

PORTSMOUTH SWAMPED.

KERR'S HAT-TRICK.

(By "CRUSADER.")

LUTON TOWN 4
PORTSMOUTH 1
LUTON. — Gibbon; Anderson, Till; Walker, Jennings, Millar; Hoar, Butcher, Kerr, Hoten, Danskin.
PORTSMOUTH. — Kane; Probert, Davison; Davies, Parker, Martin; Meikle, Mackie, Haines, Watson, Beedie.
Referee. — Mr. F. Todman, Croydun.

It was bound to come sooner or later, and as it came sooner than we expected, we were the happier for it. I do not know if that little article on forward play, written by Steve Bloomer, and printed in the "Saturday Telegraph," had been absorbed by the Town's van-guard, but it certainly appeared to me that the open character of the forward play was more in keeping with the principles laid down by the great Inter-nationals. I am quite sure, however, that the combination on Saturday was better, immeasurably better, than we have seen it for the last two seasons. Still open to improvement, no doubt, but if the spirit of this game is maintained that improvement will come. Compared with Pompey's short passing game, a play was clever and attractive up to a point, it was more effective, and was certain to bring goals. Then there was a decided

Davison, and, in less degree, Martin were also at fault, and that was detrimental to the side, and play in the second half was not nearly so interesting as in the first.

The game was won in the first half by the superior pace and finish of the Town's forward play, backed by the sound defensive work. While Pompey supplied much attractive design, they failed to finish off their work. The Town, on the other hand, wasted no time in embroidery, but swung the ball about and took the short, straight cut for success. There were some qualms for Luton as soon as the game was started, for Pompey's right wing showed pace and danger, but this was eventually beaten back, and the Town made progress. There was a dismal and long-drawn "Oh!" when Jennings took a free-kick and banged the ball towards the corner flag, but Danskin got the opportunity of centre-tricking, and as the ball dropped in the goal-mouth KERR'S head got to it before Kane's fist, and it was turned into goal, Davison kicking out from almost the back of the net, but the referee had seen it well into goal. This goal was a spur to both teams, and there were

THRILLS AT EACH END,

the Luton backs winning much applause, although the Pompey goal was more often in danger. The game had been in progress 25 minutes when Hoar dribbled and shot hard. Luckily for Kane the ball struck Martin's outstretched leg and went for a corner. Davison conceded a second flag-kick to stop the first, and Hoar put the ball to the other end of goal. HOTEN this time got his head in the right place and turned the ball past Kane, and so had the joy of scoring his first goal of the season against his old club. While Pompey were in a "can't-be true" trance, the Town left wing put KERR through again. He had Kane well beaten with a fast shot that struck the foot of the upright and rebounded. He had to run some distance to recover, and, tricking Parker, he fired in an unstoppable shot that put the Town three up and sent Pompey's spirits down to zero.

Chiefly through Parker's agency they got a move on, but the Town defenders were playing with the confidence that a big lead inspires, and another goal might easily have come following grand work by Hoar and Butcher, but the former went almost under the bar before trying to shoot, and his shot was blocked and the ball got away. We were a winning side at the interval.

Play on the resumption was not so keen, and the Town, after one hot assault had been beaten off, seemed content to take things quietly. They quickly had cause to regret, for after some "messing about" on the Pompey left, the ball came to MACKIE. His shot was on the mark, but it was a tame one, all along the goal, with little pace, and Gibbon seemed to have it well covered, but he completely missed the ball and it went into the net. Pompey woke up now, and it

REQUIRED AN ALERT DEFENCE

to thwart their efforts, but the Town forwards began to take a hand in the game again, and after Kane had once punched out from Hoar, the ball came to KERR, who spied and correctly found an opening, and Kane was beaten easily. An appeal, apparently for "hands," was heard by the referee, but after his consultation with the linesman the goal was counted.

Pompey were allowed a good deal of licence by the Town halves after this, and they were once almost on the goal-line, but Gibbon brought off a fine save (The Town had the better of the exchanges again in the closing stages, but the end came with the score as above.

Unless the ball swerved from him when almost in his possession, I cannot conceive how Gibbon failed to stop the shot that scored for Portsmouth. His after-noon's work was not arduous, and apart from that fatal instance he did well. Anderson played grandly at back, and his confidence is remarkable. I confess that I did not like the idea of moving him from half, but he seems equally at home in either position, and his clean kicking, tenacious tackling, and fearless challenging are remarkable for one so young in League football. Till was magnificent. The fault of holding the ball was not once in evidence, and no better position than he gave could be desired. There is an old saying that is odds on the man in possession, but Till's work brought the odds into his favour. He was a hopeless proposition for a man to pass single-handed, and his sure kicking, of beautiful length and accuracy, his consistency in extricating the defence from a tight corner, his sangriod and judgment of position and pace, stamped him as first-class.

In the middle line Jennings won the praise even of those who have never seen

able to see one good feature in his play. He was

A TOWER OF STRENGTH

in midfield and in defence, and the only thing left to be desired was a neater feeding of the forwards, although he initiated many attacks. Walker's display was his best as a flank half, and gave one hope that he is going to settle down there. He stuck well to Beedie, and he exhibited a better understanding with Hoar and Butcher than he has ever done. He is a certainty on Saturday's form. Millar was disappointing at the outset. He seemed over-eager, and it was a considerable time before he could settle down, but he improved very much and finished very well.

