

LUTON UNLUCKY.

WALSALL SPRING A SURPRISE.

By Crusader.

IT may be poor consolation, but it can be truly said that LUTON TOWN gave a much brighter display on Saturday, when they were defeated at home by WALSALL than in any previous game, not omitting the sensational victory at Watford. There was better team work all round, and the players worked more wholeheartedly, and Walsall's win gave no real indication of the run of the game. Though Walsall finished a goal better on the result, the Town should have won by a handsome margin on the run of the play.

It was a good game considering the conditions, but for more than three-fourths of the time the Town were well inside the Walsall half, and if the "Saddlers" ever escape defeat again this season after sustaining such a battering, they must be the favourites of fortune indeed. Rennie, for instance, can hardly have failed at so many good openings as he had on Saturday. He had much easier chances than the penalty kick. It was really remarkable how he lifted the ball gently into Biddlestone's hands on three occasions when not more than four yards separated them. In the ordinary way Rennie would have bagged a hat trick, at least, on Saturday. The visitors had to concentrate on defence from the start, and it is a fact that 25 minutes of the game had gone before Harford was called into action. At the other end Biddlestone had already proved himself a goalkeeper of parts, had made many fine saves, and had a lot of palpitating minutes before his colleagues of the attack were dangerous. Roe worked tremendously hard to get the game to take a turn, but the Town were clearly the better side, and Biddlestone must have rejoiced to see good efforts miss the target quite as often as his colleagues applauded him for grand saves.

The Town forwards showed fine speed, and with both Daly and Bedford middling the ball better than usual the Walsall defenders had a harassing time. The game took an extraordinary turn when the Walsall left wing broke through. There did not appear to be any immediate danger, but suddenly MURPHY dribbled past Kingham, and when a pass appeared likely he shot with fine precision, and Harford was well beaten with a fast cross shot. There did not seem very much to worry about then, and Woods, who was playing brilliantly, seemed a certain scorer, but Biddlestone made a brilliant save.

Then Walsall came down again, and Harford had to punch out. Before he could recover EYRES had seized the ball, and with a beautifully judged shot had the ball in the net. So well were the Town playing that there was no great fear of the visitors maintaining the lead, and following fierce onslaughts Helliwell and following the ball near goal as it came handled the ball near goal as it came from the right. A penalty kick was awarded, and RENNIE made no mistake from the spot. But again the visitors had a stroke of good fortune. Albert Walters tried to go through, but was

held up. He managed to kick a bouncing ball and it went to the right, where Harris was unattended. Harford rushed out, but HARRIS reached the ball first and lifted it over the head of the custodian, and it reached the net all right, so at the interval the score was

WALSALL	3
LUTON	1

The second half found the visitors compelled to concentrate on defence for long periods. The halves and forwards went to the help of the rearguard, and packed the goal. The ball hovered about the Walsall goal for some time, and once Rennie broke clear and went close to the goalkeeper, but lifted the ball tamely into the custodian's hands. Strong work in which Fraser and Bedford shone eventually brought a goal. After the ball had been beaten out several times it went to Daly, who shot with great force. The ball struck Bradford full in the face, and went to the feet of YARDLEY, who promptly netted.

That was the last goal. Time after time the ball went across the front of the goal, while Biddlestone made wonderful saves. Once more Rennie had a gift, but tapped the ball into the goalkeeper's hands. Try how they would the Town could not get the ball into the net. They got good support from the rear, but the Walsall backs and halves, now solely working for "keeps," withstood all attacks. Many chances were missed, and the visitors clung desperately to their lead. Now and then they gave trouble, but only from spasmodic raids.

Harford was not at fault. Kingham was not so safe as usual, and Richards was the better back. Kingham, however, like Fulton, played splendidly in the second half. Fulton did much fine work in this time, and the introduction of Clark as pivot lent fire to the middle line. He played really well, even if he did nothing out of the ordinary. He went into the fray with any amount of courage, and on this showing may be persevered with in his favourite position. Fraser was the splendid man of the line, both in attack and defence. The forwards gave a rattling good display in the first half, but fell away later. The whole line balanced well and moved quickly, and the only fault that could be found was in the finishing, which was poor.

In Biddlestone Walsall have a fine goalkeeper, and his backs kicked and tackled strongly. Houldey was the better of the pair. Helliwell gave a fine show as a defensive pivot. Roe and Walters worked hard, and Roe did many clever things in the forward line.

WALSALL	3
LUTON TOWN	2

LUTON.—Harford: Kingham, Richards; Fulton, Clark, Fraser; Daly, Yardley, Rennie, Woods, Bedford.

WALSALL.—Biddlestone; Walters (F.), Houldey; Groves, Helliwell, Bradford; Harris, Roe, Walters (A.), Eyres, Murphy.