

FOOTBALL.

(By CRUSADER).

Very few of us anticipated that the Town team would be defeated at Norwich by three goals to nil, and to say that we were disappointed in the result is only putting the matter mildly. Reversals of form seem to be very much to the fore in this season's programme, and Luton is not the only club to produce evidence of this, although it is unfortunate that we should be selected as an example of the divergent results of home and away fixtures.

Granted that we did not expect defeat after a 4-0 home victory, yet many varying phases must be taken into consideration, and particularly the change of grounds. We have not done well in visiting fixtures so far—Grimsby has been the only team to yield a couple of points—and all of us would like to see the foreign matches a little more fruitful, but we have not fared such a great deal worse than other clubs. Previous to the visit to Norwich, the East Anglian club had only a couple of victories to its credit, but like the Reserve team, it has a remarkable propensity for draws, having played seven matches in which the points were shared. Possibly it was this freakish run which gave us a certain amount of confidence in bringing away at least one token of our superiority, both from a team and a league position point of view. It is not very comforting to think that if justice had been done such would have been the case, and a clear three goal defeat takes a lot of explaining, but there is little doubt, despite the weighty evidence of the score sheet, that Norwich had quite as many anxious moments in the game as we did. To be perfectly candid, they rushed our forwards off their feet by means which were admittedly more effective than pleasant, and the Luton van had a gruelling time.

It was far from a pleasing game to watch, and what real football there was in it came from Luton, and I am quite confident that but for the unfair tactics Norwich adopted, our men would have brought off the double event. Smarting under the trips and kicks they received, together with charges of unwarranted heftiness, Luton retaliated, and then the referee took a serious view of the situation.

All the players, with the exception of Bailey and Skermer, were called together, and listened for some minutes to a discourse from him, and whether he said anything about an eye for an eye, or turning the other cheek to the smiter, I do not know, but it did not have any material effect upon the play. Our forwards were unceremoniously bowled over whenever they had the ball near goal—which was pretty frequently—and unfortunately the kick and dash tactics of Norwich met with success.

Simms got a nasty shaking when play commenced, and it seemed that his shooting powers were not so effective as usual. At any rate, Norwich took good care that he had no chance to repeat his hat trick of the previous week. The first half-an-

hour's play was, in the main, in favour of Luton, and the most attractive feature was the sparkling display given by Hoar, who, together with Higginbotham, gave the Norwich defenders more work than they liked. Hoar had the good fortune to be fed frequently, and none can deny that he made the most of his chances. On several occasions he took the ball from the half-way line to the vicinity of the

corner flag, and his centring was accurate to a degree. The only goal of the half came to Norwich shortly before the interval, and was in the nature of a surprise, Travers scoring with a fast, rising shot. The other goals for Norwich were notched late in the second half, and followed numerous unsuccessful efforts on the part of the Luton players to obtain an equaliser. The second point was from a penalty award against Tirrell for handling the ball, and Addy converted it with a low shot. In the last minute Travers put into an empty goal, Bailey having left his charge to tackle Austin.

Of the Norwich team, I think the best man was Travers, who was shifted into the centre-forward position in place of Dennison, and the change made a marked difference. He is virile and has plenty of dash, and without mincing matters, the Luton half-backs had more than they could accomplish in trying to check him. His dribbling was always a source of danger, and he kept the wings going whenever possible. The Norwich halves were positionally better than ours, but not to a great degree. The backs were too robust, and Lennon and Tirrell played a much finer game. In fact, they were the mainstay of Luton, and were always on the spot at a critical moment. The Luton forwards were a quintette in which confidence can remain, and their passing methods have improved almost beyond recognition. Bailey was good in goal, but did not have quite so much to do as Skermer. He could not be blamed for any of the goals, although it was a stroke of hard luck that his tackle with Austin failed and left Travers with the advantage. Teams:—

Norwich City:—Skermer; Gray, B. G. Smith; Wilkinson, Martin, Addy; Austin, Dennison, Travers, Booth, Dobson.

Luton Town:—Bailey; Lennon, Tirrell; Molyneux, Walsh, Parker; Hoar, Higginbotham, Simms, Mathieson, Bookman.

Referee: Mr. F. Leigh, Hanley.