

TORQUAY HOLD A POINT.

HALF-TIME LEAD LOST BY LUTON TOWN.

By Crusader.

HAD LUTON TOWN brought back both points from TORQUAY UNITED the visit to Devon would have ranked as their happiest yet. They have a more formidable job on Saturday week, when they visit Plymouth Argyle, but there were features in Saturday's game that led one to hope for even better results than a draw when they go to Home Park. The point is whether there can be a full ninety minutes of dash and speed that gained a lead of two goals in twenty minutes at Torquay.

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I am quite sure that if the Town had gone the full course on Saturday as they began it they would have won with a lot to spare, and equally certain that if they had accepted the challenge of the United with the same spirit as that challenge was made they would have won, if not by a big margin. When Torquay took up the cudgels, and threw themselves into the fray with redoubled determination after the Town had scored twice, there was a distinct falling off in the quality of the Town, hence the division of the spoils.

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The conditions were delightful, and the morning air on the cliffs at Babbacombe did the players a world of good, so that they took the field with that spirit that they were going to win, and they certainly framed as if there was no shadow of doubt. The Torquay crowd felt that way, too, especially when in well-ordered attacks Bedford shot very close, Millsom saving well, and Rennie also gave an earnest of what he wanted when he sent the ball skimming very close to the upright.

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Though the United were pegging away with good heart, there was better quality in the Town methods, and it came as no surprise when a clever clearance by Kingham, and an equally fine pass by Yardley, sent RENNIE careering through to beat Millsom as coolly as could be desired. The home crowd cheered on their team, though clearly fearful that this was but the beginning of the end. When Gardner broke through as a result of a misfortune to Kingham, an equaliser was ready-made, but the home centre-forward did not accept it, and Banes saved.

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A storming attack by the Town soon brought another goal. Boylen and Yardley did the spade work that won a corner, and they were very active, thanks to the skilful feeding of Black. Following a short scrimmage after the flag-kick, RENNIE got the ball when Millsom punched out, and returned it at great speed to beat the goalkeeper all the way. So the Town appeared to have the game well in hand before half of the first forty-five minutes had elapsed, and they were in front on merit.

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The United wanted a bit of luck to help them into a better position, and they got it. A free-kick was given against Fulton, quite wrongly, I think, but Mr. Russell was a fair official, and the ball swung out to the right. Richards was not able to catch Mackey, and an appeal for offside was negatived. The old Luton player carefully dropped the ball into the middle, pulling it back a little, and Gardner headed it. The ball, however, twisted when it fell and went against the post, and rebounded a yard. WALLER was at hand and netted.

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The United played up with great spirit, using their weight, and the halves and backs

showed not the slightest fear or sense of risk in tackling, with the result that they had a good share of the game. However, the Town should have scored another goal, for the right wing pair got through, and Yardley hustled a way to rap the ball right across the front of goal. It seemed impossible for Andy Rennie to miss it, but he did, and though Bedford got it and had a shot, Millsom saved, and the danger was frustrated. So at half-time the score read:—

LUTON	2
TORQUAY	1

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When the game was resumed the Town got going well, and a strong shot by Yardley brought out the ability of Millsom, who made a fine save at full length close to the post. There were not many more chances after this for the Town. Torquay played up vigorously, and time after time Mackey or Waller led raids, and there were several good chances. Banes made some fine saves, and Kingham and Richards were kept very busy. The equalising goal came when Kingham conceded a corner to Mackey, for though the first rush from the kick was repelled, the ball went to SMEATON, who shot hard, and Banes and Richards alike were beaten, although the Town captain dived at full length in an effort to save with Banes out of goal.

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A desperate tussle ensued. Both sides fought hard, but the Town were on the defensive chiefly, and Gardner should have scored at least twice, while Mackey once got right through, only to be overhauled and knocked clean off his feet by Fulton, a magnificent bit of work by the Town centre-half. Waller was troublesome, too, and with the home backs and halves kicking hard there were real prospects of the Town being defeated, for the forwards were out of position, and the halves were right below their first half form.

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However, the attacks were beaten off, and near the end the Town rallied. Bedford once came away with a fast dribble, and centred, and Yardley shot wide. On another occasion he got the ball over, and when it went to the right Boylen was illegally tackled, and the free-kick was well placed by the youngster, Bedford shooting a foot too high when he had a good chance to score. There was no further goal, however, and the end came:

TORQUAY	2
LUTON TOWN	2

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Lack of understanding between the halves and backs was the main cause of a point being dropped when it seemed won. Individually Banes and his backs did well, but the lack of co-operation in the second half had an ill effect on the forwards, who were a disjointed lot for a period of about half-an-hour. Fulton was the pick at half, and Rennie and Yardley forward, but Vaughan did useful work.

There were 4,000 spectators.

TORQUAY UNITED	2
LUTON TOWN	2

TORQUAY. — Millsom; Cann, Mellon; Carrick, Smeaton, Smith; Mackey, Kelly, Gardner, Hemingway, Waller.

LUTON. — Banes; Kingham, Richards; Black, Fulton, Millar; Boylen, Yardley, Rennie, Vaughan, Bedford.

Referee.—Mr. W. E. Russell, Swindon.