

ANOTHER DEFEAT

Luton Town Succumb at Watford.

TEN MEN FOR HALF THE GAME.

(By "CRUSADER").

Any little sting attaching to Luton Town's defeat was mitigated by the mishap to Graham just before half-time. To lose only by the odd goal in three after battling for half the game with only ten men, is not a result to evoke severe criticism, and I feel that in a rather poor performance Luton were not much below the victors, even allowing for the handicap under which they laboured in the second half. True, Watford had the more chances, and comparison of the defensive elements would leave a big margin in favour of the Town's rearguard. Where Watford excelled was in the dash and persistence of their front rank, and the all round strength of their middle line. Luton were more skilful individually, but lacked that vital clinching force when within striking distance. Therein lay all the difference between success and defeat, and, if my information is correct, the irony of the situation lay in the fact that the player who did most to conquer Luton was born in this town. As if that were not enough, I was informed that Edmonds, the player in question, was signed by Watford while Luton were discussing the desirability of taking him from Fulham. I have no official confirmation of this, but, even accepting the story, I should be the last to criticise the directors adversely for hesitation. Edmonds is well on the high road to forty, and

BOTH THE GOALS

that fell to Watford were of the fortuitous kind.

Edmonds is still an opportunist, but when he made the move that drew first blood for Watford he should have been thwarted. His hustle carried him through to make a gilt-edged opening for WARNER to do the needful. Edmonds never forgot the reason for this success, and the consequence was that he made many more openings for his colleagues, and Swan made two or three glaring blunders when he should have scored.

The Town were a long time before they did anything that promised success, and the inside forwards were very slow to strike. True they were all well watched, and the player to cause most trouble was Norman Thomson. Unfortunately his fine passes into the middle for Jim Thompson were not accepted, for the centre-forward was challenged in a very different fashion from Edmonds. Once Norman Thomson scooted through and Yates saved. He was challenged and lost the ball, but there was no one shrewd enough to anticipate Thomson's move, or the scores would have been equalised.

So the game went on to half-time, long before which we had seen Harper prove his skill as a custodian, and he made some fine saves. It was evident, however, that the Town players generally were getting better, and Watford seemed to be

LOSING STING

when the accident happened that robbed Luton of their chance. In a Watford attack, Graham tackled Swan, kicking the ball away from the forward's foot just in time. Swan kicked, and his boot struck Graham's shin so severely that the full back went down in a heap, and play was stopped while he received attention. The interval was sounded, and the players had retired to the dressing-room before Graham was carried off by the ambulance men. He took no further part in the match.

When the game was resumed, Gordon and Norman Thomson each fell back one position, and Woods came to the right of Jim Thompson, a four-forward formation of attack.

Almost immediately Watford increased their lead, and this time EDMONDS got the reward of his alertness. Till made a bad kick, and the centre-forward got the ball and scuffled through. Harper ran out, but the ball went past him, struck the upright, and glanced into the net.

Luton, considering the absence of Graham, did very well after this, and gave Yates and his backs a lot of work. Pointon was

THE RINGLEADER

of the assaults, but the goal was the result of a clever shot by Norman Thomson, who lobbed the ball over Yates' head, and it came down under the bar. Jim Thompson and Dennis made sure of it, but the referee afterwards said that the ball was well over the line before they got it. After this, Woods failed to take a good chance of equalising, for he shot straight at Yates with only the goalkeeper to beat.

Harper and Yates both had calls that elicited all their skill, but the end came with Watford holding the lead.

Harper's display won unstinted applause, and if he always does as well he will be under the Luton bar for a long time. He was clever in judgment, very nimble, and safe in fielding and delivery. Graham and Till were not so good as usual in the early stages, but both were playing well at the time of the accident. Till made one costly error, but he was the best back on the field. Gordon again played finely at right half, but the man to take the eye most was Millar, who came back to his very best, and

OVERSHADOWED STEPHENSON,

apart from his clever constructive work in the second half. Rennie is nothing like the pivot we knew last year or that we want him to be. He was brushed aside by Edmonds, and many times he spoiled advances by wild kicking. The forwards were patchy. Curiously enough they won the admiration of the Watford supporters, and yet we who have been accustomed to seeing them week by week know that they can play much better. There is need for a quickening element in the attack. It does not possess the vitality and swing that did so much for the club last season. Jim Thompson is like a fish out of water. He hustled as vigorously as ever, but he had very few shots. Woods was a schemer and was clever in control, but he took so long to get going that he was often dispossessed before he had made up his mind what to do. Norman Thomson was the cleverest and quickest in getting a move on, but he rather starved Pointon before the interval in his endeavours to give Jim Thompson an opening. Afterwards he helped Pointon splendidly, and the result was a more virile attack. Pointon did fine work, and was always dangerous, and Dennis was better than in recent games. Yates kept goal well for Watford; the backs were not much more than good kickers, but F. Smith and Strain were fine halves. Of the forwards, Edmonds alone was a potent force. The attendance exceeded 11,000, and the weather was all that could be desired, but the ground was not.

WATFORD 2
LUTON 1

WATFORD.—Yates; Prior, Fletcher; F. Smith, E. Smith, Strain; Stephenson, Warner, Edmonds, Swan, Daniels.

LUTON.—Harper, Graham, Till; Gordon, Rennie, Millar; Pointon, Thomson, Thompson, Woods, Dennis.

Referee.—Mr. W. Musther, London.