

IN WINNING MOOD

Luton Town Heavily Defeat The Rangers.

There were many noteworthy incidents connected with the victory of Luton Town on Saturday. For the first time since September 30th their goal average was brought level; for the first time this season they completed two games without a goal against them; they completed a sequence of seven League games and have scored in every one, and averaged three goals per match. In the last six games they have scored 20 goals.

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Those are just a few items, and there are more for the study of their record. The question arises, "Is the forward line satisfactory?" I am certain that 90 per cent. of the crowd will declare that it is, and will resent any meddling with it. There are crude elements in the play of individuals, but the greatest players of all time have never been so good that they could not have been better.

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The Rangers were well beaten at half-time, and the Town's goal average might well have been even more pleasing had they taken their opportunities in like proportion in the second half, for the misses in front of Hebden's goal were more numerous than those in front of the Town goal, though one cannot overlook the fact that Hebden made at least three saves when goals seemed certain.

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Some hundreds of Luton followers, I understand, went up to London to see the Cup-ties. They saw nothing more thrilling than the play of the Town between the tenth and fortieth minutes. It was in that period the home team overwhelmed the Rangers' defence, and there was a good goal disallowed apart from the four that counted. Dash and thrust took the Rangers' defence by storm.

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The Rangers' goalkeeper saved his charge in the first two minutes when he had to retrieve a ball that was turned goalwards by Plunkett, but the Rangers played very good football afterwards for some minutes, and the Town defence had a lot of anxiety. A goal to the Rangers in this stage might have made a great difference in the result, but they could not complete their attacks successfully, and the Town were destined to draw first blood.

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A sharp movement on the left, in which Agnew and Dennis were equally prominent, found the ball sent to the middle. Jim Thompson transferred to NORMAN THOMSON, and that player shot accurately and without hesitation, so that Hebden was well beaten. It was a fine goal, and from that point the Town never looked back. Dennis and Agnew again made a raid, and once more the ball was middled and found its way to Norman Thomson. He tricked a back and slipped the ball past the goalkeeper, but was brought down. Dennis rushed past the fallen players and netted, but for some reason the referee disallowed the goal.

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The yells of disapproval from the crowd were still in the air when the left wing once more made play, and after the ball had been passed and repassed Dennis was cutting in for goal when John went for him and brought him down very heavily. Personally I had some doubt as to whether the incident merited a penalty kick, but the referee had none, and DENNIS scored from the spot.

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Playing with tremendous pace and vigour the Town swept the Rangers' halves and backs off their feet, and Hebden had a lively time. More good work by the left wing, and Jim Thompson took a pass and made some headway. Confronted by Plunkett, he passed to MOFFAT, who slipped through and lifted the ball over the advancing Hebden, and again it found its billet in the net.

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The Rangers worked hard but unsuccessfully to outwit the Town defence, and some good centres came from the wings, but the Town were soon back again, and the thrustful work of Dennis and Agnew paved the way for a scrimmage just inside the penalty area. JIM THOMPSON was the central point, and he wriggled clear and shot at express speed into the net amidst scenes of great enthusiasm.

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Hebden made some fine saves, and several hard shots went very near during the few minutes that remained before the change of ends, and the retirement found the Town with the handsome lead of four goals to nil.

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There was little change in the run of the play in the second half, for after a moderate opening the Town were soon raiding as vigorously as before. The difference, however, was that they did not show the same promptitude in front of goal, consequently they failed to beat Hebden. He made many fine saves, notably from the shots of Jim Thompson, but should have been beaten on other occasions had there been a little more of the first-half shooting prowess.

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The failure of the Town encouraged the Rangers to strive for a reduction of the deficit. Often they worked into good position with a cleverness that won applause, but their inability to finish well, even when they had easy chances, was their undoing. There was some lack of confidence in the Town defence, or, rather, a disposition to hold the Rangers too cheaply, and a severe penalty might have been paid had the Rangers been alive to this.

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The second half was blank, much to the disappointment of the crowd, who were crying for goals. The forwards played as well in midfield as before, and the shooting was not bad, but there was not enough of it. All the line played well, and received a lot of assistance from the middle men. The combination between the two departments was as bright a feature as in the previous game.

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Fore and aft the Town were the stronger side, and there is no need to further criticise, except to suggest that the easing up is undesirable in any part of the team, and to hope that the first half effectiveness will be maintained in all matches. If so the position of the club at the end of the season will be far better than it is today.

LUTON TOWN 4
 QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS 0

LUTON.—Purdy; Graham, Till; Richards, Neal, Millar; Moffat, Thomson, Thompson, Agnew, Dennis.

QUEEN'S PARK.—Hebden; Pierce, Plunkett; John, Cable, Hirst; Brown, Paterson, Johnson, Burgess, Spottiswoode.