

STILL ON TOP!

LUTON TOWN'S FINE WIN AT NEWPORT.

By Crusader.

SUPERSTITIOUS followers of Luton Town would view with great glee the clearing of the thirteenth obstacle which was presented last Saturday, when Newport County were defeated on their own ground. The result was in marked contrast from that of last season, and was all the more remarkable because of the players engaged; two-thirds of them took part in the two games.

The County played just the same type of football, sharp and skilful combination, but there was a big difference in that of the Town, and their sweeping movements had the "Ironsides" in difficulties throughout the first half. The home defenders were kept constantly on the run, and with the Town forwards well on the target, and shooting, at almost every opportunity, it was not a surprise that they gained a lead which they managed to maintain in the second half by strong defensive play.

After an even opening the Town forwards set up a persistent attack, and after good work by Anderson and Reid, with Blakemore also safe in goal, a quick bit of play on the left wing brought a centre from Daly. Blakemore fisted out from among a crowd of players in the goal-mouth, and RENNIE, who had retreated a dozen yards, met the ball about knee high and crashed it into the net, the goalkeeper having no chance.

Newport rallied gamely, but for the most part the Town were attacking, and Rennie again went close with a fine shot. In a burst to the other end a miskick by Harris let in Gittins and Waterston, and they went right through, but Abbott came out at the critical moment and brought off a spectacular save by taking the ball off the forward's foot. The Town got away from the clearance, and after a centre by Bedford the ball was received by Woods, who headed nicely for RENNIE to crash it home again with a beautiful shot. Thus the Town were two goals ahead in a quarter of an hour.

There was severe pressure by the Town after this, and often the Newport goalkeeper was called upon. He rendered good service, and made two marvellous saves from Rennie by diving at the ball and turning it round the post. Only at comparatively rare intervals did the County threaten danger, and the Town halves and backs defended so well that Abbott had only a few troublesome shots to handle. He did his work well, and at the change of ends the score was:—

LUTON	2
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The second half was largely in favour of the County. The Town half-backs, who had played a prominent part in the first half, failed to stay the pace against the quick-footed assaults and the swinging methods of the home forwards. Curiously enough, though the home team did the more attacking, they were never so dangerous in front of goal as the Town, and after Abbott and Company had withstood several assaults, the Town only just

failed to add to their lead on three occasions.

This half was midway spent when the home team succeeded. The efforts of Harris to throw offside two of the forwards were spoilt through one or two of the Town players failing to realise the move in time, and Gittins and WATERSTON were left with a clear course. The latter scored as Abbott ran out of goal.

For some time the County had much the better of the exchanges, but the Town defended well, and most of the shots were comfortably taken by Abbott, or passed wide. When the Town forwards got going again, thanks to a revival at half-back, Blakemore was severely tested by Rennie, Woods, Yardley and Bedford. He saved well, and managed to keep his lines clear. Near the end the County again made desperate efforts, but the Town presented a rock-like defence, and the game ended with the Town gaining their third victory of the season away from home, and their ninth win in thirteen games.

It was a fast and thrilling struggle, though there was a period in each half when play was rather scrappy owing to the fierce pace. The Town deserved their victory by the opportunism of the forwards in the first half and the strength of the defence later. Abbott made several good saves, and positioned well. The backs were good throughout. Kingham maintained his high standard, and Harris confirmed the splendid impression of his first match. Both were fast on the ball and kicked a good length.

The halves played at the top of their form in the first half, but had a very bad spell in the second only to improve again before the end. They were a level trio, with none showing outstanding brilliance.

Similarly with the attack. It was co-operative movement and unselfish passing that enabled them to establish the winning lead, and with a little more good fortune, Rennie would have got more goals, so well did he shoot. His colleagues worked well together as wings, and also as a line, and found him with nice passes.

For Newport, Blakemore was a good goalkeeper, and Anderson was the better of two strong backs. The halves had a bad time in the first half, but showed considerable improvement in the second, while the forwards gave a nice display of combination and were very tricky, but they were not often given chances in front of goal.

There were fewer than 5,000 spectators present.

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NEWPORT.—Blakemore; Anderson, Reid; S. Richardson, Clifford, G. Richardson; Wardell, Gittins, Waterston, Thomas, Pick.

LUTON. — Abbott; Kingham, Harris; Black, Fulton, Dennis; Daly, Yardley, Rennie, Woods, Bedford.

Referee.—Mr. R. O. Rees Swansea.