order, but until he got injured in the first half Newman was shaping very well with Hoar, and from that wing came most danger. Unfortunately Newman suffered the worse in his collision with Merrick, and his subsequent play was affected, and he showed rare pluck in turning out. Hoar was the particular star. What a great player he would be if only he could have an experienced partner for about six months. His goal six or seven minutes from the start was fine, a neat run in and a quick low shot, which sent the ball past three or four players into the net. But his work in the second half was even better, and he eventually had Wingrove's temper ruffled. Everyone will admit that the palm must go to the Leagrave lad for his splendid game. Newman I have referred to, and we saw enough of him to believe that he will make a fine inside forward. He is well-built, fearless, and clever, and when his connection with the Army closes and Billy Lawson can take on the job of increasing his speed, I think we shall have solved the problem of inside left. Simms—the much discussed Simms. He worked better than in many recent matches, but still that Fortune failed to smile, and he could not get a goal. One shot in the first half was worth three goals, so beautifully true and accurate it was, but Merrick brought off one of his best saves of the day. One feels downright sorry that things will not come right, and it appears that for this season, at any rate, he is not going to get a change in the tide. He played well, perhaps hugging the ball a little too much, but he always had it under control

when he got it in front of him decently. Hill was far from happy in the first half, but in the second he had a big share in the storming tactics which kept the Rangers' defence busy for so long, and he got much work out of Tomlinson. Hill will develop into class if he has the average freedom from accident. Tomlinson, as someone said in the Press Box, is not exactly a racehorse, but he put in some pretty touches in the second half, when he was more settled to the position, and got across some good centres.

Of the Rangers, Merrick deserves chief credit, and his keeping in the second half was magnificent. Young, long, agile, he has fine anticipatory powers, and so was able to clear many dangerous shots and centres. Wingrove was the better back, for Old Time seems to be affecting Pullen, but both kicked well. I liked Broster best of the halves, although Cane put up a good game in the first half. Forward Ramsey was the chief source of danger, but Smith, who opened well, fell off as Urwin got the measure of him.

The victory should be reflected in the attendance at the match with Southend on Saturday, and if it is as keen a contest as last night's, there will be a pound's-worth of thrills for a shilling.

Luton.—Summers; Elvey, Dunn; F. Hawkes, Urwin, Parker; Tomlinson, Hill, Simms, Newman, and Hoar.

Queen's Park Rangers.—Merrick; Wingrove, Pullen; Broster, Cane, Baldock; Ramsey, Miller, Smith, Gregory, and Donald.

Referee.—Mr. J. A. Fish, Walthamstow.