

WITH LUTON TOWN.

A POINT FROM GILLINGHAM

(By "CRUSADER.")

Whatever fault might have been found with the Town half-backs in the Cup-tie at Highbury, there could be no complaint about their display at Gillingham. As I have so often said, it is a good side that can bring a point away from any ground in the League, and the Town deserved all they got at Gillingham by reason of the splendid display of the middle men and the backs. The forwards were not nearly so good as at Highbury, but that was to be expected, for, good as Sid Reid played at Southend, he was not nearly the terror to the opposition at Gillingham, and he could not be expected to fill the place of Sid Hoar with equal merit, or the wing problem of Luton would have been solved long ago. I should be loth to say that the withdrawal of George Butcher affected the forward work to the like extent, for Hoten was

A STRONG FACTOR

in the trouble around the Gillingham goal, but the fact remains, the Gillingham ground would have suited Butcher better than did Highbury, and I believe he would have done well there. It was a game in which the defenders generally were much better than the attackers, and Gillingham's game is essentially one in which vigour and dash play a big part.

A hefty side, they bored through on many occasions by sheer force, and it was only the valiant resistance of the Town backs that kept them from scoring early on. When after a few minutes' play the Town halves got a grip of the home team's style, the play became more in favour of the visitors, and had they been as facile in finishing as they were

ENGINEERING ATTACKS,

they would have won. A draw, however, was a fair result, and I think the main body of spectators felt that way. Anyway, the Gillingham players were satisfied that the Town were a good team, and as far as possible under such conditions they all enjoyed the contest. Play was very keen throughout, but the strong wind caused many blunders, and now and then a player thought to remedy the same by infringement of the rules, but there was nothing serious beyond an occasional excess of vigour.

The first quarter of an hour, one or two periods in the late part of the first half, and in the early part of the second half, and during the last ten minutes Gillingham were the more dangerous side, but on the whole the Town had the better of the game, and in midfield they showed more skill and intelligence than the home-sters.

THE NEAREST EFFORTS

to goals were about equal in number, and on the home side came from good efforts by Needham, Smith and Hall, and on the Luton side from Hoten, who hit the post once with a glorious drive, and on another occasion had a terrific shot saved in wonderful fashion by Fox. Green and Kerr twice nearly scored, and once Reid got in a shot that was saved on the line when a goal seemed certain.

For long stretches, however, the ball was kept between the two penalty areas, and it was through keeping it on the ground better that Luton were able to enjoy more possession than Gillingham. Many promising movements by the Town were nullified by the inability of Reid and Bonsall to return the ball into the middle, and for the most part Kerr could not get much sight of it.

Gillingham have a good defence, rather too boisterous at times, perhaps, and with no hesitation in using their

NATURAL ADVANTAGES

in physique, while their forwards are better than any combination they have

had since the war. Robertson and Fox of the rearguard, Henderson in the middle line, and Smith and Hall in the attack, were the best men.

Orr kept goal finely for the Town, for, while his work was not considerable, it was difficult when it came, and he made three saves that evoked great cheering. Anderson and Till were a level and alert pair, and did all their work intelligently, the kicking and tackling being clean and sure. All the middle men played well, and Jennings revelled in the hectic exchanges that arose now and then. Walker fed cleverly, and Millar almost shut Battiste out of the game.

In the forward line the liveliest factors were Green and Hoten, and they got through

A HUGE AMOUNT OF WORK.

Both played well on the opposition, and with a bit of luck Hoten would have scored at least twice, and Green once. Bonsall did well enough to justify another turn, and Reid, although he was off colour, should have another chance to show something of the form he displayed at Southend, provided Hoar is not fit to turn out. There is need, however, of more through passes for the benefit of Kerr, who seldom had an opportunity to cut through in the way that means victory.

The referee was not at his best, for he missed several breaches of the laws, but the weather conditions were curious, and the ball took a lot of watching.

There were only 4,000 spectators.