

POINTS FOR THE TOWN.

ROE GETS BOTH GOALS AGAINST MERTHYR.

By Crusader.

LUTON TOWN'S success at the expense of MERTHYR TOWN did not go a long way towards restoring the confidence of their supporters—certainly not to the extent of promotion talk. They had hard work to dispose of the challenge of the lowly Welsh team, who fought throughout with no little skill, and as pluckily as could be desired. Victory went to the better side on the afternoon's play, but Luton did not deserve more than the margin recorded, and, to say the least, there was a very grave suspicion that one of the goals was undeserved.

TOMMY ROE, who returned to the team for the first time since Christmas Day, had the pleasure of registering both goals. The first came after seven minutes' play, and was as good a point as could be wished, for he headed the ball downwards as it came across from Bedford's flag kick, and McKenna had not a dog's chance of getting to it. Once again the Town forwards had an object lesson in the value of nodding the ball to the ground when at close quarters.

The second goal came seventeen minutes after the change of ends, and gave rise to an indignant protest from the visitors, especially McKenna. There had been a fierce onslaught, and the goal had narrowly escaped several times before ROE got possession and came through a crowd of players to hang the ball past McKenna. At once the visitors appealed, and ran after the referee, who could not withstand the demonstration, but eventually managed to get over to the linesman, and after a rather prolonged consultation the goal was allowed to stand.

The visitors had the support of many onlookers in their claim that the Luton forward handled the ball in his rush through, but the referee was almost directly behind the player, and it is probable that the linesman was just as badly unsighted. It was hard luck for the plucky Merthyr men that they should be put further in arrears in a questionable manner, but their method of protest was unwise.

There were plenty of thrills besides the goals, and these were not all to the credit of Luton. The home side were the sharper in attacks, and were more aggressive generally, but the visitors showed pretty combination at times, and halves and forwards joined in accurate passing movements that required all the energy and skill of the Luton defenders to thwart, while Banes had plenty of work, especially for a player making his debut in this class.

Yardley and Daly were the main source of trouble to the visitors in the first half, because they combined better than the left wing pair, and seemed to find better foothold on that wing, and Yardley was the best marksman, several good shots going very close. Matters were more equal in the second, Bedford finding the going better, and once he made a brilliant raid and gave Rennie a good chance, but the centre-forward's shot had too much elevation.

McKenna had rather more work than Banes, and it was more dangerous. Once in the first half he saved brilliantly, but could not hold the ball, recovering at the second attempt and getting it away. On another occasion he should have been beaten by Rennie, who was left in possession with all the players standing under the impression that a free kick had been awarded, but the goalkeeper managed to get at Rennie's shot and save at the expense of a corner kick.

In the second half also he did a lot

of good work, and after the first quarter-of-an-hour of the second period was assailed by shots from all directions, but proved equal to all calls except the one in which Roe succeeded.

Banes had some exciting moments. He was fortunate on two occasions in the first half. Once when Gibbon hit the bar the ball went to the unmarked Williams, who fired over. On another occasion Banes was down on the ground and the ball was shot against a barrier of defenders until he was back in goal again. Yet again he was down on the ball when a rush by Gibbon dispossessed him, but Banes made a great recovery and got the ball off the forward's foot.

Graham and Fulton were strong in defence for the Town, and gave Banes his best support. Harris was quite unreliable at times, and at others made brilliant recoveries, especially when he dropped the artistry and went in for first-time clearances. Graham, however, stood above the lot for his dashing and judicious defence, and has never played better than in recent games. He has good understanding with Black, playing well up to the half-back, and between them they held a hot handful in Bryant and Borland.

Millar also did well along with Black in assisting his attack, but did not get on well with Harris, and one thing was clear again on Saturday so far as the defence is concerned. It is time there was a direct understanding when the goalkeeper should come out and when he should stay at home. If a defender wishes the goalkeeper to come out and take the ball he should let him know, and should turn and face the opposition; not run with his back to it and leave the goalkeeper in doubt as to whose is the ball.

Fulton worked unostentatiously, but with his customary spirit and energy, covering a lot of ground, and he gave Gibbon little rope. His forwards, Rennie in particular, did not receive many through passes, and the Town pivot does not follow on the heels of his forwards as closely as is advisable, but there was some excuse in view of the uncertainty of the men behind him, and both he and Black came to the rescue several times.

The right wing again did well, and Yardley is playing better than ever, with the result that there is less dissatisfaction with Daly, and he is getting over a heap of trouble to opposing defences. Rennie is not the marksmen he was, but is not getting the chances so open as in the early part of the season. Roe was fairly successful apart from his goals, and Bedford, though not reaching the standard of three months ago, is always a bit of hot stuff.

Merthyr's young men did extremely well to hold the Town to a couple of goals. They have some very good players. The defence is sturdy and resolute, kicks and tackles well, and McKenna is a goalkeeper of parts. The middle men were industrious, and in Gibbon, Borland and Bryant there are three very good forwards.

Considering the treacherous state of the ground the football was very good, and was very clean, without losing any keenness.

There were 3,000 spectators.

LUTON TOWN.—Banes; Graham, Harris; Black, Fulton, Millar; Daly, Yardley, Rennie, Roe, Bedford.

MERTHYR TOWN.—McKenna; Page, Scott; Richards, Warren, Parkin; Brown, Williams, Gibbon, Bryant, Borland.

Referee.—H. Kilsby, West Bromwich.

LUTON TOWN 2

MERTHYR TOWN 0