

A GRIM GAME.

LUTON TOWN'S DASHING ATTACK ON FORM.

Crystal Palace Beaten.

By Crusader.

YET another obstacle was overcome by LUTON TOWN on Saturday, when they entertained and defeated CRYSTAL PALACE. The Palace had suffered an unfortunate month, during which their pretensions to promotion were rudely checked, but for the game at Luton they were able to bring out again Thoms and Walsh, two of their most expensive acquisitions, and when they took the field it was clear that efforts had been made to field a hefty team, just the type to make a bid for championship honours in the lower divisions of the League. The Palace put up just the sort of fight to be expected in the circumstances, and though there were one or two instances of bad fouls, Greener being the culprit, as a whole the game was clean and yet very vigorous, hard knocks being given and taken freely in the burden of the fray.

RENNIE'S USUAL.

The Town won, and merited their success. The margin should have been more pronounced, not because they were the superior side on the general run of the game, but because they were the more efficient in the all-important aspect—finishing. They made a good start, and on the wet and slippery ground, from which the ball travelled at a fast pace, they kept play on the move, and every player on the side had his share. In speedy attacks at the outset the Palace defenders were kept on the alert, and after the goal had escaped at the expense of a couple of flag-kicks, RENNIE neatly slipped the ball home from among a crowd of players, and while hundreds of spectators were still pushing and crushing at the gates in Kenilworth-road, the thousands on the ground were cheering wildly at this early success.

There were many thrills after this, but the big kicking by the Palace backs and halves kept play in the home quarters for a considerable time. The Town halves were working at top pressure, but the Palace forwards and halves kept the game open, and but for the vigilance of Kingham and Harris they would have got on level terms. Abbott had several shots to save, but once Harry was given a good chance, and had he kept the ball low he could scarcely have failed to score, but he choose to shoot hard, and the ball thumped the bar and came out.

CALLENDER'S CALLS.

When the Town forwards got going, however, they were ever so much more dangerous, and the Palace goalkeeper had to save many good shots. Rennie should have scored twice from centres by Bedford, but, shooting hurriedly, he sent wide. The Palace goalkeeper calmly took a high shot from Woods, and also saved well from Rennie, and later, when Rennie appeared certain to score again, Callender dashed out and managed to smother the shot. He was destined to be beaten again before the interval, however, for Yardley and Daly made play, and after the extreme winger had seen his centre repelled the ball came back again, from the right, and BEDFORD tore in and shot hard, from close quarters, and the ball struck the underside of the bar and the net at the same moment, and bounced over the line to put the Town two goals ahead before the refreshments were handed round.

LUTON		2
PALACE		0

There had been no lack of incident in the first half, but in the second more was to come. Within three minutes a fierce onslaught on the Palace goal tested Callender to the full. He saved in extraordinary fashion from Yardley and Rennie, as they sought to convert a centre from Daly, but YARDLEY got the ball as it came back off the goalkeeper after Rennie had hit him with a shot as he was lying across the goal, and this time made no mistake. Rapidly the ball travelled from end to end, and at this period the Town halves were playing better than at any previous period. The Palace goal bore a charmed existence in another assault, Callender saving grandly from Rennie, and how he got the ball away on two occasions only he could tell.

PALACE PERSEVERE.

The Palace fought hard, however, and success came after Butler had broken through by brilliant footwork on the left, leaving both Kingham and Black behind. He lifted the ball across, and HAVELOCK headed past Abbott at close quarters. This encouraged the Palace, and their right wing was in

evidence, but Harris cleared his lines by magnificent work, and a goal to the Town followed. Woods took a pass and slipped the ball along the ground to Kennie, who ran in and beat Smith, but his shot hit Callender or Charlton and rebounded. BEDFORD had closed in, however, and promptly netted.

The Palace right straightway came down, and Harry managed to beat Harris and screw the ball in from the line for HAVELOCK to head his second goal. The Town renewed the challenge with spirit, and Bedford made a long run accompanied by Smith. He got the better of the back after a sharp tussle, and seeing the goal-mouth blocked with players, he tapped back to YARDLEY, who had taken position wisely, and rammed the ball home with an unstoppable shot. These four goals came in the space of ten minutes, and it seemed as if the Town would win in a canter, but the Palace were not taking it that way, and fought grimly. The Town halves could not stand up to the rushes, and Kingham and Harris were hard pressed. They got the Town forwards moving again, and Callender brought off a sensational save from Yardley after a delightful move by Daly, and Bedford sent a high shot careering along the face of the bar to fall behind.

A TESTING TIME.

Abbott then had his severest test of the afternoon, for Walsh got through to fire hard at the farther corner of the goal, but the Town goalkeeper dived and tipped the ball round the upright for a corner. This was cleared, but the Palace came again, and after Harris and Kingham had frustrated the attack and Fulton was given the chance to clear, he tried to dribble and lost the ball to Walsh, who broke through and passed at the right moment to HAVELOCK, who ran close in before shooting past Abbott to score his third goal.

There were 13 minutes to go, and the Town had to work hard to hold their lead, but Callender made another great save from Woods, and then the Palace fought fiercely. Kingham was hurt in a collision, and had to be carried off, but Dennis fell back into Harris's place, and the latter crossed over, and both kicked strongly, the end coming with the score:—

LUTON TOWN		5 goals
CRYSTAL PALACE		3 goals

It was a splendid struggle, and football like this will always ensure a crowd, for enthusiasm was kept at fever heat, especially in the second half. The crowd did not mind the rain, which fell almost continuously, though not heavily, and they had plenty to cheer about.

Abbott kept goal safely, and could not be blamed for any of the three goals. He made a few good saves, but had nothing like the work of Callender. Kingham and Harris were a fine pair of backs, and they, too, could be held blameless, for they kicked and tackled skilfully and strongly, and did their best work when the halves showed signs of flagging zeal in the second half.

IN THE MIDDLE.

The middle men were never comfortable in the first half, and after a rare rally in the second period they fell away sadly, and the Palace forwards were quick to press home their advantage. Dennis gave a good display, and in the closing stages one wondered if he had not possibilities as a back. All the forwards played fine football, and though Rennie only scored once, he was better in the general qualities of leadership than he has ever been. He received a lot of attention, and this enabled Yardley, who played his best game of the season, to shine and to score. The inside right is developing nicely, and with Woods also displaying his best craftsmanship the inside forwards were a lively menace to the Palace defence. Daly and Bedford did much good work, especially the latter, in the second half, and the line all round played the right sort of football.

For the Palace Callender kept goal magnificently; his backs were more than useful, and the halves put up a strong game, Thoms in particular, while the forwards were a fast and skilful line, Butler being about the best.

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

CRYSTAL PALACE. — Callender; Smith, Charlton; Hamilton, Thoms, Greener; Harry, Havelock, Walsh, Butler, Clarke.

Referee: G. Franklin, Southsea.