

ONE DOWN AGAIN.

LUTON'S MISSED OPPORTUNITIES AT BRIGHTON.

Forwards Fail.

By Crusader.

BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION ... 1

LUTON TOWN Nil

BRIGHTON.—Webb; Smith, Chamberlain; Wilkinson, Mooney, Edmonds; Farrell, Kirkwood, Cook, Hopkins, Wilson.

LUTON.—Abbott; Graham, Harris; Black, Fulton, Fraser; Daly, Roe, Walters, Woods, Bedford.

Referee.—Captain A. Prince-Cox, Barnes.

DISAPPOINTING in the extreme was the result of the game at Hove on Saturday, more particularly to the handful of Town followers, because time after time they were quite sure a goal had arrived. On the general play Brighton were hopelessly in arrear. There was a period in the second half when the pressure was so great that with the exception of their plucky rearguard the Albion seemed to have thrown up the sponge. Yet the Town could not get a goal. Actually they should have won the game in the first 20 minutes, for they had chances enough, thanks to the good all-round play, but the inside forwards failed badly in their finishing, and they retired without being able to reply effectively to the solitary goal credited to the Albion after 20 minutes play.

The ground was very soft, but not nearly so bad as we expected, considering the known drainage difficulties of the Goldstone-road ground. There was a real advantage in winning the toss, however, and Woods took it when he set the Albion to face a strong sunlight. The Town began well, and had they made the game theirs in the first quarter-of-an-hour there could have been no surprise to the spectators. In this period the Town rearguard had little work, for the middle men had a grip of the game, especially Black and Fulton, and they gave their forwards plenty of work. There were chances and half-chances, and several shots went near.

A SPLENDID CHANCE.

Then came a splendid opening as the result of clever combination by the middle line and forwards, and Roe eventually gave Walters a chance to sprint past the backs, and run right to the goal-line. Everybody but Webb felt that a goal was a certainty, but the goalkeeper flung himself on Walters' feet when a couple of yards from the line, and managed to get the ball. It was a great chance missed, for the resultant corner kick was got away.

Following this came Brighton's most dangerous essay so far, and clever work by Farrell gave Cook an opening, and he dashed through, but Graham came up in the nick of time, and kicked the ball off his toe. For a few minutes the Albion forwards were aggressive, but Abbott's duties were not exacting, and the Town came again to fail at another easy chance. Walters took a pass from Woods, and gave Daly a beautiful pass for the winger to gather in his stride. Unmarked, he cut in at a great pace, and shot—straight at Webb as he ran out, and so another opening was gone. The Albion profited by this, and made a determined attack, and Abbott had to punch away twice, and then Kirkwood was foiled by Fulton at close quarters. From a free kick against Fraser, who brought down Farrell, the only goal was scored. Wilkinson placed the ball among the ruck, and the tall KIRKWOOD got his head to it and directed the ball to the farther corner of the goal right away from Abbott.

MORE MISSES.

The Town were not upset by this goal, and with the Albion defenders beaten to the world, Walters dashed in as the ball dropped in the goal-mouth. How he put it over the bar was inexplicable, but over it went to the tune of cheers from the crowd. Again the Albion made a spurt, and Kirkwood brought Abbott full length to make a wonderful save. From the flag kick the Town came back again, and Daly centred Andy; Walters' header

seemed bound to find the net, for Webb was at the other end of the goal, but Chamberlain bobbed up under the bar and headed out. Another scuffle took place in the goal-mouth, and Walters was hurt in a hot mix-up; and when Black deftly ran through and was about to shoot, Edmonds made a frantic save at the expense of a corner. Again Webb saved his charge in extraordinary fashion, and another flag kick followed. The Albion goal was crowded, and the Town forwards vainly tried to rush the ball through. Webb went down in the scramble, and managed to grab and hold the ball in spite of fierce attempts to dislodge him.

