

GOALS IN PLENTY.

STIRRING STRUGGLE ENDS IN A DRAW

Plymouth's Annual Point.

(By "CRUSADER").

LUTON TOWN 3 goals
PLYMOUTH ARGYLE ... 3 goals

LUTON.—Harper; Graham, Till; Black, Rennie, Millar; Pointon, Thomson, Reid, Woods, Dennis.

PLYMOUTH.—Craig; Cosgrove, Titmuss; Logan, Russell, Hardie; Matthews, Forbes, Cock, Leslie, Black.

Referee: A. J. Attwood, Newport.

It is puzzling how the Argyle continue year after year to visit Luton and avoid defeat. Hitherto we have been wont to regard it as due to all-round efficiency in defence, but on Saturday the Town forwards were good enough to get three goals, which proved that they could not be saddled with the responsibility for the dropping of a point. Three times they got the lead, and then only to finish with honours even. Primarily the blame must rest with the defence, but careful thought will show where the main trouble came from. John Black played himself into the middle line very thoroughly, and when he had failed to solve the difficulty in the forward line I am sure that everybody felt he would have been harshly dealt with had he been left out of the side, although Richards put up as good a show against Northfleet as in any game this season. Black played his customary game against the Argyle, but the secret lay in the fact that the Argyle's brightest star in attack is also Black—Sam—and it was because that clever young man was given too much latitude that the Argyle gathered a point. Millar is apt to err in the same way in the first half, so that Matthews had many easy gallops, but in the second half Millar kept such a tight check that the right winger did not get much of the ball. On the other hand, Black was fed so persistently that it made one wonder why John Black did not stick to him closer than a brother. He had every right, bearing that name.

THE ARGYLE'S STAR.

Sam Black was responsible for the work that brought each of the Argyle's goals, and his own successful effort to appear on the score sheet was the brightest of the scoring attempts. He was an active member from the opening minute, when the Argyle made a quick advance, and was as surprised as his colleagues when the Town, on their first look at the Argyle goal, were successful. Russell used his hands to delay a rush by Norman Thomson just outside the penalty area. Pointon took the free kick and placed it perfectly, for WOODS to head into the net. But reprisal followed suddenly. To prevent S. Black going through, Till had to concede a corner kick, and the Argyle left-winger placed this well for FORBES to head a fine goal. The Town had the better of the exchanges, but not by a big margin, up to the interval, and REID came along to keep up his average, though the goal was quite unexpected. Graham took a free kick, Thomson headed backwards into Craig's hands, and before the goalkeeper had made up his mind what to do, the centre-forward hurled himself at the goalkeeper, who was still nursing the ball as he reposed in the rigging. The Argyle equalised with a goal that was even less reasonable. Leslie lobbed the ball forward, and Graham wanted to allow the

ball to go out. Sam Black had other ideas, however, tackled the Town back as the ball was crossing the line, and managed to get it. He had a simple job to pass to the front of goal, and COCK netted one of the easiest goals scored in his long career. This was a great disappointment to the Town supporters, and wholly against the run of the game, for the Town should have had a comfortable lead when ends were changed, instead of the score:—

LUTON TOWN 2
PLYMOUTH A. 2

The Town continued to have the better of the play on the restart, but the raids of S. Black were a constant menace, his speed and ball control rather more than Graham liked, and John Black could have rendered more assistance to the back. From one of these skirmishes, Matthews had a chance almost as easy as that which Cock had taken, but skied the ball over the bar. The Town were not slow to appreciate this let-off, and set up such an attack on the Argyle goal that it was marvellous how it escaped. Two or three players had plugs at the ball close in, but failed to get it past Craig. Reid seemed certain to score when he shot with great force, but the ball struck the foot of the upright and rebounded to the right, where Pointon took it on the run and rammed in another terrific shot, but the ball struck an opponent and went wide. From the flag-kick, however, Pointon sent the ball just over the first ruck of players, and WOODS headed it downwards, and it passed into the net, though Cosgrove touched it with his hand in an effort to stop it. So once more the Town were leading, and were playing better football than at any previous period of the game. Corner kicks and free kicks were well placed by the Town halves and wingers, and shots were right on the target, but Craig and his co-defenders were always in the right place. Then the Argyle had a turn, and the Town goal had one or two narrow escapes. Eventually there was a scuffle, and the ball was lying just right for S. BLACK to dash up and shoot hard into the net.

EXCITING FINISH.

There were threatening movements by the Argyle after this, and they made several strong bids for the lead. Black being the danger carrier. Even more exciting scenes were witnessed when the Town retaliated again, and how Craig managed to get the ball away twice was a mystery. Once Dennis put across a lovely centre, and Thomson seemed certain to score, but as he headed the ball, Craig was on the spot, and the goal was just missed.

Harper did not always inspire confidence. In the first half he misjudged a pass back, and Cock, had he been expecting an error, might have scored. In the second half, Harper stopped a ground shot, but there was a lot of spin on the ball, and it eluded his grasp. The Argyle players appealed for a goal, but Harper appeared to be a yard out when he failed to hold the ball first time, and the referee shook his head. The Town goalkeeper made several fine saves, nevertheless, one at full length in the second half bringing the crowd to their feet. The backs played strongly. It is a moot point whether to account the first goal a fault to Till. I fancy that he did the best thing in giving a corner, for he was alone in dealing with a couple of opponents. Graham was to blame for the second goal, for he seemed to think that he had only to wait and the ball would go out. He strove to retrieve that mistake, and both backs did splendid work. Rennie gave us one of his very best games. He is still far from a strong resister, and does not head well, but for distribution, thoughtful and accurate, his exhibition was admirable to a degree. He opened out the game as much as any player. Millar was also in grand spirit, and in the second half, especially, put up a magnificent game. John Black was clever enough in his feeding, and did a lot of useful tackling, but certainly left his namesake too much freedom.

REID'S CONFIDENCE.

Reid again won the eye of the crowd by strong leadership, and grows more confident every match. "He is playing better than ever before," said someone after the game, and that is true, the reason being that he is not baited now as he has been. The directors are reaping the fruits of their courage. On either side he had clever and thrustful partners. Woods again played a fine game, and he, too, is scoring consistently. Norman Thomson was unlucky with his shooting, but he and Pointon got on splendidly, and the winger, like Reid, is improving with every game. On Saturday he did not punch his centres so hard, with the result that there were far more opportunities for the inside men. Dennis would have done better had he received more work in the first half, but was a long way below his best form, though he got in two or three useful centres towards the end of each half.

For the Argyle, Craig again kept goal finely. Cosgrove was a dashing back, but Titmuss was just as useful, and showed more polish. Logan was a great half-back, both in defence and attack, and Russell was just as wary a bird at pivot as we know him to be at back. Hardie played better in the first half than in the second. Black was quite the best forward on the field, but got about double the chances of any other forward.

Mr. Attwood had little difficulty with the players, and not once had to administer rebuke. There was a minimum of fouls except for handling. The spectators, numbering upwards of 2,000, enjoyed every minute of the struggle.