

GIVE AND TAKE.

LUTON AND WALSALL RESULTS REVERSED.

Town Fall at Ninth Hurdle.

By Crusader.

At Luton on Saturday:
LUTON TOWN 4
WALSALL 1
LUTON.—Abbott; Graham, Richards;
Black, Fulton, Millar; Banks, Yardley,
Rennie Woods, Dennis.
WALSALL.—Wait; Fairhurst, Plunkett;
Groves, McClure, Bradford; Robson,
Walker, Lane, Hughes, Bedford.

At Walsall on Monday:
WALSALL 4
LUTON TOWN 1
WALSALL.—Wait; Fairhurst, Plunkett;
Groves, McClure, Bradford; Bedford,
Robson, Lane, Hughes, Springell.
LUTON.—Abbott; Graham, Richards;
Black, Ramage, Millar; Banks, Yardley,
Rennie, Woods, Dennis.
Referee (both games).—Mr. J. Kelley,
Harlesden.

THE reversal of the result of Saturday's game 48 hours later is not inexplicable to those who saw the second game. The referee's errors had much to do with it, though I am bound to say that the Town were very different in spirit on Monday from what they were on Saturday. It may be that the fact of reaching safety on Saturday had something to do with the change, but then, while there were periods in the second game when Walsall were as badly outplayed as on Saturday, the fact remains that the Town team—or some of them—did not go into the battle with the enthusiasm of the previous game. There was only one change on each side, but that did not wholly account for the difference. In the first place, there was not the virility one expects from the middle line, and in the second the Town backs had an off day. Very much "off," and they did not appear to relish their job at all. On the other hand, Walsall displayed remarkable vim—and more than skill. Here and there in the side was a player who knew his business, but generally they were a rabble in which enthusiasm took the place of combination. It paid.

AT LUTON.

In the game at Luton on Saturday the superiority of the Town was never in doubt. There was such a wide difference in the quality of the teams from the start that the result was a foregone conclusion before the game had run a third of its course, and the only unsatisfactory feature from the Town supporters' aspect was the lapse of the players when they had got the measure of the opposition. The eclipse of Walsall was very thorough, for the Town were not absolutely secure in the league until they had won two more points, and, of course, it mattered little that the visitors were thrust into grave danger by defeat.

By combination that was just and open, the Town had the Walsall defenders dithering from the start, and only the good goalkeeping of Wait kept the score down to three goals in the first twenty minutes. The marksmen were RENNIE, who capped a strong assault with a very fine shot; YARDLEY, whose alertness gave him a clear run in, following good work by Millar; and RENNIE again, after Yardley had done the spade work. Generally, however, the whole of the attack had some part in the goals, and the team work in this period was good to watch. Now and then the visitors made forays, but only once was Abbott seriously threatened, and then he made a great save from Lane.

Wait made many fine saves, and the Town shot well in this half, even though

they missed one or two simple chances. Once, indeed, the Walsall defence was completely at sea, and Rennie and Yardley had the goal at their mercy, but each left the final kick to the other, and neither took it. It was a winning lead at the interval:—

LUTON 3
WALSALL 0

Walsall made a better show after the change of ends, but it was due, in some measure, to falling off in the home ranks. Some of the Town players did not trouble a great deal so long as Walsall were kept at bay, but when HUGHES scored a fine goal after splendid work by Robson and Walker, a further effort was necessary. Wait again did some fine things, and his goal had many escapes before the fourth goal was credited to DENNIS from a penalty kick. The penalty was quite just, for, with Wait beaten, McClure fisted down a scoring shot from Millar, and the referee was right on the spot.

In the closing stages Abbott had a rather lively time, and he made a number of good saves, but the visitors, in spite of their pluck, were well down.

There were 7,000 spectators.

AT WALSALL.

Not quite so pronounced a slope, perhaps, but more than most sounds, that at Walsall reminded me of Millmoor, the ground of Rotherham United. It is strange that Luton, with their fine record of goals away from home, should be the first club to fail to score against the slope when there has been a goal scored at Walsall this season. One would think that Walsall could get so familiar with the ground that they would not lose a game here, and it is difficult to believe that they could fail if they used their knowledge of the ground as well as they did on Monday night.

It is true that Luton were unfortunate in the manner in which the match was controlled, but they had enough of the play to have brought away a point. In no department, however, was there such dash and go as there was at Luton, and the strong rushes of the home team when playing downhill in the second half were a decisive factor. Over and over again a spell of pressure by the Town was the prelude to a long kick forward, and Lane and his colleagues would tumble into the Town backs with disconcerting energy, and the rearguard was sadly unbalanced.

It was a very fine goal that RENNIE scored after clever work by Black, when the game was 38 minutes old. More should have been registered before and after this point, but the Walsall defence was much more compact than on Saturday, and played vigorously. It was on the stroke of half-time that the equalising goal came. By my time record the whistle was overdue when LANE took advantage of a gap in the Town defence and slipped through to give Abbott no chance.

In the second half there were many such gaps, and from one of these LANE got a second goal, while a penalty kick, rightly awarded, following a knock-on by Graham enabled LANE to complete his hat trick. Later, a great blunder by the referee gave ROBSON the chance for the fourth goal, when he and two others were palpably offside, and the Town players were appealing. Even so, the Town should have got goals in this half, but they failed at close quarters, though they showed the better football of the two teams.