It was remarkable how the Town's inside forwards failed to score again before the change of ends. Woods and Walters got right through from a pass by Bedford, but there was a bad misunderstanding between them, and the ball was got away. The only danger that befell the Town in the quarter-of-an-hour before the change of ends was when Cook got the ball after clever work by his right wing, and his first-time shot travelled wide. Interval:

BRIGHTON 1

LUTON Nil

The Albion held their own for a considerable period after the re-start, the ball travelling from end to end. Their progress was usually made by means of big kicks, the right wing being plied frequently. When the Town opened out again they played cleverly up to a point, but they could not shoot well, and the passes often went straight to the defenders. It was a neat slip-out by Walters that endangered the Albion goal. Daly took possession and cut in, but with the inside forwards waiting for the return pass, he shot straight at Webb, who had come out. Another scrimmage ensued in the Albion goal-mouth, and Roe was crippled as he tried to shoot, and was led off the field.

FRASER ON FORM.

Though short-handed for a few minutes, the Town exerted heavy pressure, and the Albion played like a beaten team, except the men in the rear. Though crude, their efforts were effective, and with the middle men also playing in the back division the Town forwards were kept at bay.

When the Albion did get away they were ever so much better marksmen, and once Abbott made a great save from Hopkins, but the Town were soon at it again. The halves almost dominated the game, and Fraser played magnificently, but the inside forwards could not get a shot. Webb made another magnificent save when Roe shot in with great power. The Town were doing splendidly in all things except shooting, and only at rare intervals were the Albion forwards in the picture. Right to the end the Town assailed the Albion goal, and even the backs joined in the desperate efforts, but all to no purpose, for the end came with the Albion successful by the only goal of the match.

FORWARDS—

Let me say right away that none were more bitterly disappointed than the players themselves. They realised well enough that they should have won comfortably, and so far from the London

report that said "Brighton deserved their two points," Tommy Cook, the Brighton leader, said that the Town should have been three or four goals ahead at half-time. He was right. The blame rests with the inability of the inside forwards. It was one of those days when things would not come right for them in front of goal. Their general football was streets ahead of that of the Albion, and could they have finished half as well as they combined in midfield they would have won handsomely. The ball was cleverly worked time after time, with the halves supporting nicely, but when a shot was due it was held too close, and though the Albion backs were nothing to boast about, they lunged clear as soon as they got at the ball. The Town wingers were not as well fed by the inside forwards as they should have been, and had long spells of unemployment until rather late in the game. Walters failed to take his chance. He seemed to be over-anxious, and lacking confidence, and though he worked his hardest, he was a long way below his best. Now and then he gave good passes to the wings, but his failures in front of goal were lamentable. Roe was the cleverest, and did not cling to the ball so much as usual, and he got in the best shot from our inside forwards, but it was saved. Woods was not so prominent as usual, and his passes lacked accuracy, though he worked unceasingly. Daly got more work than Bedford, but the latter was well watched, Wilkinson giving him little scope.

AND OTHERS

The halves played splendidly. There was little to choose among them. Black was consistently clever, and time after time initiated attacks that deserved success. Taking the game as a whole, he was the best half on the field. Fulton was more prominent for his defensive work, and he held Cook in a vice-like grip. Could he feed with the skill of Black there can be little doubt that Fulton would never be moved from the pivotal position. Fraser was a long time settling down, and was much bothered by Farrell for half-an-hour, but subsequently he rose to a high standard, especially in the second half. He dribbled and passed in masterly fashion, and I have come to the conclusion that he would play well in any position. His work in the last half-hour was magnificent.

Graham won general praise. He was every whit as good as Harris, though the latter took the part of the advance guard. They both played finely, and while Harris made one or two miskicks, his splendid powers of recovery enabled him to stave off danger. The rearguard was safe, Abbott again responding to all the calls made upon him like a custodian of the first class.

The Albion owed most to Webb, their reserve goalkeeper, who played a grand game. His luck was in, and his courage and alertness deserved it. His backs were useful rather than clever, and the middle men were unable to hold the Town forwards, hard though they worked. Kirkwood was the outstanding forward, and he was almost the best of the half-backs, too, for he was as often engaged in that department as in the forward line.

Captain A. Prince-Cox handled the game well, and the crowd, which increased from about 500 at 2.15, until about 7,000 were present, were delighted with the victory, whilst the Brighton officials readily conceded that they had been very fortunate to win.