

BACK TO WINNING TRACK

LUTON TOWN TOO GOOD FOR RANGERS.

Reid's Success.

(By "CRUSADER").

LUTON TOWN 2 Goals
QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS Nil

LUTON.—Harper; Richards, Till; Black, Rennie, Millar; Pointon, Woods, Reid, Agnew, Clark.

RANGERS. — Cunningham; Hooper, Young; McAllister, T. H. Cable, Middleton; Hamilton, Varco, Goddard, Paterson, Lofthouse.

Referee: C. T. Gould, London.

It is the duty of every spectator who saw the stone thrown on the Town ground on Saturday to acquaint the club management. It could not have been thrown at the referee, for he was not near enough, but the likelihood is that it was thrown at the half-back alleged to have struck Reid. It was a great pity there was any trouble, for, on the whole, the game was cleanly conducted, and play always interesting, if not quite up to the standard of the struggle with the Palace. The offender among the crowd, if he cannot control his personal feelings, should bear in mind that his action may have serious consequences for the club, and might lead to the ground being closed. If for no other reason, people who saw the incident should not shield the guilty party.

RANGERS' TRIBUTE.

Half-an-hour before the game, Mr. Gould gingerly strode about the field. When he returned he told me it was only just about fit for play, and if there were any more rain he doubted the possibility of finishing. Puddles dotted the field, but the Rangers' representatives were amazed the ground was in anything like such good condition considering the amount of rain. Fortunately, the rain ceased, and some of the water disappeared, but the players were in a shocking plight before the game was many minutes old. They gave remarkably good football, and the referee did his difficult part very well. I could not see any cause for the little demonstration against him. Mistakes he made, but I should like to see the man who would never err under such conditions.

ABOUT THAT GOAL.

The barracking arose from the fact that the referee disallowed a goal scored by Reid, early in the second half. If the 4,903 people who paid for admission, were absolutely unanimous that it was a good goal, I would still stand by the referee. A goalkeeper may be charged when holding the ball or obstructing an opponent, or if he has crossed the lines of the goal area. That means what it says, and when Cunningham had passed out of the area he was as liable to be charged as any other player. Equally he has the right to be exempt from pushing, and Reid, failing to get in a proper charge during the chase, pushed Cunningham off before finding the net with a lovely shot. It was hard lines that a really fine effort should be wasted, but I don't think Reid would have got the ball had he not pushed.

TWO NOT ENOUGH.

Nevertheless, two goals did not represent the superiority of the Town. They should have had many more goals, for they adapted themselves better to the conditions, and, after a fairly even first half, outplayed the Rangers in the second. It was the failure to beat Cunningham that kept the crowd on tenterhooks, but when the second goal arrived, fears vanished.

There was nothing in it during the first ten minutes, and then Woods, who was playing finely, shot hard. The ball was going all along the ground at a great pace, and seemed likely to score, but Hooper got a foot in the way. The ball went to REID, who took one stride and then found the net with a brilliant first-time shot that had Cunningham helpless.

CLEVER CUNNINGHAM.

The Rangers played fine fast football, and gave a lot of trouble. Richards, Till and Harper were sore pressed many a time, but the Town were gradually finding their stride, and soon we saw goalkeeping as good as that given by Callender for the Palace a fortnight before. The Town forwards were not only working up fierce attacks, but shooting well, and Cunningham made remarkable saves. To recount all the thrills he gave, and the cheers he won, would require a considerable addition to the space for this report. His goal appeared to be doomed to fall on a dozen occasions, but he was there somehow, and the danger dispelled. Once he was hurt when he stopped a shot by diving at full length, but recovered to do even better things before the interval, which came with the score:—

LUTON TOWN 1 Goal
Q.P. RANGERS Nil

There was no suggestion of complete mastery in the play of the Town on re-starting, and the Rangers provided warm moments for the Town defence. As the

game proceeded, however, the Rangers' halves seemed to tire against the quick movements of the Town forwards, and eventually the Rangers' goal was almost constantly in danger. Cunningham again did wonderful work, and was applauded for spectacular saves. During this period Reid netted, and the goal was disallowed but there were frequent tussles in the goal area, shots that almost scorched the posts, and corners galore. When the Rangers broke away, their wing men were very dangerous, and once Lofthouse got clean through, and from near the upright tapped the ball across. A shot struck somebody, and then Agnew, who had fallen back, kicked the ball away.

POINTON'S CENTRES.

Reid was distributing splendidly, and Pointon was getting a lot of opportunities. Once he had Cunningham at his mercy, but stood as if mesmerised. On other occasions he hit the ball so hard that it went over the heads of the waiting inside forwards. When he did get in the right one, WOODS' head met the ball and steered it safely into the net. There were more chances afterwards, but they were missed, or Cunningham nullified them by saves that were not expected. A gruelling game held the interest of the crowd right up to the last minute, and I think everybody went home satisfied with the result. Even the noisy Rangers' supporters, wearing blue and white favours and twirling rattles, acknowledged that the better team had won and deserved the margin.

WHY THEY WON.

Because the Town swung the ball about better and did not nurse it just too long, as did the Rangers' inside forwards, was the chief reason for the success. They often passed skilfully, and with Reid distributing cleverly, the whole of the line came into action. Reid again justified his inclusion, and both in distribution and shooting, played up to his form with the Reserves. Woods engineered a lot of the assaults, and had no superior for intelligence in drawing the opposition, or accuracy of passing. Agnew worked as hard as ever, but seemed to tire earlier than any other Town player, and his best work came in the first half-hour. Pointon's pace was a greater menace than his centres, and if he but gauged this feature of his work, he would be a grand winger. Clark was more than serviceable, though he did not get too much work.

SUPPORT AND DEFENCE.

Though Black did not come up to the standard of his play in his first game with the first eleven, he was the most consistent of the Town middle men. He covered more ground than any half-back, except Cable, and although out of place occasionally, there was the hall-mark of skill in the way he won possession and the use he made of the ball. I fancy he has come to stay. Millar had a lively handful in Hamilton, and was not so good as usual until late in the game, when he did fine work. Rennie's passing to the wings was his most profitable part, and he held his own fairly with Goddard. He would do well to push the ball up the middle occasionally, and let his centre-forward have a turn.

THE DEFENCE.

Richards did not make a flattering start, but soon settled down, and his weight and obstructive powers were most impressive during the period when the Rangers were dangerous. His heading at one time thwarted a series of strong attacks. Till once missed his kick, but again proved conclusively that he is a great player. His tackling was clean and clever, and his kicking superb. Harper made some clever saves. He was not tested a third as severely as Cunningham, but got enough to do to prove his skill, and is in no danger of losing his place in the side.

THE RANGERS.

Cunningham was the great man of the Rangers. We are seeing good goalkeeping in almost every game, and much though we admired Callender, I think we can bracket Cunningham with him. Hooper and Young were sturdy backs, and Cable played a grand game. He was the best half on view. How he kept going at such a pace, cool and clever, good alike in defence and attack, was wonderful. McAllister and Middleton played well for an hour. The forwards were nicely led by Goddard. I liked Hamilton and Varco for constructive work, but Paterson shot well, and Lofthouse is by no means a spent force.

HERTS JUNIOR CUP: Third Round.

Markyate 4, Harpenden Corinthians 1.
Peter's Green United 1, Kimpton 0.

BEDS & DISTRICT LEAGUE: Division II.
Batford O.B. 7, Vauxhall Motors II. 0.

RUGBY FOOTBALL.

Luton 3 points, Mid Herts. nil.
Luton "A" 3 points, Dunstable School 3 points.

