

FOOTBALL NOTES

(By CRUSADER).

Everybody appears to be agreed on the fact that Luton Town would have got no more than their deserts had they brought a point from Selhurst. True it is that Crystal Palace had far the better of the first half of the game, but equally true that Luton were just as superior in the second. "Had there been another 15 minutes," said one gentleman who saw the game, "I believe Luton would have won easily, for the Palace seemed quite played out." Our special correspondent, whose views were given pretty fully in the "Tuesday Telegraph," says very much the same; the London newspaper correspondents reluctantly admit that Luton were as good as the Palace, and yet the Town lost by the odd goal in three. Although the Palace had many chances in the first half, in addition to those which were turned to account by Conner and Feebary, Luton gave Alderson and his backs something to think about, while in the second half, especially after Simms had scored, Luton ought to have gone well beyond the equaliser.

The team rose to a high pitch in the second half, and although few of us really expected them to bring anything away from Selhurst, their visit certainly did one good thing—confirmed the high opinion they have won in the month of October. Although they did so well in that month, I think it is time to say that few of us were inclined to treat the victory at Grimsby and the draw at Brighton as justification for entitling them to the place they occupied among the "big clubs" of the League, but the splendid fight against the Palace, in spite of defeat, may cause us to give them their due. They have earned their points, and will be somewhere near the top at the end of the season. I believe that every department of the team has been strengthened, and the players deserve all credit for their excellent performances. The teams were:

Crystal Palace.—Alderson; Little, Rhodes; McCracken, Bates, Feebary; Bateman, Storey, Conner, Menlove, Whibley.

Luton Town.—Bailey; Lennon, Tirrell; Molynoux, Parker, Lamb; Hoar, Higginbotham, Simms, Mathieson, Bookman.

Now, next Saturday we get a visit from Norwich City. The "Canaries" have been doing badly, and were without a victory until a fortnight ago. They have won two successive games—Reading being the victims at home and away. I do not think that we need talk about the goal average being corrected on Saturday, for Norwich have a splendid defence, and I am quite sure the Town players will not make the error of treating the visitors too lightly. It will be a mistake if they do, for against Skermer, Gray and Smith they will be up against it. Gray is the fine back that Luton hoped to get, and who was rather anxious to come to Luton at the beginning of the season.

Although so lowly placed in the League, the "Canaries" have only given away a matter of 17 goals in 15 matches, and half the defences in the League would be glad to hold a similar record.

Luton forwards will find goals hard to get, and they will need to keep the ball moving quickly and to swing it about a good deal if they are to score. I do not expect we shall rise far by means of this game, although I think we shall win. Gray, however, is sure to keep a heavy hand on Simms, for he is a heavy player, with a vigour that is not always relished by opponents, and so the Town forwards will have to be pretty smart if they wish to level up the goal average. It is certain there will be one change in the team, for although the exact constitution is not yet announced, Walsh will reappear in the middle line at centre-half, and Parker will go left-half. Lamb was not training the other day owing to indisposition, and the middle line is bound to undergo a change. So far, it has been the department most criticised—justly so, too—and while I do not regard Walsh as an ideal half-back, he is coming on well and deserves his chance. Whether it is wise to move Parker is another matter altogether. I certainly agree with the majority of the spectators, however, that Bayliss has done well enough with the Reserves to deserve a trial, and if a plebiscite of the supporters were taken I know perfectly well that the proposal would get an overwhelming majority. For some reason or other, however, he is the one reserve half-back who has not had a chance. He has played in all three positions for the Reserves, and has done uniformly well. He is the youngest of the half-backs and deserves encouragement.

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