

BEST YET.

LUTON TOWN CRUSH CRYSTAL PALACE.

(By "CRUSADER.")

AN old supporter of LUTON TOWN told me on Saturday morning that he had enjoyed the matches between the Town and CRYSTAL PALACE more than any other series during all the years the clubs have met, and he expected to see a good game in the afternoon, with a draw as the probable result. After the game he said that his anticipation had been realised, except the actual result, but that the score vividly exaggerated the Town's superiority.

Most supporters will agree that the Palace did not deserve such a heavy defeat, and that they were extremely unfortunate on many occasions, especially in the first half.

In some respects, indeed, the Palace were the better side, but were crushed because Luton took better toll of their chances.

PRAISE EARNED.

Apart from one or two instances of pique the game was clean, and though the referee admitted at the end that he was quite as tired as the players, he said that he had enjoyed the tussle immensely. Another gentleman said that everything had come off happily for the Town, and nothing for the Palace, but I do not think it is fair to deprive the players of their meed of praise. Probably the defenders will never again experience during this season so many narrow escapes within such a short period of time as in one brief space in the first half, but I am certain that if the forwards and halves maintain the free, fast methods adopted against the Palace, they will go up the League by leaps and bounds. It is a big "IF," however, and I am not disposed to set too much store by this overwhelming victory at the expense of the Palace.

BLACK OPENS THE BALL.

When BLACK drew a bow at a venture after three minutes play, and found the target, it was a rare fillip to the enthusiasm of the youngsters. They were in front, and meant to keep there, and although the halves and backs were sorely tested, they maintained a gallant and never-say-die resistance against experienced players, and soon had further cause to rejoice, for HARKINS scored a grand goal after a fine piece of work by Pointon. It was between this and the third goal that the Palace made their strongest bid, and how the home goal escaped was a mystery. Three or four times the ball hovered about practically under the bar, but it could not be netted. Then there was another brilliant raid, and after Nunn had brought out the ability of Kelly, RENNIE registered the third with a lightning shot.

THE FOURTH GOAL.

Better was in store, for by the home forwards keeping the ball moving from wing to wing, the Palace defenders had more difficult work than the Town backs, though no more of it, and they failed to comprehend the real source of danger. A delightful bit of work by Nunn brought a successful attack, for Harkins captured the ball before it could go out, and turned it in front for POINTON to beat Kelly at close quarters. These four goals in 35 minutes would have been the finish of most teams, but the Palace were made of real stuff, and went into the fray harder than ever, bent upon reducing the arrears. They succeeded by a penalty kick given against Harkins for pushing, CLARKE scoring with a second kick, after Muir had saved the first, the referee holding that the goalkeeper encroached. Still it was a good half-time lead:—

LUTON	4
PALACE	1

The second half was not quite so thrilling, for neither forward line worked up so many fierce attacks, but the Town soon tasted further success. This came as the result of a team movement, several players taking part before Rennie fed Pointon, and the latter obliged with a nice pass from which RENNIE again beat Kelly with a quick shot.

The Palace played up strongly, and there was little to choose between the teams. Muir had plenty of work, and did it well, while his backs were very severely pressed at times.

THE MATCH WON.

There was no lack of confidence, as might be expected with four goals' lead, a win almost a certainty, and with the forwards ever dangerous when they swung the ball about, it was no surprise when YARDLEY netted after the Palace defenders had been thoroughly tied up.

The remaining play favoured the Palace for a little while, but in the later stages the Town came again, and Kelly's charge had some narrow escapes, for the wingers were centring finely, and the inside forwards were full of dash and always on the alert for an opportunity to shoot. It was a well-deserved success, and enjoyed by nearly 10,000 spectators.

ADVANTAGE IN DEFENCE.

Luton had a distinct advantage in defence. There was better power of recovery, and the quickness in tackling was a cheerful and reassuring sign. The halves found rather more than they could hold in the nippy forwards of the Palace, but the backs were in fine form, and the co-operation between the two departments meant a great deal, especially when the Palace forwards were disposed to hold the ball too long. Muir was in great form, and Kingham played magnificently throughout. Graham, too, put up a splendid game, and often infused dash when there were signs of wavering among the middle men.

Black showed considerable improvement, and his feeding of the right wing was a great help to that pair. Fulton tackled grandly, and his powers of interception were remarkable. He fell away a little in the second half, but had been knocked about a lot. Fraser was not quite so dominant as usual, but played well, and gave Nunn many fine passes.

ATTACK.

The forwards did not try to be clever, but proved most effective, their long passing and quickness in the follow-up bewildering the Palace defenders. Pointon was a long way ahead of his average game of this season, and centred splendidly. Yardley tended him well, and was full of zeal and energy. Rennie opened out the game well, and was well on the target with his powerful shots. When he gets more accustomed to the office he will get a lot of goals, for he keeps position well considering that he is a stranger to the job. Harkins is whole-hearted, and did some good work, though he is rather clumsy, as yet. He scored a fine goal, however, and took some of the attention off Nunn, who was again in grand form, and a constant trouble to the big men opposed to him.

The Palace rearguard was not sound, but Holmes played well. Hamilton was a great worker as pivot, and in attack Flood, Turner and Clarke played well throughout.

LUTON TOWN	6 goals
CRYSTAL PALACE	1 goal

LUTON. — Muir; Kingham, Graham; Black, Fulton, Fraser; Pointon, Yardley, Rennie, Harkins, Nunn.

PALACE. — Kelly; Orr, Holmes; Smith, Hamilton, Greener; Flood, Turner, Williamson, Tonner, Clarke.

Referee: Mr. J. Kelley, Harlesden.