

THIRD VICTORY AWAY.

HOW LUTON TOWN WON AT BRISTOL

By *Crusader.*

IT was pathetic to hear the comments of some of the BRISTOL ROVERS supporters about the way LUTON TOWN went about their work at Eastville. There appeared to be an idea that Luton did not want the points, and so should not have made such a hard fight as usual. An end-of-the-season game was evidently anticipated, because the Town were safe from trouble, whereas the Rovers wanted a couple of points to make them fairly certain of their place in the League without having to seek re-election. As results generally went on Saturday, a victory for the Rovers would have put them safe, but now they are in jeopardy until the last games of the season are played. They will probably escape by the skin of their teeth, on goal average, that is, if one may venture a prediction.

CONFIDENCE.

The game was won in the first half, for the Town were then well on top, in spite of having to face a strong sun. The Rovers played strongly throughout, but there was not much method about their work, and in the second half they ran almost wild in their excitement, and brought a lot of vigour into the game. It was usually legitimate vigour, however, was well countered, and the game was by no means unpleasant. The Town gave the most confident display, and it was probably the certainty shown by the backs and halves that settled the issue, though there were periods in the second half when this quality expanded into a cocksureness that gave rise to doubts among the few supporters the Town had in the grand stand. There were a few, but whom they were I do not know. Now and then voices here and there raised a cheer, evidently from ardent supporters, but the Rovers' crowd included not a few willing to give credit to the visitors as well as to their own men.

It was a glorious day, and the players felt the effects of their strenuous exertions long before the end. The Town finished the fresher side, and came within an ace of increasing their lead in the concluding stages.

METHOD PAYS.

Each goal had narrow escapes in the first ten minutes, but the Town were the more consistently dangerous, for the forwards usually made a lot of ground when in possession, and the Rovers' backs had to maintain a very sharp vigilance to keep out Rennie & Co. At the other end there were a couple of raids that with a little better luck for the Rovers, and a little less alertness by Graham and Richards, might have given the home team the lead.

The opening goal was the result of bright, open play. Rennie received a pass through the middle after good work by Fulton. Covered, he passed nicely to Dennis, who lifted the ball across; Yardley headed it back, and WOODS nodded into goal; Densley appeared to have the ball well to hand, but failed to clutch it properly, and it slipped over his hands and into the net.

AN EQUALISER.

The Rovers were nettled, but could not fathom the intentions of the Town forwards, and Nunn and Dennis each put the ball into the goal mouth for Densley to punch away. The goalkeeper was much disturbed by a very high centre from Nunn, for he did not hit the ball properly, and it was only rushed away after a hot scramble. A couple of corner kicks were badly placed by Nunn, and then the Rovers got their goal. It was a question as to Millar or Richards being to blame. The ball appeared to be going into touch on the right, and there seemed little prospect of anyone catching it, but Forbes did so, and then kicked forward to ORMSTON, who dashed down the right wing unattended. He called to his colleagues, but they were missing, and when close in he took a shot himself, and the ball flashed past Abbott and landed in the net. It was a very good goal.

On equality, the teams pulled out a little, but still the Town held the upper hand, their efforts being better drafted and showing much more cohesion. For one period of about five minutes the Rovers' goal was assailed, and shots and centres came in regularly. On the other hand, the Rovers relied mainly on the rushes of their wingers, and Homer, in particular, required a lot of watching.

THE LEAD.

The lead was taken just five minutes before the change of ends. Millar got the better of the opposing wing, feinted to the left, and then sent the ball into the middle of the waiting Woods. The Town captain tricked Perry and Roberts, and then swung the ball across to Nunn, who was all alone. The little winger went off

towards the corner flag, and, as Haydon came in to tackle, centred nicely. YARDLEY dashed in, trapped the ball cleverly, and shot into the net as Densley advanced.

There were several rushes by the Rovers before the whistle called the halt, but they were dealt with satisfactorily by the Town backs, and at the retirement the score read:—

LUTON TOWN	2
BRISTOL ROVERS	1

The Town began as they had left off, the ball being freely used, and each of the wings led attacks that nearly matured. A brisk assault tested the Rovers' defence to the full, and there was strenuous toil for Rotherham and Haydon. The latter was in fine form, and it was due to his quickness and hard labour that the goal did not fall again.

Thereafter there were long stretches in which the ball did not enter either penalty area, but the Town were playing coolly, and made good use of finesse. The Rovers' supporters now and then raised their voices to some purpose, and the players responded well. Rush after rush was made on the Town goal, but there was not much combination, and though Abbott had plenty to do, he cleared his lines with quiet skill, and his backs held a tight rein on the rushing tendencies of Ormston, Roberts and Paterson. Homer was a different proposition, for his speedy runs were a menace that demanded the close attention of Richards and Millar.

COUNTER-ATTACKS.

Fine headwork was seen, the Town players once taking the ball almost half the length of the field by this means.

Fiercer became the Rovers as the game wore on, but they battered in vain, and the Town forwards were always dangerous when they set out. Dennis twice got clear, once being robbed at the expense of a corner as he was about to drive hard from close range, and on another occasion he got in a shot that missed by inches. Haydon also proved just too quick when Nunn dribbled right in, and forced him to shoot past.

The Town made strong attacks in the last ten minutes, and shots from all the inside forwards went close, while others sailed high over the bar.

RETRIEVING CREDIT.

The Town played a level, well-balanced game, and no matter how hotly the Rovers attacked, refused to be upset or to allow their determination to be unsteadied. The spirit of the side was good; there was no shouting and fault-finding, and the whole eleven worked with a common purpose and will, and in this way thoroughly merited their success.

Abbott was quite safe, and Graham and Richards completed a rearguard that was altogether sounder than at Walsall. Nothing was given away, and the Rovers found shooting at close quarters almost an impossibility. The display of Fulton was as good as any half-back has given for Luton this season. He covered an immense amount of ground; was quick in tackling and in recovery, and his defensive work was capped by splendid use of the ball for the benefit of his forwards. Black also did remarkably well, and King got very little latitude, while Millar, though he had a tough handful in the mercurial Homer, got through a lot of work with credit.

FORWARDS' PART.

The forwards kept the ball moving from wing to wing, held it nicely, and passed accurately. The light ball was ballooned a lot in front of goal, but the hard ground was a factor against good control. Nunn was a success at outside-right, though his flag-kicks invariably went the wrong side of the goal. Yardley was thrustful, tenacious, and helped his partner to many openings for advance. Rennie also distributed to advantage, but did not shoot as accurately as we expect. Woods and Dennis were a workmanlike wing, the former supplying many illuminating touches at the expense of the Rovers' halves, and Dennis, though finding control difficult, got over some troublesome centres.

For the Rovers Haydon was a fine back, and it was not his fault that his side lost. Rotherham also kicked and tackled strongly, and Forbes was a clever middle man. Homer and Ormston were the best of the van.

There were 5,000 spectators.

LUTON TOWN	2
BRISTOL ROVERS	1

BRISTOL ROVERS.—Densley; Rotherham, Haydon; Forbes, Perry, Falconer; Homer, Paterson, Ormston, Roberts, King.

LUTON TOWN.—Abbott; Graham, Richards; Black, Fulton, Millar; Nunn, Yardley, Rennie, Woods, Dennis.

Referee.—Mr. A. J. Attwood, Newport.