

EARLY SUCCESSES HELPED LUTON TOWN TO BEAT NORWICH CITY.

ROUSING STRUGGLE.

(By "CRUSADER.")

LUTON TOWN 3 goals
NORWICH CITY 2 "

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

NORWICH.—Dennington; Hannah, Wingham; Bradbrook, Murphy, Duffus; McKinney, Rogers, Jackson, Banks, Stoakes.

Referee.—P. A. Hall, London.

Attention has been drawn in recent publications to the fact that certain animals may become "too tame," the idea being that when treated kindly they become contemptuous of man, and dangerous playmates. There was a suggestion of something like this in this game, and it nearly proved fatal for Luton Town. They asserted a decided mastery in the first half-hour, but, instead of maintaining the aggressive tactics of their opening play, they slackened a good deal in the second half. The result was that the "Canaries" became bolder, and for too long a period for the comfort of the Town supporters they gave the home defence a jacking, scored two goals, and came near equalising.

Long ago I came to the conclusion that for many reasons a team could not be too decisively beaten. Many professionals do not subscribe to that view, and some say it is absurd to continue trying to get goals when a winning lead is established. Well, three goals lead at the interval may certainly not be regarded as

A WINNING LEAD.

especially under the conditions to-day, and if in the last ten minutes the "Canaries" had drawn level few of the spectators would have been surprised. Taking the game throughout I think the Town deserved their victory, but they should have made the margin more emphatic. Two reasons why they did not may be advanced. In the first place the defence suffered in the second half a complaint that affected the visitors in the early stages—they got panicky; secondly, the inside forwards again showed undue hesitation when they got shooting chances. It may appear strange that one should complain about the lack of goals, because a glance at the League table shows that only four clubs in the Southern division have scored more goals; further, three goals is not a poor score for one match. The fact remains, however, that the three goals on Saturday only represented a small percentage of the chances, and in each case there was an element of good fortune.

Goals came too easily in the first twenty minutes, and led us to expect

A BIG SCORE.

The first came after a minute's play. Graham sent the ball flying far beyond the majority of the players, and Littlewood, lying well up, took possession and shot it out to the left wing. THOMPSON seized, went through, beat Hannah, and shot very hard and low past Dennington. Wingham tried to kick the ball as it crossed the line, but it was travelling at a big speed, and he only made assurance doubly sure, for the ball flew off his foot into the top of the net. It was a goal, however, before Wingham kicked.

A vigorous reply by the visitors threatened to draw level, but the Town defence was safe, and, with the forwards keeping the ball well on the move, another goal came in the fifteenth minute. A corner kick was earned on the left, and after the ball had bobbed about for a few seconds LITTLEWOOD hit it hard, and again it found the net after a defender had attempted to turn its course. Another assault came almost immediately, and Thompson lifted the ball over a crowd of players congregated in the goal-mouth, and MILLER got it as it fell behind Dennington and ran it into the net.

There should have been several more goals before the interval, for the Town were

THE BETTER SIDE.

and the visitors did a lot of rash kicking and not a little fouling in order to keep out the Town forwards, while the work of Dennington left nothing to be desired.

A change came over the game in the second half. The Town began as if the game were decided, but within a very short time they were convinced otherwise. Two sharp attacks by the visiting right wing were successful. JACKSON got both goals, one in the eleventh and the second in the twelfth minute, and it was during this period that the Town halves and backs lost a lot of their certainty. Efforts to stop fast raids were more frantic than effective, and so determined were the visitors that they came within an ace of equalising. When the Town pulled themselves together again the change was most marked, and Dennington alone saved Norwich from losing

A CROP OF GOALS.

Time after time he saved in marvellous fashion, and there was some very hot stuff driven into his goal. The best save of the match was when Littlewood met a centre from Thompson, hit the ball with terrific force on the half-volley, and at once there was a great cry of "Goal!" But it was not a goal. By a really brilliant dive Dennington caught the ball against the post, and at the second attempt he turned it round for a corner kick. There were other saves as clever as unexpected, though there were two or three occasions when he should not have been given the slightest hope of saving.

Following his display came a further revival by Norwich, and the home goal was assailed with a desperation that evoked much excitement, and Purdy had to be on the alert, for the light was fading, and several hot shots came out of the gloom and were well on the target. In the last minute the Town got down again, and I am assured by those right behind the goal that Dennington was beaten after a tussle with Shankly on the goal-line, but the referee refused to allow the point. There was

SOME RELIEF

among the Town players and supporters when the final whistle signalled the victory.

