

FOOTBALL CHAT

(By CRUSADEE).

TOWN FINISH BADLY.

At Luton. Result:—

Reading	2 goals
Luton Town	Nil

Luton.—Summers; Elvey, Dunn; F. Hawkes, Roe, Parker; Hoar, Hill, Sigma, Higginbotham, Bookman.

Reading.—Crawford; Smith, Horler; Goodman, Mavin, Harbidge; Carr, Weston, Dilley, Bailey; Lofthouse.

Referee: Mr. R. H. Crump, London.

One of the worst chapters in the history of the Town Club closed on Saturday, and with another defeat. We are all glad, for various reasons, that this is the end of the Town's programme, and the only thing to do is to hope for better things next season.

The game with Reading was a lesson in the art of team building, and I can say that it had been learned already by the directors of the Town Club. There is an old saying that a good big 'un is better than a good little 'un, and this game was a case in point. Reading proved to be about the biggest and strongest side seen on the Town ground this season, and although the Town were pressing for the greater part of the game, they were beaten by the all-round strength of the visitors. They were bigger than Portsmouth, and they played a strong, hardy game.

It is not necessary to go through the details of the play, but the visitors had a slight pull in the first twenty minutes, but from that time the Town did most pressing, and the Reading defence was far more severely taxed than Luton's. Personally I think we scored once, for Crawford dropped a very hot shot from Sigma, and it seemed to be just over the line, but the referee decided otherwise, and he was nearer than I. Bailey's two goals were the result, in the first place, of mis-kicks by Dunn, the right wing getting the ball across for Bailey to slip in and score, the first goal coming after ten minutes' play and the second after eighty minutes. The latter was obtained when Luton were again short-handed, Sigma having retired after a collision with Horler, in which the centre-forward got his head badly out, and on Saturday night it was necessary to stitch the wound, which was long and deep.

Reading played fast, bustling football, without being impressively clever. They gave a trial to Dilley, of Grange Athletic, and although he did nothing very brilliant, he promises to develop into a dangerous centre-forward. A big fellow with a raking stride, and quite fearless, he was apt to challenge the backs in a rather rough manner, and his treatment of Roe and Dunn elicited from the latter reprisals which brought the referee into action. Apart from this the game was not rough, although not lacking vigour. Crawford had more to do than Summers, and made several brilliant saves in the second half, while Smith and Horler played powerfully at back. The halves were moderately good, but in the second half were constantly beaten by the home forwards. Goodman was about the most useful. Bailey scored the goals, but the smartest of the forward line was Carr, the Watford youth, who was very dangerous when he got on the move.

Summers could not reach either of the shots that scored, although he made valiant efforts. The first goal went in off the post, but both were good shots. He saved one or two good shots, but had much less work than Crawford. Elvey played magnificently, reaching his very best form, and his kicking and tackling were clean and sure. Lofthouse he reduced to a mere shadow of the clever winger we know in pre-war days. Dunn did very well except for the two rather hastily attempted clearances which gave the visitors their chances. Arthur Roe again played a scientific game at centre-half, and although occasionally harassed by the tactics of the visiting forwards, he never lost his coolness or cleanliness. It is a pity that all footballers do not concentrate on the ball to the same extent as Roe. I have come to the conclusion that he will be a better wing half than centre-half, for although he is not lacking in courage or stamina, I do not think

he bustles enough for a centre-half. That he is a better half than forward I am convinced. Fred Hawkes again played a useful, steady game, and with Dick Elvey conspired to nullify the cleverness of the visiting left wing. Parker played with his customary polish, but left Carr a little too much, and threw extra burden on Dunn. For the first time in his career Ernest Simms had to leave the field in consequence of an injury incurred from an opponent. When he previously did so it was the result of a strain. He had played a hard game up to that point, but did not shoot often enough. Higginbotham was equally earnest and he played a brainy, if rather slow game. Sid Hoar was lame at the beginning, and this affected his play, but he got over some useful centres. Bookman did not shine often, and Percy Hill, while playing his hardest, was not so good as he has been. The forwards generally showed a lack of understanding.