

LUTON TOWN WELL BEATEN

Disappointing Display at Charlton.

(By "CRUSADER.")

CHARLTON ATHLETIC 2
LUTON TOWN 0

CHARLTON. — Preedy; Burton, Herod; Smith, Bowers, Armitage; Thomson, Haley, Rees, Briggs, Cox.

LUTON. — Brookes; Anderson, Graham; Mills, Jennings, Roe; Brown, Butcher, Kerr, Hoten, Dennis.

Referee.—Mr. J. E. Head, West Bromwich.

"Play up, the Labour Party," was the cry of some of the spectators at the Valley, Charlton, on Saturday afternoon. This encouragement was given to the Athletic, who play in red jerseys, and, as so often happens, the encouragement was more necessary on the other side, for at the time the Town defenders were in sore straits. Indeed, they were seldom otherwise, and the display of the side as a whole was a long, long way below their game at Norwich the previous Saturday. Charlton well deserved their win, for although the goals were nothing brilliant, their general play was infinitely superior to that of the Town. There was no apparent advantage to them in the ground beyond that of playing before their own crowd, and if the ball was apt to be tricky on the rather hard ground, they had to contend with that only to the same extent as the Town. The difference lay in the confidence and methods not less than in the better control of the ball. Whereas very few of the Town's passes were accurate, few of the Athletic's seemed to go wrong. Their defence was certainly sounder, their halves were quicker on the ball and seemed to know intuitively just where was the forward most advantageously placed. And the forwards

SWUNG THE BALL ABOUT

in a fashion that kept the Town halves and backs on the run and often hopelessly out-paced. Particularly noteworthy was their quickness on the ball, and if it were true, as stated semi-officially, that they had nine reserves in the side, then it will be a bad day for Luton if the first team comes here. Personally I do not give any credence to the statement, for Preedy has won his place in the team; Burton has always been a first choice man since he left West Ham United; Herod, Smith, and Armitage are regular first team men, and Bowers has made good at centre-half. In the forward line Haley and Briggs are new-comers, but the former will not be superseded if he plays as he did on Saturday, for he is one of the cleverest youngsters I have seen for many a long day, his ball control being that of a veteran. Charlton have found a big nursery of amateurs somewhere, and the players they had against the Town on Saturday will hold their own with the best in the League if they were on their average game.

One cannot attribute more blame to one department than another on the Town side. Various, among the Luton supporters that were there, I have heard every line from goal to forwards blamed. The truth of the matter was that

NONE WAS AT HIS BEST.

They started well, but after the home side had opened the score they seemed to lose what little sting they had, and Preedy was never in trouble. In the second half he had not one respectable shot to stop, for the Town forwards

failed with monotonous consistency against the wily Hurton and the doughty Herod.

Until the first goal the Town had a fair share of the exchanges. This was a rather lucky goal. Cox, who was too often left unattended, got a clear course for a centre, and he middled the ball nicely. After two or three attempts had been made, REES got hold and shot hard. Brookes was positioned, but the ball struck a defender, Anderson it appeared to be, and went away from Brookes into the net. After then the Town tried hard to break through now and then, but Preedy had nothing to worry about, and then the Athletic set up a rousing attack, and eventually Rees had hard luck with a shot that hit the post, and from the rebound Haley drove in at a terrific pace, but Brookes saved brilliantly by tipping over. The flag-kick was successful, but should not have been. It appeared to me that Brookes started out too late in his intention to punch away. Anyway, REES got his head to the ball, and it flashed into the net.

In the second half the Town began well again, but it was a mere

"FLASH IN THE PAN."

and although there was no other goal, the home forwards missed several good chances after cleverly working positions that left the goal almost at their mercy, Rees making one very bad blunder. Near the end the Town made further efforts, but these were beaten off without a great deal of difficulty, and they retired goalless.

Brookes made half-a-dozen fine saves, but at least one mistake. Anderson, for once in a way, did not seem to be master of the ball, and that, of course, meant that he was often beaten for possession. He did much better in the second half. Graham, while not in such fine form as in the previous three or four games, was about the safest of the defenders, and his kicking was generally true and clean. In the middle line, Mills, while playing with his accustomed dash and skill, certainly allowed Cox too much scope, and the annoying part of it was that whenever Mills had an even chance at close quarters he never seemed to be beaten, but it was Rees.

LONG SWINGING PASSES

that made Cox prominent so often, for they were usually given when Cox had a clear field. Jennings was not so good as at Norwich, but he did very useful work in defence, as also did Roe, who was clever without being brilliant. The middle men found the open tactics of the home team a very severe task to defeat. The forwards gave little help, and they did not get much. Brown did as well as anyone in the first half, but he cannot centre from the right with the facility that marks his play on the left. Butcher, whose shoulder still troubled him a little, collected well, but did not make much ground. On the other flank, Hoten was about the same as in the Norwich game, a little better if anything, but has still to touch his best. Dennis did not get a lot of work, but usually made some progress when he had a chance.

For the home side, Burton, Armitage, Bowers, Rees, Haley and Cox all did good service, and, as a side, they were the better balanced and more active complement. Only one or two breaches of the rules, marred the game, and in this respect the Town were less blameworthy than the opposition.

There were 6,000 spectators.