

GREAT START BY LUTON TOWN.

FOUR VICTORIES.

Both Teams Succeed Home and Away.

(By "CRUSADER").

At Bristol on Saturday.—

LUTON TOWN 2

BRISTOL ROVERS 1

BRISTOL ROVERS.—Whatley; Bennett, Haydon; Rowley, Forbes, Smith; Barrett, Williams, Whatmore, Holcroft, Evans.

LUTON TOWN.—Mingay; Graham, Till; Richards, Bennie, Millar; Pointon, Thomson, Thompson, Agnew, Dennis.

Referee: W. E. Russell, Swindon.

Scorers.—

For Luton: Jas. Thompson.

For Bristol: Whatmore.

At Luton on Monday.

LUTON TOWN 2

BRENTFORD 1

LUTON.—Mingay; Graham, Till; Richards, Bennie, Millar; Pointon, Thomson, Thompson, Agnew, Clark.

BRENTFORD.—Ferguson; Donnelly, Winship; Hodnett, Rae, Bellamy; Craddock, Lane, Watkins, Dearn, Berry.

Referee: Mr. F. E. Epsie, Maidstone.

Scorers.—

For Luton: Millar and Norman Thomson.

For Brentford: Dearn.

Searching into records, a long way would be necessary to find a happier beginning of a season than that of Luton Town in the closing days of August. It cannot be denied that the second game discovered a few dismal "Johannes" among the supporters. Perhaps they had some little justification for pessimism during a period of the game, but it should not be forgotten that there is, or should be, year by year, less and less gap between the classes into which football clubs are divided, and at this time every club has more or less definite visions of promotion, or, at least, of doing well. At the beginning, no club thinks of relegation: all eyes are on pride of place.

It was so at Bristol on Saturday. The idea in the Western City was that, for once in a while, the Rovers were likely to prove a better side than the City, and

TALK OF PROMOTION

was fairly free and easy. We, too, have suffered disillusionment in our time. After seeing ninety minutes of hard and earnest play under a tropical sun, the Rovers' supporters had revised their views considerably, and were fain to admit that at least one club was more likely than the Rovers to move into Division II. next May.

The game was exciting for the greater part of the time, but the pace was such that one or other team had to crack up, and it was the Rovers. They got a fortunate goal in the first half following a long spell of pressure, in which our backs and Mingay were overworked. More dangerous situations had been erased, and none expected a goal, but it came and filled—or made a start towards filling—

THE ROVERS' CUP OF JOY.

Barrett, a nippy winger whom Millar found too elusive at times, swung in a shot-centre, which Mingay caught neatly enough. Graham was close beside him, and the goalkeeper apparently expected the ball to keep at bay the rushing Whatmore, but between them the worst happened. WHATMORE caught Mingay on the hip, the ball was dislodged from the goalkeeper's grasp, and before he could recover, it had trickled over the line just inside the upright.

If this cheered the Rovers it certainly gave a filip to the Town, and from that point they never looked back. The equaliser came from a fine effort by JAS. THOMPSON, who took a pass from Richards, slipped the backs, and netted with a fine shot that glanced off the post, Whatley having no chance.

In the second half, Luton

PRESSED FIERCELY

for most of the first half-hour, and Whatley's goal had many narrow escapes, and he saved the citadel time after time. At the end of fifteen minutes there was another nice pass into the goal-mouth by Richards, and again JAS. THOMPSON seized on the ball, slipped between the backs and sent the ball past Whatley.

That was the end of the scoring. The Rovers had a few turns, but the Town were very persistent, and the narrowest shaves were seen when Agnew, Jas. Thompson and Norman Thomson were active. Moreover, Dennis had been hurt, and the Town were thus short-handed, but, as the Bristol papers say, they more than held their own, and thoroughly deserved their success.

The forward play was clever, Norman Thomson doing brilliant things, and engineering most of the attacks, but the

whole team played with

DASH AND ENTHUSIASM.

Each department took its share of the work, and while the middle men were not at their best all the time, they stuck to a hard task with pluck and zeal, and were entitled to their share of appreciation. The defence was wonderful in the early stages, and not a man but merited all the praise he received from the onlookers as well as in his wage packet on Tuesday.

It was a fine start, and the play of the Town won applause from nearly 15,000 spectators.

BRENTFORD'S BOUNCE.

Perhaps we expected too much on Monday night. Brentford have been in lowly circumstances for years, and even the merit of their performance on Saturday when they trounced a much-boomed Brighton and Hove Albion side by four goals clear, did not reduce confidence in the ability of the Town to record their second victory. The "Bees" have been reorganised during the close season, and to good purpose. They have no highly-priced stars, but they have men of

FERVENT INTENTION,

and this they quickly showed to the 9,000 spectators. In the view of some spectators they nearly "bounced the Town out of it."

