

COBBLERS' WHACKS!

There was a wretched game at Northampton, and the Town were deservedly beaten by two goals clear. Northampton's position in the League is just about deserved, on the quality of football they showed, and if Luton had not played any better in any other game they would have been propping up Southend United on the League table. The Town have never played worse than on Saturday, and although the goals scored by the "Cobblers" deserved the "lucky" label, they should have got more.

It was a nasty game from another standpoint. At an early stage in the game I remarked to a colleague that it was proving quite a pleasant encounter, but five minutes later we began to see trouble. Up to then the Town had done fairly well, but some hot work by the home halves changed

the spirit of the game, and with the referee showing lamentable lack of firmness, we had players kicking each other with impunity, heavy charges, and unpenalised dangerous play in almost every phase. The one-eyed section of the crowd were urging the home players to "do for" one after another of the Luton team, and when the game was over, as the Town players were leaving the field, an ugly rush was made by two or three hundred, and stones, sticks, turf, orange and banana skins were thrown, several of the players being struck. Mr. Harry Smart, one of the Town directors, rushed on to the field and caught one offender in the act, and dragged him half-way to the Club offices, but no assistance was forthcoming, and eventually the scamp wriggled free and took to his heels. The dressing-rooms of the Northampton players and the officials are at the other end of the field, so they did not see the disturbance.

This scene was far worse than the behaviour of the Bristol Rovers' crowd, and I was informed casually that a similar disgraceful demonstration occurred when Exeter visited Northampton. The Northampton Pressmen could see no reason for this or the continual demonstration made against Luton players during the progress of the game. Certainly there should be more heard of it.

There is little need to give details of the game. There were few sparkling spasms, and the ball was in the air far more than on the ground. The "Cobblers" were very earnest indeed, and I must say that the only players against whom I could complain were the half-backs and Jeffs, who were not too scrupulous when beaten. Unfortunately, several of the Town players retaliated, and that was the root of the trouble. Save for one brilliant effort by Graham there was not a forward who showed ability to shoot in the first half, and when LOCKETT got his goal just before half-time, it was practically a gift. I see that one report credits him with grand shots. Well, the first goal came when three or four players missed kicking it during a scrimmage, and Lockett was not a yard away from goal. The second came from a like distance, immediately after the interval, and followed a corner. From among a crowd of players someone headed against the bar, and the ball dropped into the ruck of players almost under the bar, and LOCKETT'S foot happened to be the first to hit it. Tirrell booted it out by a great effort, but it was well over the line. Subsequently the Town captain twice saved certain goals by kicking away from off the line, but he maintained his record at Northampton by failing to give of his best. Bailey, Lennon, and the halves were good, but the forwards were very poor indeed, and save for a few sallies by Bookman, there was little danger for the "Cobblers." I should hate to discourage any young player, and I think Reid has possibilities if he can grow a bit, but at present it is asking too much of him to face, with success, men like Jobey. He lacks experience, although his heart is in

his job. Anyway, a more experienced man will have to be found for next season. Higginbotham was crippled, and Hoar had few chances until late in the second half, when he went inside, and he then made several dangerous raids, from one of which Reid would have scored had he been blessed with a bit of luck.

NORTHAMPTON.—Smith; Watson, Jeffs; Bedford, Jobey, Williams; Pease, Graham, Lockett, Hewison, Chambers.

LUTON.—Bailey; Lennon, Tirrell; Foster, Walker, Roe; Hoar, Higginbotham, Reid, Mathieson, Bookman.

Referee: Mr. C. Austin, Kidderminster.