

LUTON'S VICTORY.

EXETER BEATEN AFTER VIGOROUS STRUGGLE.

By Crusader.

IT was a very hard struggle for LUTON TOWN to beat EXETER CITY on Saturday at Luton, and though they had far more chances to score goals they were accounted fortunate to win by many of the supporters. The match held many unsatisfactory features, for unpleasant incidents were too common, and the lack of official control was often a source of much annoyance to spectators. The trouble with the referee began within five minutes of the start, when he disallowed a goal by Rennie as offside. Everybody was taken aback, for the Town centre-forward had beaten a full back before running in, and the idea of offside was quite untenable. The only feasible suggestion was that the referee overlooked Pollard until Rennie had beaten him, and yet that seems utterly absurd.

Then there was the rough play, and, as at Exeter, in this matter, Mr. Pennington appeared to think that repeated trips called for nothing more than a free kick, and then when there was retaliation out came his note-book. I doubt if Nunn even made one effort in the last twenty minutes without getting his ankles rapped, and if Mr. Pennington doesn't know that repeated offences of this kind call for something more than the whistle and a free kick, it is time he read the Referee's Chart.

EARLY ACTION NECESSARY.

Our game at Exeter was lost because of this sort of thing, and if Mr. Pennington had told players very plainly that a second trip would be tantamount to inviting marching orders, the game would have been more enjoyable for everybody.

RENNIE sent the crowd into rapture with a great goal three minutes from the start. Yardley made it possible by some quick thinking and clever passing, and a smashing drive by the centre-forward did the rest. It was barely a minute later when Rennie again got through and suffered by the referee's blunder.

Exeter's halves and backs gave their forwards opportunities to attack, but beyond a few shots from long range Abbott had little to worry about. The big burden was accepted by Richards and Till, and they put up a splendid defence, with Ramage as a stalwart auxiliary.

HOLLAND IN LUCK.

The Town forwards were more aggressive, and more persistent in testing Holland, and the City goalkeeper made some fine saves. He was very fortunate to get the ball away on several occasions, and two or three times the ball went flying over the bar when a little better marksmanship would have scored.

The Town had much the better of the exchanges when they got within range, but there was not the same skill in the building-up of attack as was shown by the visitors. It was close on the interval when the City goal had a series of escapes, the ball travelling from head to head within the goal area before the custodian managed to punch it away. The interval came with the score:—

LUTON TOWN	1
EXETER CITY	0

Before many minutes had elapsed in the second half it was clear that the Town were falling away again, and attack after attack was launched by the visitors, the home forwards being almost out of the picture. Now and then the extreme wingers would sally forth on a mission that raised hopes, but the finishing was poor. It was well for the Town that in the twenty minutes that followed the change of ends the backs and Ramage gave of their best. These three played themselves almost to a standstill. Richards was a giant for strength and energy, and his determination kept the visitors at bay many times when they looked likely to score.

DOGGEDNESS.

Perhaps the doggedness of the defenders gave the forwards some heart, for Pointon was frustrated close in by Holland, and then Yardley should have scored when allowed to go through from an apparently offside position; and Rennie lifted the ball over the bar when the goal was yawning in front of him. Nunn had been quiescent for some time, but now came into the limelight with quick, clever dribbles. In spite of trips he got through and centred, and then a little later he failed to take a perfect pass from Rennie. The crowd groaned, but NUNN'S failure had been unexpected by Ditchburn, who was trying to play the man instead of the ball, and the little winger recovered, dribbled round Pollard, and then drove in a magnificent shot from twenty yards' range, and Holland was well beaten.

Immediately the visitors' right wing, skilfully fed by Mason, made progress, and after Edwards had done some forceful work, Abbott had to save. He got the ball well out to Compton, who was lying well up, and drove it into the net away from Abbott.

In the closing play the Town were on top again, and Yardley, Rennie and Pointon each hit the upright, and Holland made some good saves.

PLAYERS.

The Town defence was very steady and strong. Richards and Till were at their best, and largely because of that Abbott had much less work than Holland. The visiting forwards were tackled as soon as within range, and there was fearlessness and grit in the work, and often a good deal of skill. Ramage kept them company when the storm was at its worst, and though he did not do any too much for his forwards, he was a powerful pivot. Black again played a brainy game, and Fraser often won applause, but also won a good deal of criticism by his fault of dribbling too much.

The forwards were good enough in the first half, and for the last twenty minutes, but they had a ragged spell just after the cross-over. Pointon and Nunn were not consistent, though doing many good things, and Rennie was better before the change of ends. Woods and Yardley were hard workers, but the combination, apart from the early stages, was open for improvement, and the marksmanship more so.

Exeter's best were Holland, Pollard, Mason, McDevitt and Edwards.

There were 9,000 spectators.

LUTON TOWN	2
EXETER CITY	1

LUTON.—Abbott; Richards, Till; Black, Ramage, Fraser; Pointon, Yardley, Rennie, Woods, Nunn.
EXETER.—Holland; Pollard, Miller; Ditchburn, Mason, Gee; Purcell, McDevitt, Edwards, Parkin, Compton.
Referee.—J. V. Pennington, Reading.