

LUTON TOWN SHARE.

BRISTOL CITY WIN A POINT AT LUTON.

(By "CRUSADER.")

Few, if any, blamed the Town directors last Saturday—before the game. They had made experiments, and to that extent they were justified, although the difference of opinion on the construction of the side will always be acute until we can see a higher standard of forward and half-back play. It is perfectly well-known that to get three supporters together thinking alike, either before or after a game, is something of a wonder, because the Town's playing list contains so many players of a certain level that it is an impossibility to arrive at unanimity. There is no reason to think that the team that turned out last Saturday was the result of unanimous voting in the Board room, because there are various sorts of spectacles there, just as round the fence. At the moment things are in anything but a happy state, for the Town have struck a bad patch, met it with a bump, and the main thing is that we should keep our heads and not get excited or angry with each other, for few of us but think we could improve on what others do in any sphere.

In one little circle before the game I was offered odds that no two directors thought alike, and that no two players would give the same team if they were asked to make a choice. I quite believe it. After the game we had a dozen different teams from a dozen people, and everyone was sure that his was the pick of the basket. It is a splendid sign and one that the directors need not fret about, when the supporting ranks take a healthy interest in the club. Knowing nothing of the inner workings and the complications, the only outlet for the criticism is the construction of the side, and we may surely be allowed that little privilege either before or after a game. To my own cost I know that there is far more interest shown by the supporters concerning the probable team than there is in what the team has done. And I think it is well to foster that interest. Indeed, I think it is necessary to a maintenance of interest, and I do not think it helps the "gates" to curtail it.

Nevertheless, I think that a crowd of 8,000 is not nearly enough for the visit of such a side as Bristol City. An individual who seems to get a lot of amusement out of the job of criticising nearly every time one writes, is often very sarcastic about the figures I give concerning the size of the crowd. For last Saturday he placed the figure at 13,000, which was "only 5,000" more than the official figure. Before the game commenced, I thought there would be 10,000 present soon after the start, but the stiles cannot err, and 8,000 was the correct figure.

And now something about the game. It is conceded by players and supporters alike that the City played better football, and if they had been smart in front of goal they would have won, but they shot poorly and quite failed to consummate their good work in the open. Their goal was a lucky one, but ours was just about as fortunate, although obtained in a different way. The City's goal after ten minutes' play, came as the result of MATTHEW'S rather crafty way of taking a free kick. When the Town players expected him to pass out to the left, he fired in a shot at goal, and the swerve on the ball beat Gibbon and Tirrell as well. If that goal came as a result of a mistake by the Town players in failing to cover up, then the Town's goal was due to a blunder by Vallis, who held the ball long enough to allow Reid's vigorous challenge, and although the latter did not get the ball when Vallis dropped it, HIGGIN-BOTHAM did, and put it safely into the net.

The Town played strongly up to the interval, and had the better of it, for Bristol's goal had some very narrow escapes, and with Vallis a bit shaky, it appeared to be only a matter of time before a goal came. Bristol's forwards were always troublesome, however, and Gibbon had one or two nasty shots to deal with, but the game was waged chiefly in the Bristol half, and there were enough chances made to have put up a useful lead before the cross-over. After changing ends, however, we found a new Bristol. They played splendid football in the middle and forward lines, and were persistently working up strong attacks, and the Town goal had some very narrow escapes. For a long period there was practically only one team in it, and that was not Luton, who could only raise a few raids that were not at all well carried out, and the attack was lop-sided. Near the end the Town did better, and with a little steadiness they might have won, but had they done so it would have been more than they deserved on the run of the game.

The Town's experimental forward line was not a success, and it is obvious that further changes must be made. The brightest play came from the left wing, where Butcher and Hoar did magnificent work. The former was the chief spirit in attack, and he brought out the best in Hoar, who got across many fine centres, and was generally too good for Dyer. Thompson, at outside right for the first time, put in some nice runs in the first half, but Higginbotham did not touch his best by a long way. Reid was a worker, and at times he passed well, but he could not shoot at all well. The forwards did not receive anything like good support from the half-backs, and the latter line, as a whole, gave its poorest exhibition of the season. They spoiled all right in the first half, but in the second they could not hold the Bristol forwards, and at no period of the game did they feed well, and the ball was too frequently in the air. Jennings got his wing working better than any other part of the team, but this was almost the only redeeming feature of the middle line's work.

Lennon and Tirrell have usually been saved a lot of defensive work by the keenness of their halves, but this was not so on Saturday, and they had to battle along against heavy odds. Both did well, and deserved more praise than any part of the team except the left wing. Gibbon had not a lot to do, considering the amount of attacking work of Bristol, but he did his little well.

Bristol had a fine back in Banfield; Matthews was the cleverest half-back on the field, and the forward line was the best.

seen at Luton this season for combination,
but poor in front of goal.

LUTON TOWN 1 goal

BRISTOL CITY 1

LUTON TOWN.—Gibson; Letnon, Tir-
rell; Foster, Walker, Jennings; Thompson,
Higginbotham, Reid, Butcher, Hoar.

BRISTOL CITY.—Valles; Dyer, Ban-
field; Neenan, Matthews; Cockerill;
Worlock, Walker, Patrelough, Sutherland,
Pocock.

Referee.—Mr. L. E. Vickery, Birmingham.