

LUTON GET A POINT.

STRONG DEFENCE PREVAILS AT MERTHYR.

DANSKIN AGAIN INJURED.

(BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

MERTHYR TOWN 0
LUTON TOWN 0

MERTHYR.—Lindon; Partridge, Ferner; Thomas, Woodward, Nash; Fisher, Turner (H.), Turner (E.), Arblaster, Morgan.

LUTON.—Gibbon; Graham, Till; Jennings, Walker, Roe; Hoar, Anderson, Hoten, Butcher, Danskin.

Referee.—Mr. D. H. Asson, West Bromwich.

Luton's final trip to the "Welsh Wilds" bore a strong resemblance to those fortnightly journeys in the old Southern League Second Division days, particularly as it included a visit to the Rhondda Valley yesterday. The only remaining members of the team of those days, however, are Hoar and Roe, but as Jennings, Gibbon, Danskin, and Westgarth have each spent a considerable period of their football careers in and about the Welsh hills and valleys, the whole outing had something of a re-union spirit about it, for it was almost a series of hand-shaking from arrival at Merthyr to leaving Pontypridd on Tuesday morning. Bob Thompson, who is now at Pontypridd, was naturally pleased to meet so many of his old mates, for he does not appear to have developed into a lover of Welsh League football, and at the moment is not playing in the team.

It was the first time the Merthyr journey had been made on the Saturday morning, but the opening of a new service via Newport enabled this to be done very comfortably, and the party reached Merthyr an hour before the kick-off.

To Lutonians a 4.45 start on a Saturday seems curious, but at 4.30 the ground was almost empty, while at the commencement of the game there were about 6,000 present, which was the best gate at Merthyr since the early days of the season. Indeed, on one Saturday it was reported there were not more than 1,000 present, and the club are having quite a struggle to keep going. The players are kept busy, and since playing at Luton they had taken part in two mid-week Cup-ties, both of which were drawn, with the result they have two re-plays this week. As a consequence it was given out one or two players were out of the side through injuries, and the team was remodelled to a larger extent than usual after only a week's interval. The new players coming into the side compared with the team which drew at Luton were Partridge, Woodward, Nash, and Fisher, while Thomas changed over from left to right half-back.

THE DRASTIC CHANGES

in the Luton side added to the novelty, only six players on each side occupying the same positions as the previous Saturday.

Another unexpected change was caused through the indisposition of Mr. J. E. Head, the referee, but, fortunately, a capable official from the same neighbourhood was available in the person of Mr. D. H. Asson, who will be remembered as the referee of the memorable Final at Wembley last season. Let it at once be said he conducted the game splendidly, and the players were never allowed to get out of hand. This also applied to the crowd, for early in the second half Mr. Asson stopped the game and had a spectator in the enclosure removed from the field by the police.

Sid Hoar for once won the toss, but there was nothing in it, for there was scarcely a breath of wind about. The first item of interest was a burst through on the part of Arblaster, but he was pulled up for offside, and a similar opening at the opposite end had the same result, for Danskin was adjudged offside when taking a neat pass from Butcher, although it was a very near thing indeed. Jennings soon got on the nerves of the crowd by a vigorous tackle on Morgan, but the final result of this attack was a weak shot which Gibbon saved comfortably. E. Turner got the worst of a tackle with Graham, and retired for a few minutes, but was soon back again. It was rather comical to see Butcher trying to bowl over the burly Lindon in the goal-mouth, but weight once more told, and danger was averted. E. Turner was proving

A DANGEROUS MAN

in the centre, and sent in a fine attempt when Graham let Morgan through, and the winger sent across a well-directed centre to the middle of the field. Later there was a demonstration from the spectators when Jennings fouled Arblaster, but on the whole the game was contested in a better spirit than at Luton. Mr. Asson was not inclined to pull the play up for an honest charge, and knew when to put his whistle into operation much better than does the average official. A fine shot from quite 30 yards' range by H. Turner must have scored if the direction had been a trifle more accurate, for it flew by the upright. The one chance of winning the match for Luton came when Lindon left his charge and was actually grassed while well out. The ball came out to Roe, who promptly sent it back, but in trying to miss the heads of his opponents he got the ball a yard too high, and it sailed safely over the bar with the goal absolutely undefended. At the opposite goal, just before the interval, Luton were just as fortunate, for Gibbon ran almost to the corner flag in his attempt to get the ball clear, without actually placing it in touch, and Fisher securing returned it to midfield for E. Turner to send well over the bar, Gibbon

being almost on the edge of the penalty area at the moment.

