

A GREAT WIN.

LUTON TOWN SMASH LEAGUE LEADERS.

(By "CRUSADER.")

There could be no question whatever about the merit of the Town's win over Portsmouth. It was not a "just deserved to win"; not a lucky win; not a "just scrambled home" affair, but a real top-hole victory that went to a side that was fore and aft the better. Portsmouth are not a poor side. We saw enough football from them to recognise that, but the Town team, new primed and ready for the toughest struggle, led off in a style that augured well, and before a third of the ninety minutes had passed they were completely the masters of the situation. There were points of similarity in the first two goals and also in the third. Five minutes had elapsed when Danekin centred from the corner flag and KERRE headed through. Luton had the better of the next twenty minutes, and HOTEN headed the next goal from Hoar's flag kick, while two minutes later KERRE put in a great effort that was crowned with success. This was a delightful goal, for the Town centre-forward had to collect the ball again after his first shot had rebounded from the post. The game was then only twenty-seven minutes old, and for the remainder of the first half interest was rather spasmodic. Early in the second half MACKIE reduced the arrears with a shot that Gibbon should have stopped, but a little later KERRE notched another fine goal, and that dispelled any lingering hope that Pompey may have had.

The football in the first half-hour was good to watch, both teams being all out, but it deteriorated very much afterwards, and there were a few unpleasant incidents. It was unfortunate that Tom Parker, who had a splendid welcome when he turned out, got

THE WORST RAGGING

from the crowd. He had brought Hoten down very badly, but there had been a bout between the pair in the first half, and one or two scenes between other players, and Parker's game suffered proportionately. In the second half there were long periods of scrambling play, both teams falling off a great deal.

The changes in the Town defensive lines were regarded with dubiety by many supporters, but they turned out trumps, with the exception of goal. That was Gibbon's only mistake, however, and he, along with the other players, should regain confidence as a result of Saturday's game. He made one very good save in the second half. Anderson and Till did great service at back. In the former the Town have a young player who is bound to make his mark. He was comfortable from the start, and played with the assurance of a seasoned player rather than in the manner of a youngster playing his first game at full-back in League football. Anderson was signed as a young hopeful, and he was the stand-by in the first of the reserve games, but now he is beyond question a first team man, for he did well enough at half-back to warrant his inclusion, and his display at back leaves one in doubt whether he is not better at full-back. As for Joseph Till, well, he is one of the mysteries of football transfers. He comes to Luton to take the place of Lennon, for whom Stoke paid a substantial fee. He gets the place all right, then crosses over to his rightful position at left-back, and proves even better there. Yet Stoke is his native place, and Lennon cannot get his place in the Stoke team. Till won golden opinions on Saturday against a remarkably clever vanguard, and both he and Anderson played grandly in all phases of defensive art. They kicked well with either foot, but it was in

THE SUCCESSFUL AUDACITY

of their tackling that they won highest praise.

Jennings captained the side to good purpose. He was an inspiration to them, and there was nothing wanting in the matter of leadership. He "bottled" up the crack marksman, Haines, and gave the other two inside forwards very little scope to exercise their shooting powers. Walker did wonderfully, too, much better than when on the left flank, and his work held out promise that he had found his place. Millar leaves a good deal to be desired in some respects, but when he had got over the importance of the occasion he gave a brilliant wing very little scope.

The forwards have not played better for a long time. Kerr is not an ideal leader in the sense that Simma was, but he is a great opportunist, and his powers as a marksman are such that the crowd watch breathlessly his every move near goal. He is a forward after their own heart, and he is also showing no small improvement in distribution. His forcefulness was impaired by injury, but he had done the damage before Pompey realised the danger. Hoten, too, showed fine control, and although he twice got in the wars, he did much effective work, and will do even more when he opens out the game.

Butcher had no equal for ball control and intelligent disposal. He dribbled brilliantly, and his passing kept Pompey's defenders always on the run. Hoar shone in consequence, and Pompey's left flank defenders had a knockabout afternoon. Danskin was not so prominent, but he did not get the ball so often as Hoar, and, of course, he has hardly had time to settle down after his injury.

Portsmouth have a very fine goalkeeper in Kane, although he seems to have a kink for entertaining the crowd. He got cross with Hoten in the first half, but soon recovered his good temper. He twice

DECEIVED THE REFEREE

in a peculiar way. When there was a goal kick he went and picked the ball up, and while the referee was walking down the field, his back to the goal, Kane did not kick off in orthodox fashion, but simply took a drop kick from his hands. On the third occasion he was caught by the linesman, who signalled the referee, and so Mr. Todman had a word with the keeper, and made him take the goal kick properly. Probert was the safer back. He had not such troublesome stuff to contend with as Davison, perhaps, but he kicked well and his judgment was better. Davison was not lacking in zeal, but he could not hold Butcher or Hoar. The middle men were disappointing. Tom Parker was cheered more than once for his skilful work in the first half, and he nursed his forwards cleverly, as well as breaking up many attacks, but after the defence had fallen he did not maintain his form. Martin played as hard as ever, and put in a strenuous afternoon's work, but Davies found Hoten a hot proposition. The inside forwards played very pretty football in midfield, their short passing being accurate and sometimes bewildering to the Town halves, but it was overdone, and often they found Jennings, after having beaten him once, recover to spoil the chance they had worked so cleverly to create. Meikle and Beedie shared the honours forward, and both had to be diligently watched to be safely held. They put across many centres, but the inside men were seldom given time to convert.

This was far in front of any other display the Town have given this season, and they fully deserved the win.

There were 3,500 spectators immensely pleased, and about a dozen from Portsmouth who were much surprised.

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, Croydon.