Butcher was the brains of the forward line. His control was superb, and his passing a feature of the game. No player opened up the game with like facility, because there was none could think quicker and control so cleverly. On form like this he should always be the first and unquestioned choice for the line. He got heaps of work out of the line who played up to it as usual, but not one went better than at Portsmouth.

They were the best wing on view. On the other flank, Hoten made further improvement, but in his zeal to beat his old side he often forgot Danskin, who had not enough work to do. The winger was non-too smart in midfield, but he centred well. Like Hoten, Kerr got the wars, and this affected his play considerably in the second half, but his value lay in his work in front of goal. The hat-trick is no easy accomplishment, but Kerr will do it again if he is nursed, and with a little better fortune he would have improved on it.

Pompey could not blame Kane. He did well all that could be expected. Probert was the better back, although he had not the awkward job his colleague had. In the middle line Parker did well for half-an-hour, but not as a game as a whole. Haines was the best. Haines, "the farmer's boy" centre-forward, as they call him Portsmouth way, might as well have been going "across a dreary moor." He was never conspicuous except for his helplessness against Jennings and the backs, but his inside colleagues could not do a lot for him. The best forwards were Meikle and Beedie, who were always fast and dangerous, and the latter's centres were dandies.

LUTON AMATEURS "A"

v.

FENNY STARS

(By "LOOKER-ON.")

The gentleman who supplied me with the names of the visiting team at the Dell on Saturday unfortunately put them into wrong positions, so that there were a few mistakes in the account which I sent in to the "Saturday Telegraph." However, there is no harm done, and the names below are correct.

LUTON AMATEURS. — W. Butt; S. Girling, A. Hickson; J. Williams, F. Smith, H. Chalkley; A. Inwoods, C. Lane, T. Streator, R. Holdstock, S. Day.

FENNY STARS. — A. Cox; F. Smith, G. Bradbury, R. Bradbury, E. Watson, E. Swannell; E. Martin, J. Manyweathers, H. Tattams, S. White, W. White.

Referee. — Mr. W. Conquest (Luton).

Soon after the game started it was evident that the teams played in different styles. The locals had a much better idea of the passing game, and some of the work between halves and forwards was very neat. The visitors depended on "kick and rush" progression, but their efforts usually came to a full stop when their forwards reached the home backs, and Butt was seldom troubled. Cox, of the stars, worked overtime in the visitors' goal and saved shots of all kinds. He used his feet far more than the ordinary goalkeeper, and with perfect accuracy. His backs worked hard; but Watson was the best man among the defenders, and managed to get the ball away many times. The pressure exerted by the Amateurs brought its reward after about 25 minutes' play, and the interval LAKE, STEPHENSON and SMITH had a Cox Half-time:—

Luton Amateurs 3, Fenny Stars 0.

The second half began quietly, but the local side were to blame in keeping the ball too close; while individual attempts were made to dribble round half-a-dozen defenders, and some of the players wandered far out of position. After a time matters improved, and then the irrepressible Cox had a lively time. He counted some fifteen good saves made by him in this half, and he could not be blamed for the two goals scored by HOLDSTOCK. Some of his saves bordered on the marvellous, and if there were an element of luck in them, he deserved it for the general excellence of his display. The home halves backed their forwards well, and the ball hovered round the Stars' goal most of the half. What they did not do was to let Hickson and Girling would risk in at the right moment, although the former in passing back to Butt, made a slip which might have led to a goal. It was a victory for the side with knowledge of the finer points of football and an appreciation of the value of combination. Final score:

LUTON AMATEURS 3
FENNY STARS 0



G. Butcher.

NOT A PROMOTION SIDE

yet, but if Portsmouth may be accounted boobies, it is by no means too late for Luton to have similar ideas. The Town's game on Saturday was the sort of game that wins promotion, and if the one or two weak spots are strengthened, and the team then kept together, we shall be in the run for supremacy. We have much leeway to make up, for every point has to be fought for, but on points we are only three down on the games with the same opponents last season, although the goal average is worse, there being 9 against 15 as compared with 14 against 11 last season. Yes, we have time to recover, but there will have to be no falling away from the standard set up to the discomfiture of Portsmouth. That is the right word, is it not? If ever a team suffered disillusionment Portsmouth did.

Two or three times during last week my reports of the game at Portsmouth were compared with those of the daily papers. I said little, but preferred to await the return game, and while I never anticipated that Pompey's defence would crumble up to such an extent, I can quite truthfully say that the Town right wing had just as much of the play at Portsmouth as they had on Saturday—the only difference being that the results were not so happy. The Town got no sort of justice from the Press last week. They have it this week.

The opening stages in this were typical of the quality of the game the Saturday before, and so the game might have been pleasantly contested to the end if the Pompey players had kept their heads, but the first goal seemed to undo their confidence, the second got on their nerves, and the third ruptured one or two tempers. Not all the blame was on one side, nor did all the Pompey men get rattled, but there were one or two

VERY MUCH UPSET.

Tom Parker had a great welcome when he stepped on to the field, and I was sorry that he got into bad odour with the crowd before the end. He had a duel with Hoten in the first half, and there was some feeling over it, and in the second half Tommy laid out the Town forward so heavily that it was some minutes before Hoten recovered. That was when the crowd began to call him names, and the Pompey captain did not improve matters by his frequent chalking of the referee. Mr. Todman is not an ideal official, but when he sought the opinion of the linesman there was no satisfaction for Parker. It was a pity, for until the Town's third goal no player had been more admired, and none better deserved it, but his game suffered when he could not