

EXETER SPOILED.

At Exeter on Easter Saturday.

LUTON TOWN 2 goals

EXETER CITY 1 goal

EXETER CITY. — Pavey; Pollard, Flynn; Southway, Mitton, Crompton; Matthews, Davis, Crockford, Coopland, Dockray.

LUTON TOWN.—Gibbon; Graham, Tirrell; Molyneux, Jennings, Eoe; Hoar, Butcher, Reid, Hoten, Clarkson.

Referee: Mr. R. Lethaby, Bristol.

There was no fluke about the Town's victory at Exeter. The City's position on the League table, compared with that of Gillingham, made them to all appearances a much more formidable side, and they certainly knew more about the game, but they were beaten on their merits. Much bigger than the Town, they looked a smart lot when they turned out, but from the opening kick to the finish, try as they might, they were always struggling against a better balanced side, and they were very fortunate indeed to get a goal. The Town worked more openings, and it was not always the fault of Reid, Butcher and Hoten that these openings were not turned to good account, but chiefly to the tactics adopted by some of the home defenders, who did not scruple to bring down any opponent who managed to work into a dangerous position.

Each goal had narrow escapes before the interval, and Davis once hit the Town goal-post with a hard shot from the goal-line but while the woodwork was not struck by a Town marksman, Pavey saved a great shot from Reid, and other shots went within inches of the post and bar. Long before the Town scored they had been deserving of success, and when it did come ten minutes after the start it was the result of a very bad foul on Reid. The free kick taken by Molyneux brought a scuffle in the Exeter goal, and when the ball came out to HOAR, he banged it into the net. For ten minutes the Town had the upper hand, and all the inside forwards made fine efforts, but at the end of that time the referee awarded Exeter a penalty on the decision of a linesman, on the grounds that Hoten had handled. The Exeter players and the Town players alike agreed that there was no offence, but CROCKFORD scored from the spot. The game was slightly in favour of the Town to the end, and then Butcher was fouled by Pollard in very much the same way as Reid had been. This time there was an altercation, not, as was supposed by one writer, because Exeter disputed the punishment, but because of a tiff in which Pollard threatened Reid, and Butcher stepped between. The referee had a word with the City back, and the players then crowded into the goal-mouth, as Tirrell advanced to take the kick. It appeared impossible to get the ball past the barrier, but there was just one loop-hole, and TIRRELL crashed the ball through it and into the net, with Pavey helpless to save.

Forthwith the crowd began to troop away in silence, and the City could not get the ball near the Town goal again. The ball was out of play while the last seconds were ticked off, and the end came with the Town once more successful at Exeter.

After the defeat at Gillingham, the win was gratifying, because it was deserved. Pavey kept goal well. I was told that Harry Pryer had been superseded because he was nervy. If Pavey doesn't go the same way I shall be surprised. Backs of the stamp of Pollard and Flynn would almost make a sphinx hysterical, and Mitton and Southway are little better. Crompton was not merely the best player: he was the solitary one of the defensive lines that could keep a cool head. He played a fine, clean game, and never had an ill word with Hoar and Butcher. Of the forwards Crockford and Dockray were the best, with Coopland in the category of Pollard.

Gibbon was not unduly tried, and did his work well. Tirrell was on his best behaviour, and Graham fully justified his inclusion, his judgment in kicking and tackling being splendid all through. The halves put up a great game, and the forwards improved immensely on their previous day's play. Hoar played well in spite of damaged knee and painful shoulder, and was a thrustful winger, thanks to the assiduous service he got from Butcher, who did fine work. Reid shot well without getting any luck, and Hoten did a lot of clever dribbling and fine passing, while Clarkson was a useful winger in spite of indisposition.