

THE LEAGUE DIV. III

A FINE FINISH.

Luton Town Trounce Southend.

(By "CRUSADER.")

There was no question about the deserts of the victors in the game at Luton last Saturday, when the Town thrashed Southend United by four goals clear. No stranger to the positions of the teams on the League table, would ever have dreamed that Southend could be above Luton. The Town played like a championship side, and the visitors were never allowed to develop a dangerous or a sustained attack, and but for capital goalkeeping by Hayes, and many failures of the Town forwards to take easy chances, the score must have been very much larger.

REID performed the hat trick, and capital goals they were. The first came after 28 minutes' play, when Tricker neatly headed the ball to the Welshman, who shot a magnificent goal. Easy chances were missed before the interval, Reid making the simplest of blunders after clever play with Tricker.

A minute after the restart, Shankly made a grand shot from a most acute angle, and Hayes could only punch out the ball for REID to meet on the volley and score the second goal. The Town played irresistibly, and soon Reid brought Hayes down to save a terrific shot. The goalkeeper twice pushed the ball out, but SHANKLY eventually netted. Shortly afterwards Tricker hustled Donnelly, and the ball went to REID, who tricked Sayles and scored the fourth goal with another rasping shot.

The score gives only a moderate idea of the superiority of the Town. Faster, brighter, more virile in attack and defence, they gave their best—something of the sort of thing we expected at the beginning of the season. Could they be relied upon to play football like this consistently, I have no doubt that every man jack of them would turn out for the first League game next season. It was real, sparkling football, and practically all attack, hence the best of defence. So powerful and active were the Town half-backs that they were continually popping the ball in front of the Southend goal, and having shots frequently, while both Till and Graham went close with rousing shots, Till's once hitting the post with tremendous velocity, and Graham shooting just wide.

All the forwards tried to help Tricker to get a goal, but the centre-forward's luck was right out. He led the line splendidly, and a few weeks' regular training would give him just that foot faster and quicken his mind in emergency. He is a most promising player, and should he be fixed up by Luton for next season, he will be a strong candidate for the leadership, whoever comes to the club. All the for-

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wards played well. Reid not only captivated the crowd by his powerful shooting, but he fed Dennis cleverly, and the winger made the most of it, making several flashing runs, and seldom failing to get the ball square in front of goal. Shankly also played finely before he was hurt in the second half, and Thirlaway thus got the chance to do well against his old team. There was a little difference between the methods of the wings, for the right wing held the ball rather close, whereas the left wing pair played a very nice open game, and gave their opponents more leather-hunting than was good for them.

The middle men again gave a splendid display. Some of their work was quite remarkable in combination. They were fast in recovery, and in individual tackles nearly always came off best. All came near scoring, too. On this form it will have to be something good to depose any one of them at the opening of next season.

The backs were not overworked. Often they went after it because they were not getting enough. Till was the best back on view, but Graham also proved that the confidence in him is not misplaced. So Brookes had practically nothing to do, and not one difficult shot to stop.

For the visitors, Hayes gave a great display in goal, and we appear to get all the best goalkeeping by other League clubs when they come to Luton. His backs were worried so much that they were inclined to lose their tempers under pressure. The halves and forwards played nice clean football when they got a chance, but they were slow by comparison with the Town team. Jewhurst, Dobson and Slater were their best, with McDonald a clever winger when he was well used.

There were 5,000 spectators, and the game was thoroughly enjoyed.

LUTON TOWN.—Brookes; Graham, Till; Walker, Jennings, Millar; Thirlaway, Shankly, R. Tricker, Reid, Dennis.

SOUTHEND UNITED.—Hayes; Sayles, Donnelly; Jewhurst, O'Rawe, Edwards; Johnson, Dobson, Hick, Slater, McDonald.

Referee.—Mr. E. Butler. West Norwood.