

STUNG AGAIN.

LUTON TOWN LOSE TO BRENTFORD.

A GOAL DISALLOWED.

(By "CRUSADER.")

BRENTFORD 1 Goal
LUTON TOWN Nil

BRENTFORD.—Thomson; Donnelly, McClellon; Walton, Graham, Roe; Hendren, Lane, Whitton, Finlayson, Douglas.

LUTON.—Purdy; Till, Graham; Richards, Jennings, Dennis; Miller, Shankly, Littlewood, Thomson, Thompson.

Referee: A. L. Grinstead, East Ham.

When most of us had come to the conclusion that the Town would bring a point away from Griffin Park, a corner kick was won by Brentford. Finlayson took the flag-kick, and sent the ball rather well out of goal. The half-bald head of LANE caught it and turned it into the Town goal. Purdy was positioned for it when a leg interposed and the ball was deflected past the Town goalkeeper, and the match was won. This was

NOT THE ONLY GOAL

that was scored, but it was the only one allowed to count. In the first half after a dour defiance by the Town defenders, Jim Miller got clear away. He went almost up to the goal, with Shankly, Littlewood and Thompson in attendance. When McClellon overtook him the ball was passed, and touched McClellon's leg, so that Littlewood and Shankly missed it: Thomson had run out of goal and missed it, too, but Jim Thompson, who was well behind all of the other Town forwards concerned, ran in and put the ball into the net. From somewhere near the middle line, Mr. Grinstead indicated that the scorer was offside, and once more refused to consult the linesmen, one of whom was well up the field and did not make any signal.

On the run of the play, Brentford deserved their win, and yet it would have been a comfortable success for the Town had the chances been taken by the inside forwards. The defence, aided by some luck in the early stages,

THWARTED MANY ATTACKS.

for it was a slow beginning the Town made—as in several matches recently. Purdy was the saviour of his side even thus early, but when the Town began to open out, their raids were fraught with danger to the "Bees." In spite of the heavy ground, the rain and the dreary conditions in general, the pace was a cracker, and no player spared himself. The Brentford attack combined better, however, and it was owing to the clever constructive work of Alec Graham and the inside forwards that the Town defence had such a gruelling time, for Douglas and Hendren were plied with wide sweeping passes, and they sent the ball into the goal-mouth time after time. When the inside forwards did get a shot, however, Purdy made grand saves. As the half wore on the Town forwards showed better understanding, and there were several phases of

DELIGHTFUL PLAY

between Dennis and Norman Thomson, the usual result of which was that Jim Thompson got a pass and a sprint. Had his centres been utilised as they should have been, the Town would have won the game in the first half. Most of the thrills, however, came at the Town end, for the home forwards shot much better, and Purdy made remarkable saves, even the "Bees' supporters, notorious for uncharitableness to opponents, giving him cheers.

After the interval there was a considerable difference in the play. It was more vigorous than keen, the pace was slower, and there was not so much skill as in the first half. The Town had a lot more of the play, and more than held their own for the greater part of the half. At least three perfect openings were missed after Miller had put the ball into the goal-mouth, and it was this failure of the Town inside forwards that lost the match. One reason for the sustenance of the

Town's attack was the fine kicking of Joe Till and Graham, for they plugged the ball right into the Brentford penalty area time after time. There were many hot assaults by Brentford, but they were not so insistent as in the first half. Still, Purdy again brought off wonderful work, and it was hard lines that he was beaten in the manner described about ten minutes from the end.

In the closing stages the "Bees" played three backs and four half-backs, and they successfully held their lead to the end.

The Town's inside forwards should have won the game. They were much below recent form. Littlewood did not keep his position well in the first half, and although he remedied this fault to a great extent in the second period, he was

STILL OFF COLOUR

in shooting. He has many good points, and he is one who will pay for his corn many times over if he is carefully coached. Shankly had an off-day. It is not often he does, but this was one occasion. Even so he now and then brought out a dazling bit of play. It was in front of goal that his deficiency was most marked. Norman Thomson did not seem strong enough for the conditions, which were against his style of play. Some of his movements, in the first half especially, were masterly in conception and execution, and his passes a model of accuracy, but here again the marksmanship was deficient. Jim Miller would have been quite as dangerous as Jim Thompson had he received the chances. He was almost starved in the second half, yet he made openings that should have turned the result in favour of Luton. Jim Thompson once again did well on the extreme left, and his centres were well-timed, while he

TROUBLED THE BACKS

as much as anyone.

The halves played a strong and resolute game. I was anxious to see how Dennis would frame at left-half. None would acclaim him an unqualified success, but what half-back is against a craftsman like Hendren? He was a bit slow in starting off, but long before the interval he was holding his own well, and some of his combination with the left wing was all that could be desired. Dennis was nothing like a failure, and it would be no surprise to me if he developed into a better half-back than he is a forward. Jennings had his usual rough time at the hands of the Brentford crowd, but, as he himself says, when the crowd were criticising him he felt that he was doing his best for his side. He had Whitton pretty well tied up, for Lane gave him the hardest work. Richards seems to have secured himself at right half, and once more put up

A ROBUST GAME.

and in the second half the "Bees" left wing was seldom in the picture.

Till was not always on top of his job in the first half, but in the second, especially when he used his best kicking powers, he put up a great show. So did Graham, and if he is moved again from left back we shall not know what to think. He is at his very best now. Purdy completed a magnificent defence, and he is as good as any goalkeeper that has worn the Town colours since the war, if not before, and whatever the circumstances under which he got his chance with the first team, there can be no doubt that he is a great goalkeeper—worthy of his place in greater teams than Luton Town.

I think most of the Town followers will share the opinion that the referee seemed to have forgotten the change in the offside rule. There were more offside decisions in this game than in any the Town have played this season.

There were nearly 10,000 spectators present, and they were well repaid for their enthusiasm.