LUTON STILL LACKING.

Another Point Dropped at Home.

BRISTOL ROVERS' ESCAPE.

(By "CRUSADER.")

A very large proportion of the spectators at the match on the Town ground on Saturday will query that word "escape" in the headlines. Many of them went away feeling that the Town were fortunate to retain a point, for they were impressed by the quality of the Rovers' play in the first half. One must take the game as a whole, however, and weigh the opportunities that fell to the respective sides, and because the Town had the more chances I think they should have won. The changes made were not conducive to an improved combination, especially as between middle line and attack, and while there was no lack of effort on the part of individual players, there was not that snap and precision which were a vital feature of games in the first three months of the season. The directors made the changes because of the debacle at Chelsea, and though they were given to understand pretty plainly by the crowd that changes were expected, the course adopted did not meet with unanimous approval. The difficulty, however, is to know what series of changes would have evoked unanimity or a better result.

THOMSON'S CHANGE.

The transfer of Norman Thomson made a forward change compulsory, though the transfer was not compulsory. Under the circumstances, Agnew came in, and Clark was preferred to Jim Thompson on the extreme left wing. Panther was brought in at centre-forward, Reid having pulled a muscle again. Woods naturally crossed to the inside-right position. The only other alteration was made in the middle line, where Richards was preferred to Rennie, and this was a provocative of criticism as any change. Taken as a whole, the results were not satisfactory, but the changes were of such a nature that one could hardly expect immediate success. Such a disturbance of positions demands time before there is a settlement of the players. This was quite evident from the beginning of the game.

"THE MORE WE ARE ——"

The first half display was in favour of the Rovers. They were the more stylish, the more resourceful, and resolute as a team. One could well believe they had sung all the way from Bristol "The more we are together," for they encouraged each other splendidly, and combined better. The Town had more chances but these usually arose from individual work. The players had plenty of confidence in themselves, but not enough in their colleagues, and so, with few exceptions, they were all too often ploughing lonely furrows through the mud and nullifying their own efforts. It made for shakiness throughout the team, and not until late in the game did they reach what was best. It was then too late. Had they played with the same dash and verve in the opening half as in the later stages, I am sure they would have held a good lead at half-time.

BRIGHT BEGINNING.

Not twenty seconds had elapsed before the Town had the lead. Till lost the toss, and Panther, Woods, and Agnew played the ball, the latter lashing it out to Pointon. The winger got clean through on the right and centred beautifully for PANTHER to head a neat goal. The Town, however, never looked like keeping the lead, and Mr. Harper was tested several times, and the work of Forbes was of such a quality as to keep his men constantly on the attack, the left wing in particular doing fine work. CLENNELL levelled the scores in four minutes, and no futher goal was scored.

Play was interesting because so many promising movements were begun, but usually they flickered out because of poor marksmanship or over-doing the dribbling. Time after time the Town forwards got through, but could not beat Whatley, while the visitors, ably engineered by Forbes, usually had to shoot from long range. Harper and Whatley each made good saves, and at the interval the Rovers had earned wholesome respect in every way.

SECOND HALF.

The second half found the Town on top. They had the Rovers on the defensive for the greater part of the game, and Whatley made some thrilling saves. The combination was still missing, however, and very little passing was seen either all along the line or on the wings. Panther was prominent for good distribution, but seldom got the ball returned to him as it should have been.

At the other end the occasional raids of Evans and Douglas were fraught with grave danger, and Harper, although not often employed, was fortunate to get in the way of one effort from Clennell, while he made several good saves. The Town worked harder than ever towards the finish, but were unable to bring their efforts to a successful issue, and the game ended in a draw.

COMMENTS.

Harper did very good work in goal, and after some wavering at the start, both Graham and Till played well, the former especially. In the middle line, Black showed his customary cleverness, but did not cooperate well with Woods, and so the latter did not shine as much as usual. Millar was patchy—sometimes doing very clever things and at others being out of position, but he tried to infuse some dash into the forward line. Richards played as enthusiastically as ever, but he will never be so useful at centre-half as he is at right-half or at full-back. Even he, however, could not impart the zeal to his colleagues that he showed, and a willing horse is not much good if the load is too heavy.

FORWARDS.

In the forward line, Panther did not play as well as in the two previous games I have seen him play, but that was because he was never fed right. A man as quick as he requires the drawing of the defence and the ball pushed through the middle, and Woods was about the only player who could do it. The latter also gave Pointon good chances, of which advantage was not taken, and the winger never again did anything so clever as that initial run and centre—which was a goal-finder all the way. Agnew worked very hard indeed, and, apart from poor finishing, was probably the best unit in attack. Clark got little work until the second half, and then he got over centres that should have won the game.

For the Rovers, Whatley kept goal finely; Haydon was a fine back; Forbes the finest player on the field, until he tired in the second half; and Douglas, Clennell, and Evans all did good work forward.

There were 7,000 spectators.

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BRISTOL ROVERS	1

LUTON. — Harper; Graham, Till; Black, Richards, Millar; Pointon, Woods, Panther, Agnew, Clark.

BRISTOL. — Whatley; Bennett, Haydon; Rowley, Forbes, Roberts; Douglas, Barrett, Culley, Clennell, Evans.

Referee.—W. E. Russell, Swindon.