

LUTON'S LUCK—GOOD AND BAD.

THE FIRST WIN.

(By "CRUSADER.")

At Luton on Saturday.

LUTON TOWN	3
BRIGHTON	1

LUTON. — Brookes; Johnson, Till; Walker, Jennings, Mills; Hoar, Cockle, Kerr, Shankly, Dennis.

BRIGHTON.—Cook; Downs, Jenkins; McAllister, Coomber, Little; Nightingale, Dennison, Smith, Hopkins, Wilson.

Referee.—Mr. H. E. Gray, Forest Gate.

At Northampton on Monday.

NORTHAMPTON	1
LUTON TOWN	0

NORTHAMPTON. — Smith; Watson, Jeffs; Needham, Wood, Williams; Pease, Cook, Lockett, Myers, Page.

LUTON.—Brookes; Johnson, Graham; Walker, Jennings, Mills; Hoar, Cockle, Kerr, Shankly, Dennis.

Referee.—Mr. N. Shuker, Whitwell.

Satisfactory from the fact that the Town opened their winning account on Saturday, it cannot be claimed that the play deserved that adjective, and nobody was surprised to know that they had lost at Northampton on Monday night.

At the moment the club is under a cloud, for there have been many injuries, and the club has not yet been able to field the same team in two games.

The casualties to date include Anderson, Till, Millar, Roe and Hoar, all of whom have been compelled to stand down through injury, while several other players have suffered injuries that would have involved rest had there been players available for their places.

THE FIRST WIN.

Brighton were defeated by industry more than by skill. From the point of view of combination and scientific football the Albion were the better, but the Town resisted desperately and attacked fiercely, and, on the whole, they deserved their success. It was a very good game in the first half, as football goes in these days, the players showing speed and keenness, but in the second half the speed was reduced and the keenness degenerated in some instances into spite. Jenkins was the first to spoil it very badly, and, as last year, he fouled Hoar quite deliberately. The Town right-winger retaliated, and the result was that the referee spoke to both players.

KERR signalled his return to the Town team by notching two very fine goals, the first after thirty-one minutes, when Cockle gave him a chance following good play by Mills. Brighton equalised just before the interval as the result of a nice run by NIGHTINGALE. KERR'S second goal came when the second half had been in progress twenty-one minutes, Cockle again pushing the ball through for the centre-forward to take in his stride and shoot a glorious goal from nearly twenty yards' range. The third came from MILLS eleven minutes later, a high kick that was meant for a lob into the goalmouth dropping between the goalkeeper's hands and the bar, hitting the ground behind him and coming into play. The referee promptly gave a goal.

Apart from the scoring of goals Brighton were the more workmanlike side, and their halves and forwards played smart football. They positioned better than the Town, and were more accurate in their passing, because they had better understanding of each other's play. They often had the Town defence in difficulties, and had Hopkins shot as good as he is reputed to do, the Albion would probably have won. Nevertheless, neither goalkeeper was tested as often or as severely as he should have been, especially as both pairs of backs were inclined to wobble.

The main strength of each side was in the middle line, and all six of these players were kept hard at it from start to finish.

Brookes did his little well, and while kicking and tackling fairly well, both the Town backs lacked a concerted plan of action. Of the middle men the most satisfactory feature was the improvement shown by Walker, who did some magnificent work, especially in defence. It was his best game so far. Jennings maintained his form, and Mills grows in favour every game. Dennis was the best of the forwards again, his control being excellent, and his centring almost perfect. Shankly was a worker, clever in passing, but needs to get off the mark quicker. Hoar found Little as attentive as ever, and could shake him off only by great efforts. Cockle did not touch his best, but if he can pave the way for Andy Kerr he will have solved a big problem. Kerr's goals were sufficient to justify his return, and we hope he is going to do that in every match.

For Brighton, Cook appeared none too certain in goal. Downs, though slow, was the better back. All the halves did well, with McAllister very clever, and the other two industrious, and the forwards were smart in midfield, but poor in front of goal.

There were 8,000 spectators.

THE SECOND DEFEAT.

It was generally agreed on Monday night that the Town were unfortunate to lose. At least, they deserved a point, agreed the home crowd and officials, and not a few were convinced that Cook and Pease were offside in the initiation of the only goal of the match. This came four minutes before the interval after the Town had been having a good share of the game, and playing against the strong breeze. Cook received the ball when in an offside position, the referee being well down the field, and he passed to Pease, but the appeal of the Town against both players was ignored by the referee, although one of the linesmen was flagging. Graham had too far to run to tackle Pease successfully, but managed to bother him, and Mills actually recovered the ball, but then fell, and PEASE again got possession and scored. On two other

occasions Northampton hit the bar, while Brookes had to fist away several shots, but he had not so much to do as Smith, who kept goal well. Nevertheless, there was not enough force about the finishing of the Town's forwards. Often they got through the Northampton defence, but failed to utilise their chances, and Smith saved easily, his hardest task being to get to a fine shot from Mills following a corner. Shankly shot well on two or three occasions, too, and there were many corner kicks, but none turned to account.

A draw would have been a fairer reflex of the merits of the two sides. The football was bustling and hustling rather than scientific, and there was a lack of team play generally. Johnson and Graham played grandly at back, and the Northampton people were saying that Luton's middle line was ever so much better than theirs. The forwards played pluckily, often against unfair tactics, and with better shooting they would have won the match. Dennis again did well, and Hoar much better than in any previous game, but he was crippled in the second half. Cockle was clever, but did not feed well, and much the same may be said of Shankly, while Kerr had little luck after several fine bursts.

For the "Cobblers," Pease and Page were two grand wingers, and probably the best in the League, and Cook was a very clever partner for Pease, but Lockett was well watched, and Myers could not get going. All the halves were solid, with Wood very good; Jeffs was the better back, and Smith was safe in goal.