Luton began brightly enough, but there was something about the Brentford resistance that seemed to puzzle the Town forwards, and make difficult the work of defence. For the greater part of the game the ball was oftener in the environment of Ferguson, and far more frequently aimed at his charge, but the visitors went into the fray whole-heartedly. Where danger was, there were they, and unafraid, and, like outposts, their wing men and centre-forward were aye ready to foray and despoil.

For half-an-hour the Town were the more aggressive, and then there came a change. They seemed to falter in the face of

RESOLUTE RESISTANCE,

and Brentford assumed the offensive. For about ten minutes Brentford were the better side, and threatened to run away with the result. They would run away for nothing less: their play said so. And it was after two or three hectic assaults, in which Watkins had been the ring-leader and chief source of danger, that they were rewarded.

A burst on the right wing was nullified, but the ball came back to Hodnett. He used his wits, and instead of sending his ball to a rather crowded wing, he shot it into the middle, where DEARN, quick-witted, took possession, and, in almost less time than it takes to tell, had beaten Mingay with a neat shot.

There were warm moments after this, for Brentford had well hold, and when Mingay was nudged by Lane as

HE HELD THE BALL

after catching it, there seemed likely to be another goal, but the fallen custodian managed to scrape the ball away, and nothing worse than a corner-kick happened. Luton made strong efforts to get on terms before changing over, but they could not.

It was soon evident after the restart that the Town were bent upon retrieving the position. They assailed the Brentford goal, and the wingers were prominent with fine centres that none met. The visiting defenders kicked anywhere for safety, and so there were several corners. Five minutes of this half had elapsed when Clark took a corner, and after the ball had been in and out two or three times, MILLAR judged its flight to a nicety, rushed in, leant high above several heads, and headed the ball downwards—the correct way to head a ball in the goal-mouth—and

THE SCORES WERE LEVEL.

Brentford were then chaired up, and the Town were swinging the ball about much better than in the first half. We felt sure the lead had come when Jas. Thompson was swept off his feet as he was bearing into goal. The penalty was disputed, of course, but it was unquestionably an offence, and Thompson took it upon himself to take the kick. Everybody is saying how unwise it was; had he scored they would not have done so, but, with visions of a like mess last season, and doubts as to whether he can make the best use of a dead ball, I thought that Graham, who has been very successful on like occasions, should have been invited. Anyway, Thompson shot yards wide.

This was disappointing, but the black-edge was taken off very soon, when Poulton took a dainty pass, careered down to put across a lovely centre, and Norman THOMSON headed a very fine goal. Perhaps it would be better to say that he completed

A GRAND MOVEMENT.

Luton had many chances after this, and Jas. Thompson came very near to scoring several times, but failed to do so, and perhaps the best shot of the whole game was a storming drive by Reanie from 30

yards, which skimmed the angle of bar and upright. Brentford came again in the closing stages, and so energetic were they that it required all the strength and alacrity of the Town defenders to prevent a score. They were successful, however, and the fourth point was safely garnered.

Taking the two games, I think one must wait before criticising keenly. The ground and the heat were all against really good football, and on last season's snowing Luton need heavier turf. The two results have confirmed opinion that there is splendid material, and without suggesting that there is

A BRILLIANT SIDE.

I think that if the players are kept together, steer clear of jealousy, and maintain the team spirit that was more in evidence on Saturday than on Monday, they will have a hand in the ultimate decision as to which club shall rise. Mingay has kept goal well in both games. Some criticise his running out, but they had only applause for his venture that deprived Watkins of a goal on Monday night. There is, however, need for some better understanding between backs and goalkeeper as to who shall take care of the attacker who challenges the goalkeeper, and Mingay will concede goals if he tries to hold on to the ball when he has caught it on the goal-line. Some of his saves in both games were very fine, but this

SPECIFIC UNDERSTANDING

should be immediately established.

Graham is a grand back. On this form he can play with any team in the country. Till is as good as ever, and his speed and accuracy should convince folk that he is not the "old man" they think. There is a tendency to think a man is old if he loses his hair or if his legs go a bit out of the straight. Joe Till will hold his own for many years yet.

The halves left something to be desired, because they desire something themselves. We shall not see the best of Richards or Millar until we get some rain—a lot of it. Rennie is gradually improving, though apt to overkick his forwards. They have all done well, but will do better with heavy grounds. So will the forwards. Norman Thomson's play at Bristol was that of a genius. He was not so good on Monday night, perhaps, but is

A FIRST-CLASS FORWARD.

and should get on well with Pointon, who has speed and centres well except for a slight tendency to pull the ball behind his forwards. He will get over that fault all right. Agnew is as industrious as ever; his thrustfulness is very disconcerting. Dennis was very good until injured on Saturday, and Clark made a splendid deputy on Monday. The position will give the directors pause when next they consider its occupant. Jas. Thompson was at his best on Saturday, but was off colour and unlucky on Monday. He should not have another experience like that, and I hope to see him make up for it on Saturday, when Swindon come.