

HARD LINES AGAINST THE "LIONS."

LUTON TOWN SHOCK MILLWALL

Second Half Lapse.

(By CRUSADER).

MILLWALL ATHLETIC 3
LUTON TOWN 2
MILLWALL. — Harford; Tilling, Hill;
Noble, Bryant, Amos; Chance, Hawkins,
Landells, Lincoln, Black.

LUTON. — Muir; Kingham, Graham;
Black, Fulton, Fraser; Pointon, Yardley,
Rennie; Harkins, Nunn.
Referee.—Mr. C. D. Moon, Bristol.

a repetition. The free kick was taken by Pointon, who swept the ball over the heads of a ruck of players, and HARKINS' height proved profitable, for he headed a neat goal, Harford having no chance.

The "Lions" played harder than ever now, but the Town kept the ball on the move, and this eased the backs. However, the vigour of the "Lions" forwards brought their first goal. Graham dashed over to prevent Lincoln capturing a ball that was going out, and the tallest forward on the field knocked the Town captain on to the ball, and a flag kick followed. A scramble in the goal-mouth ensued, and HAWKINS, at the second attempt, managed to tar the ball into the net.

Millwall played strongly after this, but the Town rearguard stood up to it, and the narrowest escape before the change of ends came when Nunn had taken a free kick. He sent back again to Yardley, who dribbled through and let fly with all his might. Harford just managed to get his finger tips to the ball and divert it, so that it went out. The interval came with the Town in front:—

LUTON 2
MILLWALL 1

The "Lions" resumed with great energy, but were repulsed, and then the Town had a turn. The home goal was threatened, but following a mishap to Yardley, who was struck by a hard volley, the home forwards got away, and LANDELLS, after some manoeuvring that should never have been allowed, shot a lovely goal, the ball going right away from the goalkeeper.

The Town seemed listless by comparison with their first half play, and Millwall hammered consistently for an equaliser. Once Bryant drove in a glorious shot, and the ball took the whitewash off the post. The load upon the Town backs was very heavy, for Fraser alone of the middle men seemed capable of standing up to the struggle, and though the backs cleared often, the Town forwards could not keep the ball going long enough to earn a decent respite for the rearguard. Pointon was several times at fault for dillyng, a fatal policy against players like Hill and Amos, neither of whom stands on ceremony, and the inside forwards did not seem able to get past Bryant. Then came the winning goal. A rush on the right wing left Hawkins in possession near the line, and he lifted the ball into the middle. LANDELLS got his head to it just before Kingham, and though Muir was right in line for it, the ball twisted out of his clutch, and rolled into the net.

A RALLY.

The Town then seemed to revive, and to get back again to their first half form, and the home defence had a lively time, but the ball was booted into touch without hesitation. End to end play ensued, and then Rennie got in another shot. The goalkeeper went down to it, but could not hold it, and it seemed as if either Harkins or Yardley might get through. However, Harford grabbed the ball and held it, eventually throwing it behind for a corner, before he had to receive the attention of the trainer. From Nunn's flag kick the goal was in real peril, and when the ball was scrambled out, Yardley lifted it goalwards again, but it fell just the wrong side.

The Town continued to give as much trouble as the "Lions," but their efforts

were several times nullified by Black being penalised for foul throws, and from the free kicks the Luton goal was often menaced. At the other end Harford once ran out a long way to get in a volley when the Town forwards looked like damaging the score again, but the "Lions" returned to the attack, and Kingham and Graham had plenty of work. Muir once saved magnificently when Lincoln headed in, and though the Town got away again, they were easily held, and the end came with the score as above.

JUST DESERVED.

Millwall just about deserved their success, though half-a-dozen policemen were unanimously of an opposite opinion, and did not burk saying so. The Town defenders had gruelling times. Muir kept goal grandly. Even if one were to say that he should have saved the third goal, the Town supporters would agree that he saved when he might well have been censured for being too keen. Kingham put up a great game again, and considering he had been indisposed for the greater part of the week, it was wonderful how he kept going. He worked with his head—with the inside as well as the physical use of it, and was frequently applauded. Graham also stood up to it finely, though he had a harassing wing in opposition, and apart from the misuse of free kicks, I do not think he could be rated other than a class. The middle line seemed strengthening. At the start Black seemed to anticipate trouble similar to last season, and was lacking confidence, but regained it as the match wore on, though his feeding was not so good as usual. Fulton played heroically in the first half, and then most unaccountably fell away. The effect was to be seen in the activities of Landells, who was almost unknown in the first half, but a lively factor afterwards. Frank took the eye for his all-round excellence, and in defence and attack alike was the best of the line. Apart from Bryant, no other half-back was in quite the same class.

