

DRUBBING AT PLYMOUTH

LUTON TOWN LOSE BY FOUR GOALS.

HAT TRICK BY BATTEN.

(By "CRUSADER.")

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 4
LUTON TOWN 0

PLYMOUTH. — Craig; Cosgrove, Miller; Logan, Preston, Rowe; Corcoran, Sloan, Batten, Leslie, Black.

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

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

Whatever the opinion of the merits of the Town team to-day in comparison with that of previous seasons, there was never much optimism about the visit to Plymouth, and when it became known that the journey of over 250 miles was to be made on Saturday morning, opinion became settled conviction that a drubbing was in store. So it proved, for the Argyle made the best of the early stages, and won the game in the first twenty minutes, before the Luton players had got into their stride.

By motor-bus the journey from Luton to Paddington began at 8 am., and the London station was reached in an hour and a half. Shortly after 10 o'clock the party entrained, and alighted at Plymouth after four hours' journey, arrived at Home Park just before 3 o'clock, and at 3.15 lined up to start. Under such conditions it was too much to expect success against such a side as the Argyle. Added to that were the uncomfortable conditions, for with the exception of about 10 minutes, when the sun shone brilliantly, rain fell more or less heavily, and in the second half came down in torrents; the ground was spongy on top of a clinkered bed.

Frankly, I do not feel disposed to criticise the play of any individual. All

PLAYED PLUCKILY,

but man for man the Argyle appeared to be a yard in three faster than the Town in the opening stages, and with their forwards snapping chances promptly, they soon had command of the result.

Jennings won the toss, and it appeared as though he chose to face the elements, but the wind was capricious, and one moment it appeared to be behind the Luton players, then to sweep directly across the ground, carrying the rain into the faces of the people far back in the stand, and then to be behind the Argyle. Certainly in the second half the Argyle found progress more difficult, which would lend colour to the idea that they had the advantage in the first half, but there was also the fact that the Town were more into their stride.

Argyle deserved to win. They were the better combination, as well as being better in front of goal. Brookes had little chance with the goals registered against him, but BATTEN was a very lucky young man to perform the hat-trick. He is by no means a brilliant footballer, but is as thrushful as fierce-looking, and, by the way, he was fortunate to escape "marching orders" late in the second half, when he became peeved because he could not add to his score. His first goal, less than two minutes from the start, was the result of good work by Paddy Corcoran, who upset Bob Graham with a hefty charge, and got the ball in the middle for Batten to hit it first time. The ball struck the underside of the bar above Brookes' head, came down and out.

LIKE A FLASH,

but without a second's hesitation Mr. Asson awarded a goal. He was "a good referee" then, said the crowd, but in the second half he became "rotten," and was roundly booed because he recorded off-side according to his own judgment and that of the linesmen. The feeling was such that he stopped the game and walked over to a group of sailor boys in front of the grandstand and addressed them seriously. I am convinced that Corcoran was in an off-side position at the start of the movement. The second

goal followed a corner taken by Black, and Sloan transferred to the centre-forward after the ball had bobbed in and out of the scrum, and he again beat Brookes. The third, after twenty minutes' play, was from a centre by Corcoran, Batten flinging himself at the ball and heading it into the net.

The fourth goal came 12 minutes before the end, and the Town players loudly appealed for off-side. Black had only Johnson to beat, and although the latter got the ball once, he slipped, and BLACK regained possession to run away and beat Brookes with a magnificent shot.

The ball was in the Argyle half as much as it was in Luton's, but there was a vast difference in the matter of its distribution, and the Town players

SUFFERED BY COMPARISON.

Now and then they did some clever little movements, but they finished badly, and Craig had not one really difficult shot to stop. On the other hand, the Argyle combined quickness of foot with celerity of wit, and not only was there very fine understanding among the forwards, but the middle men formed a sort of reserve attack. It was noteworthy that not only did the forwards and halves combine, but the halves and backs, and even the backs and goalkeeper. A player was never afraid to put the ball to a colleague in the rear, and although this may be regarded as the longest route to goal, it served, especially as the man in the rear invariably had time to survey the disposition of his vanguard. It was this back-passing as much as anything that made the Argyle play so attractive, even if it often resulted in the forwards being thrown off-side. That was a little point some of the spectators overlooked. They wanted all the pretty play to be effective, and did not like the way Johnson and Graham, the former in particular, manoeuvred Argyle forwards off-side. The Argyle halves pushed the ball through on the ground, and this constructive work led to many strong attacks. It was this

UNISON OF EFFORT

that gave the Argyle the advantage. Unity of purpose is a good thing, but if it is not interpreted in action its value depreciates. The Argyle have assimilated that truth.

It was long before the Town made a really dangerous attack, and then it came from the left wing, and there was no spell of play more delightful than a run in the first half in which Mills, Jennings, Shankly and Dennis all had a part. Dennis made the most ground, and with an acrobatic effort Andy Kerr managed to hook the ball over his head, and it just topped the bar. The movement gained a remarkable outburst of applause. Kerr and Dennis were the main instruments of danger forward, for although all five strove as hard as they possibly could, the others were less difficult to dispossess. The middle men also were hard workers, but lacked feeding ability. The flanks often left the two wing men unattended, while Jennings was not up to concert pitch, although he made one or two

HURRICANE BURSTS,

and Mills did as much shooting as any of the side with the exception of Kerr. Johnson and Graham did well when they had found their feet, and the application of the off-side theory by Town defenders has never been so successful. Brookes kept goal well. Something super-human might have prevented the goals, each of which had an element of luck, but was a striking example of opportunism.

The Argyle goalkeeper had little to do. Cosgrove was a fine back of the vigorous type. At half-back Logan was outstanding, his feeding of the forwards being remarkably good, and all the attackers were fast, clever and vigorous.

Until the last quarter of an hour the game was pleasantly, if robustly, played. Then, however, Graham brought Batten down in a tackle near the centre line. He helped up the centre-forward, and, apparently, was apologising, when the forward slapped his face. Immediately Jennings got hold of Batten and flung him aside, and for a few moments there were possibilities of a scene, but Mr. Asson promptly took the job in hand, and, leading Batten aside, administered a lecture.

The crowd, variously estimated at 6,000 to 12,000, according to the position of the estimator, included quite a good number of friends of Luton, and there were frequent outbursts of applause. With the exception of little pockets of what are called "sports," the Argyle crowd are a generous, happy folk.

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