

THE LEAGUE—DIV. III.

TEN OF TWELVE.

Luton Town Continue their Successful Run.

(By CRUSADER).

LUTON TOWN 4 Goals
ABERDARE 1 ..

LUTON TOWN. — Gibbon; Lennon, Tirrell; Foster, Walker, Roe; Hoar, Hugginbotham, Thompson, Reid, Clarkson.

ABERDARE. — Duckworth; Morgan, Gillespie; Hughes, Archibald, Gibbon; Tompkinson, Sheldon, Martin, Anderson, Danskin.

Referee: Mr. R. C. Wildig, Southampton.

Most defeated teams cannot find even one thing to be pleased about, but Aberdare did on Saturday night. It was the attitude of the Luton crowd

Aberdare players thought that the Luton crowd were the most sportsmanlike they had ever played to, and also referred to the fact that they had a similar experience last season. The tribute was justified, too, although I rather fancy that some of our players would not subscribe to that opinion. The

crowd were right: Aberdare deserved all the encouragement they got. They started under



Thompson.

A BIG HANDICAP,

and they played pluckily and well under depressing circumstances.

If there is one fault that exasperates a crowd more than another it is the "showing off" business when a team is leading, and it is a fault that has cost Luton goals — ever since I have seen the Town play, at any rate. It cost us a goal on Saturday, for I do not think the Welshmen would have scored had the Town continued to play after the fourth goal as they did in the first half. From fast and interesting, the play degenerated to the scrambling and unpleasant, and spectators were disposed to take the view that the Town players were wholly responsible. I do not agree with that: players of Aberdare were equally to blame, and the referee as much as either. Mr. Wildig's attitude was "hit off" by the spectator who hailed him as

"THE SERGEANT-MAJOR,"

and while he was very good on the main points of the game, he quite failed to distinguish between the fair shoulder charge and the trip. On at least two occasions the Town should have had penalties, but he did not give them, while on several occasions he

penalised Foster for perfectly fair and harmless, but lusty charges. Another extraordinary decision was the occasion when Archibald was knocked out by Higginbotham. Not 10 seconds before the Luton player had been badly tripped, not for the first time, by Gillespie. The referee gave a free kick, but did not



Walker.

think the offence merited a caution. When Archibald was laid out, Higginbotham was cautioned very ostentatiously, and the charge was certainly unduly heavy, but what happened? The referee simply threw the ball down to restart the game. Now if there were an offence, there should have been a free kick; if there were not, then there was no need for a caution.

Aberdare's long journey must have been occupied by a thinking out of the disposition of the team. Price is

UNDER SUSPENSION,

and Brooke was ill, so two backs had to be found, and the difficulty was overcome by playing a forward at right back, and a half-back at left back; then a wing half had to go to centre-half, and a reserve player brought in; the forward line included a utility man and a half-back, and no fewer than seven changes were necessary on the match-card. The Town thus had better fortune. They had no great need of it in the early stages, for they were very much the superior side, and played with more enterprise and dash than the Welshmen, whose play was pretty, but too frilly against the powerful halves and backs of the Town. The Town's play in the first half was of the match-winning kind, and they might well have had a bigger lead than three goals at the change of ends. The Aberdare defenders had some strenuous moments before their goal fell. There was

AN ELEMENT OF LUCK

about the incident leading up to it. A good way out was Hoar when he found his way blocked by Gillespie. In endeavouring to

centre, the winger sent the ball against the back, and it went for a corner. This was well placed by Hoar, and HIGGINBOTHAM headed a lovely goal. The next goal was a bright example of opportunism. Snapping up Higginbotham's pass, THOMPSON attempted no embroidery, but let fly a low shot that travelled at tremendous pace through a gap in the defence. Duckworth was on the watch, but the suddenness and the speed were too much for him, and the ball shot off his clutching arms into the net. The third came from Reid, for Hoar sent right across goal, and although the ball was temporarily checked, it went on to REID, who was close up and easily netted.

Aberdare had more of the play in the fifteen minutes after the interval than previously, but Hoar then got across a lovely centre, and THOMPSON, towering above the other players, headed past Duckworth into the net. After this

THE TOWN SLACKENED

considerably, and at one time the inside forwards were getting mixed up with the halves, and the forward line was quite unstuck. Two or three times Thompson gave passes for inside colleagues who were not there, and as the exchanges became more vigorous, the play became little better than a scramble on the part of the Town players, while Aberdare dribbled and manoeuvred better than at any previous stage of the game. It was due to this easing up that Aberdare got their goal, for Martin pranced through smartly and delivered a powerful shot that had Gibbon beaten before it struck the bar. Foster and Lennon each made big efforts to retrieve it, but lost the ball, and SHELDON shot hard and true past Gibbon, what time the crowd gave hearty applause. This goal came a few minutes from the end.

SUMMING UP.

The Town defence was all right for seventy minutes, but then a sort of rot set in, and it was due to the fact that some of the players could not keep their places, but were playing anywhere. The forward line was deprived of its effectiveness, and the defensive divisions were too crowded. Gibbon was all right, and Lennon put in a lot of hard work. The halves were the mainstay of the team, but the forwards, while better toned up in front of goal, thanks to Thompson's presence, did not move as skilfully as at Swindon.

Duckworth was a good goalkeeper for the visitors, Morgan was the cleverer back; Hughes played finely at right half, and Martin and the extreme wing men were always dangerous, but were not well supported.