FORWARDS.

Of the forwards much the same might be said. Nunn was once more the dashing bit of personality in the attack, and had Tilling on toast. In speed and footwork he was very clever, and could have done with more work, especially in the second half. On the other wing Pointon played quite well before the interval, but afterwards fell off altogether and missed good opportunities of putting the ball into the middle. Yardley was a glutton for work, but there was not enough co-operation among the inside forwards. The experiment of playing Rennie at centre-forward was justified, and with a little perseverance he might develop into a good leader. Not only did he shoot a fine goal, but now and then got the ball to the wings with sparkling passes. He shot rather wild at times, but he showed rather the saving quality of shooting when given a chance. Harkins seemed slow and incompetent for the job in the first half, but in the second was useful, and showed distinct promise. The team did not suffer by the change. He might be persevered with, but perhaps he should get some practice with the Reserves before becoming a fixture at inside-left.

THE "LIONS."

Millwall played up to the club's reputation for vigour and strength, and deserve praise for a game much better than for many seasons as regards sporting manship. Harford kept goal well, and Hill was a very sound back. At half, Bryant was the dominant feature. He played grand football throughout. The forwards were big enough and strong enough, but met a resolute defence. Mr. Moon has improved, and I doubt he made an error in the whole course of the game. He was firm to check offences, knew his own mind, and he allowed and expected the linsmen to do their own work without any new-fangled scheme. The players paid him high compliments, and there can be no better tribute. There were about 9,000 spectators.

FROM a purely partisan aspect, the question Luton supporters will wish answered is relative to the experiment of playing Bennis and Harkins in the forward line. Before that, however, mention must be made of the most satisfactory feature. After the game the referee went to the dressing room and congratulated the Town players on a sporting match. I do not know that this has been a frequent occurrence in the meetings of the teams, but, following upon the experience of the Town at the Den last season, it is a compliment we can appreciate. At times there was too much vigour, especially when the "Lions" were all out to equalise, but there were only occasional lapses, and no very serious breach of the laws. The "Lions" have always been noted for mixing it, and they did so at times in this game, but fouls were few and far between, consequently the game was more enjoyable.

MUIR'S MISFORTUNE.

Quite a number of people felt that the Town were unlucky to lose. Two special reasons might be given for that view. Firstly, it is not a common occurrence for a team to be two goals up, and then to lose; secondly the winning goal once more had a very considerable element of misfortune for the losers. Muir was inclined to blame himself for allowing the ball to elude his grasp, and while he may feel that way, I am certain that no Luton player or supporter would do other than praise him for his work in the game.

Apart from those two reasons I do not think the Town could complain that they were unlucky on the general run of the day. In the first half they were better than Millwall at certain periods, but the "Lions" did the most pressing. For the greater part of the second half the home team were the better side. Their superiority lay almost entirely in greater physical strength and determination. In the first half they gave the Town's youngsters a severe milling, and the result was noticeable in the second half, when the "Lions" big bustling forwards and halves rushed through often by sheer weight, and, plucky though the resistance was, the Town could not cope with it as efficiently as before.

A DRAMATIC CHANGE.

The "Lions" were quicker in their stride, and Muir showed his mettle almost immediately. Within five minutes his skilful work had evoked applause. We were just beginning to turn ourselves to the probable scrap between the Millwall forwards and our defence when there came a dramatic change. Yardley suddenly swung the ball out to the left wing; Nunn seemed, completely hoodwinked Tilling, and then, as other defenders rushed at him, quietly screwed the ball in a back pass towards the centre. RENNIE met it without waiting to pat and place it, and the ball flashed into the net for a really delightful goal. It was a rare stroke for the centre-forward, and put us all in great heart. It gave the players new life, and after Kingham had cleverly frustrated an attack, the Town played up splendidly, keeping the ball on the move, and giving the home defenders any amount of trouble. Harford had dealt with one dangerous situation, and then all the line took part in one run. Nunn capped the work with a grand centre. Harkins took the ball into the goal-mouth, and as Bryant was framing to head away, Pointon dashed in and got his head there first, and the ball flew over the bar. Muir then had a big slice of luck, for after fielding a dangerous header very neatly, he slipped down and lost the ball. He managed to hit it with his fist as Hawkins rushed in, and the ball struck the forward and went behind.

HARKINS' TURN.

Exchanges were even for a time, though the home inside forwards were putting a lot of dash into their finishing efforts, and were well supported by the halves. Pointon had once slipped Amos very cleverly, and the half back fouled him to prevent