

Bob Hawkes' Game.

At Luton last night.

Luton Town	1 goal
Bristol Rovers	1 goal

Luton Town.—Fryer; Elvey, Dunn; F. Hawkes, Rutherford, R. Hawkes; Hoar, Urwin, Bratby, Higginbotham, Bookman.

Bristol Rovers.—Whatley; Beandon; Pares; Howes, Crompton, Steele; Walters, Davison, Whitton, Vaughan, Palmer.

Referee: Mr. A. E. Caseley, Wolverhampton.

The question on everybody's tongue last night concerned Bob Hawkes. Why had he ever been left out of the first team? Bob certainly played as good a game as any half has played for Luton this season. The veteran has no superior in ball control, and in the feeding of his forwards, and his tackling was all that could be desired. If Bob turns out again on Saturday the selection will be very popular. He fell into the class and the old style ever so sweetly, and very little was seen of the Bristol right wing. Bob is by no means a ~~Back~~ number yet. The pity is that he was not on the winning side, but I am not going to claim that we deserved to win. The Rovers were a better balanced eleven, and the forwards were the strongest part of the side, although the backs were pretty smart. Indeed, I think the home halves and backs saved the game for us. Fryer had much more work to do than Whatley, and although what we call "narrow escapes" were as numerous and "narrower" at the Bristol end, it would be idle to claim that the Luton players shot as well, or worked with the knowledge of the Rovers. If anything, our forwards had the better title to the name of rovers, and it is a fact that something more cohesive than last night's quintette will be required for next season.

Taking the game as a whole, the draw was a fair result. I am not forgetting that the Rovers' goal was a soft thing. Fryer should have saved it, and, indeed, he appeared to have the speculative shot sent in by Whitton quite safe, for he was in position, the ball was travelling at a comfortable pace only, and he got both hands to it easily enough, but it slipped over them and into the net. It was a shock quite as severe as that of Saturday, when Plymouth got their winning goal. After then Fryer did sufficient good work to earn forgiveness, but having seen the majority of Luton's games this season I have no hesitation in saying that we have never had such a soft goal credited to us. One felt sorry for Fryer, nevertheless, and I am glad to be able to pay testimony to the excellent work he did afterwards. On at least half a dozen occasions he made brilliant saves, and once he ran out and flung himself at full length to take the ball off the toes of the visiting forward, who had an almost certain goal. Fryer is worth persevering with, and when he has got

over "nerves" and become accustomed to his colleagues he will do well.

Fortunately, Higginbotham took the bit in his teeth right away, and within a minute had levelled up. The goal came thus: Fred Hawkes took a free kick near the halfway line, and flammed the ball well up. Higginbotham promptly seized it, and, eluding Brandon's challenge, he left Whatley helpless with a fine shot into the far corner of the net. For the rest of the game there was always plenty of interest, and it was much better than the last three or four games on the Town ground. There were any number of interesting duels between the Bristol left wing and Fred Hawkes, and this was the best wing on the field, without question. The pace of the game was also fast, interest was maintained right to the finish, and the game was almost won on the stroke of time when Urwin and Bratby tried to kick the ball past Whatley close to the post, but the keeper managed to get it away.

The quality of football was poor, but the ball was on the ground much oftener than usual—Bob Hawkes saw to that. Crompton, too, showed how clever he could be in the art of feeding forwards, and I hope the lesson will not be entirely lost. It was that faculty of Crompton's which enabled Palmer and Vaughan to do such a lot of damage, and they invariably got the ball on the ground, and were able to get away without loss of time. It makes such a tremendous difference when a forward can take the ball in his stride. Bob Hawkes often gave Higginbotham and Bookman like opportunities, and the winger frequently made ground, but he was not in his best fettle.

To Fryer I have already made reference. Dick Elvey and Dunn were again very good, and the latter's mishaps were due to the fact that he could not see. Off the field after the first quarter of an hour until the

interval, in consequence of a collision in which he received a nasty crack between the eyes, he could scarcely see the ball, but played well. Rutherford did many good things at half-back, and appears to have recovered from his ailment. Fred and Bob Hawkes I have dealt with. Of the forwards, Higginbotham was the best, but there was lack of understanding and combination. There was too much kick and run about it, instead of thoughtful passing and opening out. Hoar and Bookman tried hard, but neither was at his best, although both made several dashing runs. Neither Urwin nor Bratby played so well as on Saturday, and we have yet to see the best of the latter. He started well, but did not shoot quickly enough, while Urwin was often short in passing. Both tried hard, however, and will do better. Higginbotham gave as good a display as he has yet given, and his was a real good shot, but the great fault was lack of combination.

Of the visitors, Brandon, Panes, Crompton, and Palmer were the best, and the team showed more method and finish than Luton. So they deserved the point.