The second half, so far as pressure was concerned, was more in the Luton quarter, for, unfortunately, Danskin, in reaching out for the ball, developed his old injury, and was useless for the remainder of the game, although he kept on the field after a little attention from the trainer. Reduced to practically three regular forwards, the Luton attack could not force the game, and were obliged to adapt themselves to

DEFENSIVE TACTICS

for considerable periods. During one strong attack Graham got in the way, but Gibbon just managed to save a dangerous situation. Graham meanwhile had to be assisted from the field, but, fortunately, was eventually got round and resumed play. Hoar got in a long drive, but the elevation was once more too high, and Lindon was not troubled. Luton were now obviously playing for a draw, and it would have been rough luck indeed if one of the few mistakes of the officials had resulted in Gibbon being beaten. Even in this instance the linesman on the stand side was more to blame than the referee, for he was within a few yards of Fisher when he was allowed to get away while standing yards offside previous to receiving the ball. However, the Merthyr winger could not be blamed, for he planted the ball nicely in front of goal, and Gibbon brought off a remarkable save when it looked odds on Turner scoring. Indeed both spectators and players clamoured for a goal, claiming that the ball was actually over the line, but Gibbon always had the ball in front of his body while dodging his opponents, as he ran from one post to the other in clearing.

This was the final excitement of a fairly interesting game, and Luton were

ENTITLED TO THE CREDIT

of earning another away point under our hardship of a re-constructed forward line, with a cripple included for half the game.

The main interest, of course, attached itself to the experiment of Anderson as a forward, but the accident to Danskin scarcely gave the combination a fair chance, as, naturally, it took Anderson a little time to settle down to his new position, and by the time he did so little help could be given by the left wing which made the visiting attack lop-sided. Hoten, without being classed as a ready-made tip-top centre, did not altogether fail, and forced the pace at times, but as a forward line it was scarcely the success anticipated in many quarters when the team was announced.

The half-back line once more was the most successful part of the team, and it would appear that this division can be changed without danger in any match, for the resources of the club are well above the average. Naturally, Jennings was anxious to do well on his old pitch, and he put full vigour into his work, with the result that he came in for some abusive remarks from the spectators, but it could not be claimed he was unfair in his tackles, and he has not previously done better work on the wing for Luton. Walker and Roe played their usual clever game, and held the home attack finely, especially in the second half, when the crowd were expecting to see the local team get ahead. Both backs did well, with Till the more showy of the two, with

SEVERAL DARING TACKLES

which, if they had not been successful, might have proved disastrous. Gibbon had not a deal to do, but made at least two sensational saves and thus earned his share of the bonus.

As a forward line Merthyr were seen to more advantage than Luton, with E. Turner as the pick. He was a source of danger all the game, and with a shade more luck might have won the game for Merthyr. Partridge was making his acquaintance with Third Division football, and kicked well, but when Danskin was fit, he found the Luton left wing a trifle too much to hold, and probably if the ex-Aberdare winger had not broken down an even better result might have come about for Luton. Lindon could not be beaten at close quarters, but he made one or two slips which might have entailed the downfall of his side if the Luton attack had been in its best form.

For once Cardiff has been given a miss as Luton's headquarters in Wales, and Pontypridd was chosen as the centre. Unfortunately, Sunday developed into a soaking wet day, and it meant rather a slow time indoors for most of the day, although a trip between the showers was made to Pontypridd's ground, which is locally claimed as the best pitch in South Wales, and the new stand erected this season is something of an eye-opener. A determined effort is to be made to enter the charmed circle of the Third Division for next season.

EJECTION ORDER.

James Rayson Parsons, 35, Park-road West, applied at the Luton Borough Court on Saturday for an ejection order against his tenant, Lillian Boxford. The latter, who had three children, said she had tried for other accommodation.

Complainant said there were seven in his family to live in three rooms. A girl of 16 and a boy of 17 had to sleep in one room. One son was going into consumption, and it was necessary to have a room to save his life.

The Bench granted a 21 days' order.