

THE GAME WITH SWANSEA.

So far as the game with Swansea was concerned, there has been no question among the supporters about the merits of the visitors. Luton had as much of the attacking, but there was not the same quality about it as about that of the winners. The same may be said of the defence. The speed and general cleverness of the Welsh side was too much for the Town players, and the team, as a whole, suffered a loss of nerve and steadiness when the "Swans" obtained the lead. It was obvious that we should have to rely upon the forwards for victory, for the visiting forward line always looked good for goals, but when the Town defence faltered under the pressure, the forwards did not rise to the occasion and ease the burden. Swansea's forwards are good enough to score goals against any side, and their defence showed remarkable rigidity under pressure, whereas our forwards seldom looked like getting goals as the result of combined effort, and the defence exhibited unusual hesitancy.

It goes against the grain to question the reward of such meritorious forward play as that shown by Swansea, but there seemed to be no doubt in the minds of the Town defenders and supporters that DEACON was offside when he opened the score. Whether this was the case or not, there was more than a little luck about the point, for in the initiatory movement that led to it, Till seemed to hesitate under the impression that Thompson was hurt, and before he could make up his mind, Smith had snapped up the ball and gone on to the attack with it. Had the visiting centre-forward finished the job himself there would have been no complaint on the score of offside, but he sent a forward pass to Deacon, and that player was unhindered in front of goal. Under any circumstances, the referee must have seen Till stop to assist the fallen player, and he should then have stopped the game, for Till's action affected other Town players. It was an unfortunate contre-temps.

Thereafter we had more than enough of the "one-back" game; the crowd were shouting nasty things while the players were all crowded about the middle of the pitch, and for a few moments neither could make headway owing to the frequent whistling up for offside. Luton had several chances at close quarters, but the forwards could not get the necessary direction in shooting, and they were often guilty of dallying. The best effort came from Hoten when, instead of dribbling into the goal-mouth, he let fly a surprise shot, and although Brooks was beaten to the world, the ball struck the bar and dropped into the goal-mouth, while thousands of mouths were wide open with a shout of "Goal!" When DEACON got the second point there could be no doubt about his position. It was a pretty goal, well worked for. Hole was the man to make the opening for his inside men, Smith most unselfishly let the inside right have the ball, and a fast cross shot completed the Town's discomfiture.

The play was never dull, although the pace had diminished somewhat, in the second half. Each goal should have fallen if there had been steadiness on the part of the forwards, but we had almost made up our minds that the Town would go away goalless, when KERR changed our outlook and put new hope into us. After his goals in the practice games, we had looked for something of the sort he achieved on Saturday. He got the ball in midfield, and took the visitors completely by surprise. Instead of attempting to pass, he simply tore through at breakneck speed, eluding three or four players in the process, thereby making for himself the simplest chance to beat Brooks, and he did it as elegantly as could be wished. Thereafter the Town had the better of the game in the matter of attack, and the Swansea goal escaped by sheer good luck, faulty as was the shooting of the forwards. Hoten twice had hard lines, for shots that seemed certain to score cannoned off opponents' heads and went for corners. Bonsall again hit the bar, and two or three times the ball traversed the goal-mouth and only wanted tapping through, but there was none there to oblige, and so the end came with Luton in the minority.

SWANSEA TOWN ... 2 goals

LUTON TOWN 1 goal

LUTON.—Gibbon; Till, Tirrell; Foster, Jennings, Millar; Hoar, Butcher, Kerr, Hoten, Bonsall.

SWANSEA. — Brooks; Morley, Milne; Bellamy, Collins, Booth; Hole, Deacon, Smith, Thompson, Spottiswoode.