

SHOCK FOR LUTON.

EXETER CITY'S EASY WIN.

By Crusader.

LUTON TOWN'S last game of the Old Year was a real knock-out blow to the Club and the supporters. EXETER CITY, who yielded a point to the Town at Exeter, were level on points, and it was confidently anticipated that the Town would rise a place in the League table as the result of the match. Expectations were shattered, however, for the City won by four goals clear. Though the result was against the run of the game, the City merited success because they adopted methods that were more profitable.

While the City defenders were stubbornly resisting the desperate attacks of the Town forwards, who were clever enough in approach work to get to close quarters consistently, the City forwards were usually lying well up, just inside, so that when the ball came their way they were not unduly hampered by opponents.

These tactics paid well, and though the Town pestered the City rearguard persistently for twenty minutes, the goals went to the spasmodic but always menacing raids of the City. Alderson kept goal brilliantly for the City, and the Town forwards really deserved better fortune after their clever approach, but such shots as were taken promptly never reached the intended billet.

Often the forwards were slow in getting the shooting boot to the ball, but in spite of this fault the Town's general work was worthy of a lead long before the City got it. The game was 20 minutes old when PURCELL and HOUGHTON combined in a clever run, and the latter, accepting a return pass shot a beautiful goal. A minute later HOUGHTON snapped another chance when a shot from Hemingway was diverted, and the inside right way was diverted, and the inside right had but to nod the ball into the net.

Again the Town swarmed round the City goal, and corner kicks and scrimmages in the goal-mouth were frequent, but the defenders packed their goal well, and got the ball away by hook or by crook—by crook not often, but once, at least, the ball was handled when the referee was not in a position to see. Alderson played brilliantly in goal, and though he had a lot of luck, he was not undeserving of it.

The third goal for the visitors was rather lucky, but a lesson in tactics. Houghton received near the centre line; Richards rushed in, but the City player popped the ball past him to PURCELL, who had a clear field, and lost no time in getting across it. As he was overhauled, he shot with all his might, and the ball travelled high up, struck the upright near

the top, and glanced into the net. So at the interval the score stood:—

EXETER CITY	3
LUTON TOWN	0

It was a big deficit, but the crowd had not lost hope, for the Town had played strongly enough in all except finishing, and it was thought that if this were improved they would still be good enough to share. Not so. Their policy remained the same, and their fortune showed no improvement. The attacks for a long time were as frequent as in the first half, but still the City goalkeeper and his backs managed to stave off the threatened fall.

The City forwards were not idle, but for long stretches they were unemployed. When they did get away they gave thrills, and Banes had to deal with awkward shots. They got another goal midway through the half, and the points were then quite assured. Houghton was the moving spirit, for he executed a brilliant dribble and when close in goal gently patted the ball to GUYAN, whose job was easy.

The Town pegged away bluckily, but they had lost heart. They could not beat Alderson, try as they would, and though frequently near scoring, the conditions remained the same. Alderson and his backs defending stubbornly, and shots being blocked or swerving away when the goal seemed certain to be captured, and the end came without further score.

Banes could not be held responsible for any goal. He had not much to do, but had no chance with any of the four successful shots. Kingham's ankle was obviously weak, and he was much below his best, and Richards' play suffered accordingly. Fraser played a great game, and though his colleagues were useful in attack, they were not good enough in defence, while the forwards, cleverly though they made attack, finished badly.

Alderson kept goal splendidly, and his backs worked skilfully, covering each other nicely and kicking well. Ditchburn was the best of a valiant middle line, and Houghton of a fast and aggressive attack.

EXETER CITY	4
LUTON TOWN	0

LUTON TOWN. — Banes; Kingham, Richards, Walker, Smeaton, Fraser, Daly Young, Yardley, Woods, McInnes.

EXETER CITY. — Alderson; Baugh, Shanks; Sheffield, Ditchburn, Dennington, Purcell, Houghton, Guyan, Hemingway, Doncaster.

Referee.—Mr. E. C. Sambrook, Swansea.