

SWANSEA STAGGERED

AND SO WERE LUTON TOWN'S SUPPORTERS.

GREAT VICTORY.

(By CRUSADER.)

LUTON TOWN 6 goals

SWANSEA TOWN 1 goal

LUTON TOWN. — Gibbon; Lennon, Tirrell; Molyneux, Jennings, Roe; Hoar, Higginbotham, Reid, Butcher, Clarkson.

SWANSEA TOWN. — Denoon; Morley, Milne; Roulson, Harwood, Williams; Hole, Deacon, Smith, Thompson, Spottiswoods.

Referee: Mr. F. Todman, Croydon.

A mysterious letter from Swansea reached "Pat" Tirrell, the Town captain, one morning last week. It was written "without prejudices," but it contained a small volume of information as to the intentions and methods of Swansea Town as a team and as individuals, and complete advice as to the best way of defeating the Welshmen. In short, the writer's recommendation to Luton might be summarised in the words of the old song, "Knock 'em in the Old Kent Road." If the writer were in

earnest, then he had a really joyful time in the Welsh town on Saturday night, and he will rejoice in the fact that the offside tactics of the Swansea defenders were beaten according to his plan, and Denoon's alleged proud boast was spifflicated by the hard driving he suggested. Alto-



Reid (Luton).

gether he had a lot to gloat over, and doubtless he will go to the Vetch Field at Swansea next Saturday, if, as he says, he is "a Luton Towner," still

GLOATING AND HOPING

for a repetition.

It is hardly likely that he will get it, but I am quite sure that if our team play as they played on Saturday, they will win. Six goals in ninety minutes is too much to expect frequently, especially against a team like Swansea, but it would be known more often if the Town played as they did in this game. It is all very well to say that the disparity between the teams was exaggerated by the score, but the fact remains that the Town missed chances that should have brought up the score to double figures, and just as method counts in attack, so does mistake discount from the value of defence, and it was due as much to error by the Swansea defenders as to the skill of the Town forwards that Swansea sustained

THEIR HEAVIEST DEFEAT

— or, to put it technically correct, they had more goals scored against them in this game than they have had since the war. Last season they never had more than three goals scored against them in one game, and Luton Town were numbered among those who did that. This season they lost four goals at Reading, but scored four in the same game, and in no other game this season have they lost more than a couple of goals. Indeed they have never lost more than four goals in a game since the war.

It was easy to understand why they have scored more goals than any other club in the Division, for their forwards played smart football, and the Town have lost more than one game this season where the victors have had less of the play than Swansea had, and although our forwards registered on six occasions, the defence deserves just as much credit for the triumph, for they could never afford to be slack, and our goal area was the scene of some exciting struggles, in which the "Swans" were

NOT ALWAYS PLUCKED.

What, then, accounts for such a victory? Well, the improved methods of attack, including vastly superior shooting to that

they are accustomed to give, and also the complete collapse of the "offside theory" when met by intelligence and speed. Swansea complained of "offside goals," but I can honestly say that I do not think one of the seven goals was open to question. They were aggrieved because their



Hole (Swansea).

tactics failed. On more than one occasion men were pulled up wrongly, and the Swansea backs got to that pitch of careless audacity when they thought they had only to step forward and appeal and the whistle would sound. It answered for a long time in the second half, when Milne spent most of the first twenty minutes on the centre line, but it failed after then, because the Town forwards managed to keep behind the man in possession. Reid's second goal was the most serious blunder in the eyes of the enemy, but it was almost exactly like the second goal Portsmouth scored against the Town a month ago at Luton—the back stepped forward and appealed after the pass was made, and the referee was

NOT MISTAKEN.

But even when five goals had been registered against them, the Swansea backs still persisted in these tactics, and so invited the disaster that overtook them.

It was a good clean game on the whole, with the Town faster and stronger, and the forwards improved out of all knowledge—and improved because they kept the ball moving, and opened out the game splendidly, so that the visiting halves and backs had little rest. They were in earnest from the start, and in earnest at the finish, and still going strongly, whereas the Swansea defence was almost demoralised. Facing a strong wind, the Town's first attack was brief, and then Swansea got a fruitless corner. Then the Town got away, and after once being repulsed Higginbotham and Hoar made headway, and the former sent through to REID, who slipped in to beat Denoon with a hard low shot, the keeper being beaten by the pace. For the next twelve minutes Swansea did more pressing, and then Reid made

A GRAND RUN,

and was shooting close in when Milne got his foot in front of the shot, and the ball went for a corner. Placed well by Clarkson, the flag-kick gave a lot of trouble, and half-a-dozen attempts were foiled by the defenders, but one of them eventually kicked the ball against HIGGINBOTHAM, from whom it rebounded into the net.

The Town had the better of the exchanges for a few minutes, and then Swansea commenced a series of spirited attacks and THOMPSON got their goal with a very fine shot just under the bar. Their glee was short-lived, however, as REID received another neat pass from Higginbotham, and scored with as good a shot as that of Thompson, and although Swansea made desperate efforts, they were kept at bay, and the Town had a good lead of 3-1 at the interval.

Swansea almost overplayed the Town in the early part of the second half, and the goal had many narrow escapes, but once the "offside theory" had been collared the Town ran riot. Higginbotham led the first successful movement by

DRAWING THE DEFENCE

and sending Hoar away to centre right along the ground dead in front of goal, and REID dashed up to score easily. Then Reid rushed through from a pass by Jennings, and when hampered he gave HOAR a back pass, and the winger dodged two or three opponents before netting with a magnificent drive. A little before the finish CLARKSON raced Morley for the ball, beat him after a prolonged tussle, and shot past Denoon as the latter came out, and that ended the tale, although the Town came near scoring on several other occasions.

It was a refreshing change to see the Town get so many goals, and every man played well. Gibbon dealt with several dangerous shots with his usual confidence, and Lennon and Tirrell touched their best form of last season, kicking and tackling with fine judgment and accuracy. The middle line excelled, and I don't know that one could be said to be better than another.

A WELCOME FEATURE.

was the improvement in the feeding, and Jennings was usually the man to start Higginbotham and Reid on their journeys. Roe watched Hole very closely, and it was well he did, and Molyneux did a peck of splendid things.

Reid could never be ousted from his position if he always played so. It was

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easily his best game for the Town. He might have opened out the game more, perhaps, but his strong and speedy raids, his fearless challenge of the backs, and his sturdy obstinacy in the face of odds was quite wonderful, and his shooting was deadly. He owed much to the support he received from Jennings, and a great deal to the cleverness and unselfishness of his colleagues of the front line, especially Higginbotham. The latter gave

A BETTER DISPLAY

than usual, and his pushes forward for Reid were as timely as could be desired. He did not do much for Hoar in the first half, but made a splendid partner afterwards. Butcher was his ubiquitous self. He missed a couple of easy chances, but he made ever so many more, and again made Clarkson a live force in the attack. Between them they gave Roulson, the ex-Birmingham half-back, a severe testing, and the winger, well as he did, would have done better had he made ground oftener before centring in the first half. His speed and tricky feet were usually too good for Morley. Hoar did not shine much in the first half, but in the second portion he never wasted a ball, and did great work.

Of the visitors, Denoon could not be blamed for the defeat. Milne was the more reliable back, but both faltered under pressure. Williams was the pick at half, and was as good as any man on the field, while the forwards played a fine game, in which Smith was the best of the inside men, and Hole a clever winger.