

THE FIRST BRACE.

Luton Town Defeat Brentford.

By the defeat of Brentford on Saturday, Luton Town got away one peg from the bottom of the League table. At the same time they brought the first ray of hope to the supporters. After the first four games the Town sunk from a "promotion" side to a "relegation" candidate. After Saturday's game it was not a case of "relegation," but an average "bottom six" side. The results of our games with Portsmouth in the next two weeks will either confirm that or improve on it, and if by any chance the present leaders in the League table suffered defeat on both occasions at the hands of the Town, we should have, of course, a "promotion" team again.

I don't anticipate anything like that unless there is considerable accession of strength and better fortune than has hitherto been experienced. Beyond the gratification afforded by winning at Brentford's expense, much remains to be desired, and we can only hope that the directors' efforts to obtain that strength will be crowned with success. It is possible that in this issue may be news to that effect, for in spite of the many foolish declarations to the contrary, there have been efforts to get really good new men. Some of the big clubs are willing to part with players—at a price. Those prices are excessive, and cannot be met on "gates" of 7,500.

Brentford were rightly the losers of a moderate, but not uninteresting game. The heavy rain that commenced soon after the start and continued for the greater part of the game was

A DECIDED HANDICAP,

and the conditions were more suited to the big Brentford fellows than to Luton's, and that perhaps accounted for the improvement in the visiting side as compared with their game of the week before.

Fortunately, there is plenty of turf on the Town ground, and spills were not so frequent as they might have been, or as were expected. Yet it is to the heavy grounds—that most of the Town players look forward, and during the past three years, at least, they have done well when the going has called for stamina.

Their success at Aberdare had also done the "Bees" a lot of good, and they were more confident than they were when we went to West London. They had a good deal of the play in the first half, and gave our defenders many anxious moments before ANDREW KERR turned to account Sid Hoar's fine sprint and trickery. It was a very nice goal, the sort of thing we may often expect if the two players keep free of accident. It was hard luck for "Pat" Tirrell that he did not increase the lead before the interval, for he beat Young with a mighty free kick, but the ball hit the bar and rebounded.

KERR'S second goal was a gem, and the crowd rose to both the Scot and Hoten. The latter made one of his best dribbles in midfield, and then sent the ball nicely forward for Kerr to take in his stride, forge ahead and beat Young in

MAGNIFICENT FASHION.

We felt then that the game was won, but we were a little too previous. The Town players slackened off considerably, the "Bees" got busy, and the home goal had one or two narrow escapes before and after it fell to HUNTER. The visiting centre-half got possession some thirty yards out, and although he could hardly have hoped for success from that range, he sent in a fine shot. Tirrell had fallen back into the goal-mouth, and was at the end of the goal where the ball travelled. He seemed to have a good chance to head it, but it was a shade too high, and it entered just under the bar. Luton had more chances afterwards, but failed, and then Brentford rallied just before the finish, and with Capper sending the ball well into the goal area, Shepherd ran out to punch away, but missed. Almost at the feet of Williams and Johnstone the ball fell, but they hesitated just long enough for Jennings to get there as well, and he hit the ball away. It was a very narrow squeak, but the last chance the "Bees" got, and the game ended with the Town happy in their first win.

Shepherd can do better than he did on Saturday, I am sure. He shaped well generally, but he seemed to be lacking in confidence. Till played grandly at back, his tackling being fine, and he had a nice understanding with Anderson. On the other flank, Tirrell had not the same advantage, for Walker played on the inside man a good deal, and the speedy Capper was too fast for the Town captain when there was room to manoeuvre. Nevertheless, Tirrell kicked with something like

HIS OLD PRECISION.

Jennings maintained his pre-eminence at half, and he had some rare duels with

Johnstone, a pugnacious little forward. Anderson quite justified his inclusion, his display being a revelation to most of us. Good as he is at back, I should imagine that he has found a more congenial place at half. Walker did well generally, apart from his neglect of Capper. Walker, however, has been criticised under circumstances that are not quite just to him. I have been told, very emphatically, that he played to instructions, and if that information is correct, then Walker did his work well, for Clayson did not shine at all. This playing to instruction is all very well, but if it crabs a player's natural game, he suffers. He should be allowed to use his own judgment, and Walker is experienced enough now to be trusted. The forwards did not often show much idea of combination. One or two nice movements evoked applause and brought peril to Young's charge, but in the main the work was too individual in character. Hoar did not have as much opportunity as usual, and he made the most of what he had, and there should have been more goals from his work. He is sprinting faster than ever, and his centres do not now travel to the other corner flag, but invariably drop into the goal-mouth. Reid was not as clever at inside right as he was at centre the previous week, but he was a worker all the time. Kerr is not a leader in the sense that Simma was, but his methods are calculated to get goals anywhere, and nothing better could be desired than his second. Hoten also showed improvement, his control being better, and if he will continue to make opportunities for Kerr there will be

BONUS FOR ALL.

Bensall again found the Brentford Kerr a tousy sort of half, hard to beat, and he will require more experience before he can hope to retain a regular place in the first eleven. When he took his courage in both hands he did well.

For the "Bees," Young was a good goal-keeper; Alton played well at back, being more consistent than Pearson; and Kerr was their best middle man by a long way. He is a very fine player, although not over scrupulous. All the forwards required firm dealing to hold them. The right wing was the better, but Hughes played well in the second half, and once hit the post when he seemed certain of a goal.

LUTON TOWN	2 goals
BRENTFORD	1 goal

LUTON TOWN. — Shepherd; Till, Tirrell; Anderson, Jennings, Walker; Hoar, Reid, Kerr, Hoten, Bensall.

BRENTFORD. — Young; Pearson, Alton; Kerr, Hunter, James; Capper, Clayson, Johnstone, Williams, Hughes.

Referee: Mr. T. J. Duke, Harlesden.