

TOWN TOP THE TABLE

Narrow Victory Over Merthyr Town

SECOND HALF BOMBARDMENT.

(By "CRUSADER.")

LUTON TOWN 2
MERTHYR TOWN 1

LUTON. — Mingay; Graham, Till; Richards, Gordon, Millar; Pointon, Thomson, Thompson, Woods, Clark.

MERTHYR.—Lindon; Woodward, Pedler, Crewe, Bishop, Clarke; Murphy, Phillips, Bell, Sutherland, Pither.

Referee.—Capt. A. Prince-Cox, Barnes.

There always seems a suggestion of humility about the very name of Merthyr Town, but it is never shared by the players that turn out for the Welsh club. So on Saturday. They began like a team out for promotion honours, and their liveliness seemed to take away the breath of the Town team. It was not that the play of the visitors was very clever, but it was fraught with danger, and as the Town seemed unable to control and pass in anything like their best style, we began to wonder if that unbeaten certificate would be blotted unexpectedly. When Harry Mingay made the fault that enabled SUTHERLAND to open the score there seemed every prospect of the visitors taking away

AT LEAST A POINT.

Fortunately this gift goal was the turning point for the Town. While their general play still left much to be desired, they were always the better side from that moment, and Merthyr were very lucky indeed to go home with as few as two goals against them.

The equalising goal was the wind-up to one of the prettiest movements of the game. Jim Thompson accepted a pass from Richards, put the ball out to Pointon, who drew his men and tapped inside for NORMAN THOMSON to juggle it past Bishop



N. THOMSON,

who scored the first goal for Luton.

and shoot right away from the outstretched hand of Lindon, who managed to touch it, but could not keep it out of the net.

The second half was all

IN-LUTON'S FAVOUR.

Merthyr were concentrating on defence right from the re-start, and right well they packed their goal. Several times the winning goal seemed certain, but the game was three-fourths gone when the successful movement came from the right wing. Gordon took a pass from Pointon outside a ruck of players, and, when tackled, sent the ball across to Millar, who transferred to WOODS, and the latter kept his head and his feet, and took it a bit nearer before banging it past Lindon. There was an appeal for offside, but it was nothing like an offside goal, for to my view Woods had about four or five players between his position and the goal when he scored.

The pressure on the visitors' goal was

SELDOM RELAXED.

Woods hit the upright, and Jim Thompson once got the ball past the burly goalkeeper, only to see one of the visitors kick it away from the line as it was trailing into the net.

The Town were value for a much better win, but there is not the efficiency in shooting that we want to see, and that is most desirable if the position at the head of their table is to be maintained. Personally, I do not think we shall see many goals until we get some heavy weather, and I do not think we shall get the best of the middle men until the conditions are more to their liking. Time after time on Saturday they did splendid work, and paved the way for attacks, but the passing fell short or

WENT ASTRAY,

and the Merthyr defenders took no risks. No fault can be found with the defence, speaking generally. Mingay certainly made a bad blunder, and the visitors should never have had their goal, but one swallow does not make a summer, and one blunder should not kill a goalkeeper. Graham and Till once more played finely, though the latter once missed the tricky ball, and Graham made one or two quaint kicks. Both tackled grandly, and in the second half each had a shot or two, while they were fast in recovery, and gave the opposition few chances of shooting.

Owing to Kennie's illness, Gordon was brought in at centre-half. He did not bring the improvement that was possible, though none could write him down a

failure. He was quiet in his work, and made some good passes, but we still lacked that

DOMINATING SPIRIT

that is expected from a tip-top centre-half. I do not think the team suffered at all from Kennie's absence, Richards and Millar were slow in finding their best, and were puzzled by the tactics of the visitors in the early stages, but in the second half they and Gordon were the masters of mid-field, and were only disconcerted when



H. WOODS,

who scored the winning goal for Luton.

they were striving to get the goal that meant so much or to increase their lead. There is need for a sharpening up at the beginning, and it is not wise to allow the other side to get the lead.

The forwards were patchy, and were not a whit better than the middle men in the first half, in the matter of ball control and constructive work. Certainly Merthyr's halves and backs

HELD ON STUBBORNLY,

and fought every inch of ground, but passes were not gauged at all well, and it took several of the players an unconscionably long time to get a move on when in possession. Woods was probably the slowest in this respect, but he is getting no more than his due in giving him the credit for making the truest passes and the best drawing of the defenders. He used his wits to good purpose, and was responsible for many of the most dangerous moves. Norman Thomson played one of his cleverest games at home, something like the work we see away, and his feinting and pushes through the middle were of inestimable value. Jim Thompson worked as hard as ever, but his shooting day has to come, and against less intensive methods than those of the Merthyr players he

WILL GET HIS REWARD,

for his robust and tireless essays.

Pointon played better, and got the ball across more quickly, while Clarke also was more dangerous than in his previous games. After the mishap which caused his removal on the stretcher just before the interval, he pluckily turned out again and did very useful work, some of his middles being well-nigh perfect.

Merthyr have a great goalkeeper in Lindon. After the game he blamed himself for the first goal against him, but I could not see that he had much chance, and he made many fine saves in the second half. Indeed, he made goalkeeping look an easy job, so

SURE IN POSITIONING

and handling the ball. Woodward was as good at back as he has been at half-back, and that is saying a good deal. He and Pedler kicked hard, and never delayed getting the ball away. Bishop played a strong game as pivot, though all three halves tired a good deal before the Town's furious onslaughts. Sutherland also put in a lot of good work in defence, and was seldom very far from the ball. Pither did well, and in Bell the Welshmen have a youngster who is likely to develop into a very fine leader. Not much was seen of the right wing after the first half hour: Bob Millar saw to that.

Capt. Prince-Cox had the game well in hand, and I think this was the best game we have had at home for that reason. There were a few accidents, but the players did not take so many liberties with him as players have done in previous games.

There were nearly 10,000 spectators again.

RESULTS IN BRIEF.

LUTON LEAGUE.

Davis Athletic "A" 10; Ramblers 0.

FRIENDLIES.

Davis Athletic 3; Morgan's Athletic

(Camberwell) 0.

Davis Juniors 2; Avondale 6.

RUGBY FOOTBALL.

Luton "A" 3 pts.; Edgware "B" 11 pts.