There are references in the foregoing to fouls committed by the visitors in the first half, and Mr. Hall should show a stricter control. Considering the pace and vigour, it was a wonder the players did not get more out of hand. It is not enough to give a free kick when a man is deliberately brought down, and there was a flagrant case for a penalty kick when Wingham laid out Littlewood in the first half, almost under the official nose, though the ball was some distance away. There was retaliation in the second half, and it was not surprising, though unpleasant. On the general application of the laws Mr. Hall is a fair exponent, but better discipline is needed.

The Town's play was patchy, due, in some degree, to the treacherous nature of the ground. At times they showed quite a lot of skill, at others were crude. When they had received

THEIR LESSON

in the second half they played with great determination and enthusiasm, and as Norwich were equally ardent the struggle was keen and interesting, and the spectators got full value.

Purdy again made some good saves, and could not be blamed for the goals. He showed a disposition to run out in a risky way on occasion, and the visitors, had they been quite cool, might have scored once when he was out of goal. There is still need of a better understanding between the goalkeeper and the backs. Till played splendidly, and made a minimum of errors. His kicking was clean and sure, and his tackling marked by judgment and skill. Graham was not quite so sure in his kicking, and some of his rushes were ill-timed, but it was a bad day for defenders, and on the whole the pair put up

A FINE BARRIER.

The middle men played their usual game, hard, resolute and determined. They had need to be, for the visitors' vanguard was a hefty, persevering and fearless line. Some of the combination on the left flank by Millar, Dennis and Thompson was delightful. In the second half, however, Millar found McKinney an improved opponent, and had his work cut out to hold his own. Jennings had as virile a trick to meet as in any game for a couple of seasons. They hustled the buster, and he bore well-defined marks of the fray, as did they. Richards gets better, and while he did not have the better of all his tussles with either Banks or Stoakes, his understanding with Till made for safety, and his help to the Town attack was most valuable. Dennis was the most prominent of the forward line. He was doing two men's work, bringing and carrying, now assisting Millar, now lending a hand to Jennings, and he certainly gave Thompson many fine passes. I hope he has not lost his confidence in shooting, for that, allied to his activity, means much to the attack. Littlewood again confirmed the opinion that he will pay for keeping. When he learns to be patient enough to keep position and to wait for the long forward pass or the shot through the middle he will do better. His close association with the Norwich backs had much to do with their

FRENETIC EFFORTS

in the first half. They did not like him a bit, Shankly began well, but he suffered through having to work the right wing himself for the greater part of the first half owing to Miller's retirement through injury. He did many good things, though the ground was against him, showing to the best of his ability. Thompson again won a lot of praise, and apart from a tendency to wait for an opponent to come along there was not much to find fault with. Always a worker, and tough enough for any kind of opposition, he is making good on the left. Miller again had fewer chances than he merits. Against the best half of the visitors he accomplished some clever bits of work, and had he been fairly treated he would have been more successful. Miller wants the pass that Thompson often gets—a chance to sprint clear of the backs. When he gets it there is always a lot of danger for the opposition, and so it was in this game. The combination left something to be desired, but many will echo the wish of one of the supporters after the game—that the team should not be meddled with until it has proved less efficient than it was on Saturday.

Norwich had two men who were more conspicuous than the others—Dennington and Banks. The goalkeeper was sought by the Spurs last week, but Norwich wanted too much money for him. As transfer fees go in these days it would be difficult to estimate the value of Dennington to Norwich, and it is upon that value the estimate must be made. His backs were shaky and the halves were an industrious but an off-beaten line. Duffus was their best in this department. In a very good forward line Banks was the big feature. He is a clever schemer, and while he was not prominent in marksmanship, he paved the way for the others.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

TOWN RESERVES GET A POINT.

Luton Town Reserves visited Norwich on Saturday and accomplished a fine performance in bringing away a point, though they were deserving of an even better result.

Six goals were scored. DUTHIE opened for Norwich, the referee allowing the goal, although Mingay cleared the ball. ROGERS equalised, and this was the interval score. In the second half MOFFAT gave Luton the lead, but METCALFE equalised, appeals for offside being negatived. WILSON then gave Norwich the lead, but LOVE equalised, and the final score was:

NORWICH RESERVES 3
LUTON RESERVES 3