

LUTON TOWN'S BEST OF THE SEASON.

Merthyr Town The Victims.

(By CRUSADER).

LUTON TOWN 6 goals
MERTHYR TOWN Nil

LUTON TOWN. — Brookes; Anderson, Till; Walker, Jennings, Millar; Thirlaway, Shankly, Kerr, Reid, Dennis.

MERTHYR TOWN. — Bow; Griffiths, Phillips; Woodward, Cowan, Booth; Arblaster, Turner (H.), Turner (E), Ward, Sillito.

Referee: Capt. A. J. Prince-Cox, Barnes.

Luton Town achieved several distinctions on Saturday. They scored more goals in a match than they have done since December, 1923; they scored their biggest victory for three seasons; they inflicted upon Merthyr Town the heaviest defeat the Welsh club have sustained this season; four forwards scored in a match for the first time this season; and—well they sent the directors of the club home with more contented minds. It is true that Merthyr Town are at the bottom of the League, but the critics had been so impressed by their performances in the last two or three games that Luton were reckoned as being in for a grim fight. When Merthyr showed the way to goal in the opening stages, the predictions were deemed worthy of respect, but before the interval it was clear that something like a miracle would be required to prevent the Town gaining a big victory, so thoroughly had they established a mastery over the Welshmen.

For fifteen minutes play was fairly even, but then the Luton team had so got

INTO THEIR STRIDE.

and the game resolved itself into a struggle by Merthyr to prevent matters getting worse all the time. Six goals' margin did not accurately reflect the full extent of the Town's superiority, and in handing to the players their wages and bonus to-day, the club officials should include a note pointing out that two years ago Southampton won promotion solely because they had a better goal average than Plymouth; and that last season Bournemouth & Boscombe had to seek re-election to the League because they had a worse goal average than Watford. It was quite evident before the game was an hour old that some of the team were disposed to be content, whereas if they had kept on playing for the purpose of getting goals they might have gained their biggest win since the war. It may seem a pity to grumble about anything after a victory by six goals clear, but before the game Bristol Rovers held precedence over the Town simply because of a better goal average. The Town do need to

LEARN THIS LESSON.

and it should be driven home by the officials with all the emphasis possible.

The game was patchy; sometimes thrills were continuous, at others the play was deadly dull.

It is a significant fact that the Town's goals all came from close quarters. Reid once found the net with a fine drive, but the whistle had gone for offside; the other goals were notched after play had been carried right inside the six yards' area. Nevertheless there was some good shooting as well as some poor attempts, and at times it was extraordinary how the inside forwards failed to get the ball past Bow. They were practically on the goal line several times, but managed to hit the goalkeeper or another defender with the ball.

The speed and combination of the forwards was very good indeed, but the main factor towards success was the magnificent work of the middle men. They were the masters of the field, and both in attack and defence made

THEIR PRESENCE FELT.

The ball was seldom wasted, and it must be a long time since the forwards received such well-directed and easily-collected passes. And the result was reflected in the amount of work given to Thirlaway and Dennis. They were always extending the Merthyr defence, and if the inside forwards had shot better there would have been a very much larger tally of goals. Co-operation is bound to win good results, and I hope that from now to the end of the season we shall see that vital principle in every game.

Details of the play are unnecessary, except for the naming of the goal-scorers. After 15 minutes REID scored a fine goal after a good run by Thirlaway, though Kerr had as much to do with it. The second came after good work by Dennis, SHANKLY netting from close in. The third came through SHANKLY, again following good work by Dennis, planting the ball through from close range.

Thus at the interval:—

LUTON TOWN 3 goals
MERTHYR TOWN Nil

The second half had been going for about 15 minutes, and there had been a lot of corners. Thirlaway put his flag-kicks in front of goal very accurately, and from one of them JENNINGS rushed in and headed the fourth goal. Almost at once KERR got the fifth after good work by Dennis, and Shankly uselessly placed the ball so that Kerr could not miss. Another Thirlaway corner kick ended in DENNIS getting the ball home, and that finished the register.

Brookes had not more than five or six shots to stop, and after a quarter of an hour he might have had nothing at all to do if it had not been for the disposition of some of the team to try and make rings round their opponents. Two good saves found Brookes.

ON THE ALERT.

Anderson and Till played clever football, and it was comforting to find more understanding between them and Brookes. Both were often feeding the forwards with well-judged kicks. If Jennings is chosen as the most conspicuous of the middle line, it is because he had most to do, and the two Turners kept him busy. His colleagues played just as well when it was required from them. Walker has not done better, and Ward and Sillito had a dull day. Millar recognised that he had a stiff handful in Arblaster, and so kept the check rein tight, maintaining his good form of the last month.

The work of the halves helped the forwards splendidly, and apart from the shooting, which was still far from what it should be, all the line played well, passing with nice precision, and showing good speed. They ran the Merthyr defenders

OFF THEIR LEGS.

It would be invidious to make any selection from the five, because each seemed to realise the requirements of his colleagues, and if they can manage to keep the same balance and intelligence in their general work they should satisfy to the end of the season, and get the goal average properly adjusted.

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Bow was not to blame in any way, and he made many good saves. His backs were big kickers until they were busted, and Kerr saw to that part of the business very well. Booth was the cleverest of the whole of the defence, and worked very hard both in defence and attack. The forwards were given few opportunities. H. Turner was quite the best of the five.

There were not 5,000 spectators, and the receipts would hardly pay the club's expenses for one week.