

BRILLIANT DISPLAY BY LUTON.

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE ECLIPSED.

By Crusader.

IT was a joyous Saturday afternoon for followers of Luton Town, and in no game this season, and in very few last, has there been such enthusiasm as was maintained from the start to the finish. Without equivocation, it may be said that the Town merited their success, but the score did less than full justice to their superiority. The Argyle, in spite of a couple of goals scored as a result of fortuitous incidents, never had a real grip of the game, and their defeat reflected credit on every member of the Town team.

The ground was heavy, but the Town played at a pace and with an energy that swept the Argyle halves off their feet, and no defence could have parried successfully the brilliant combination, added to which was a fire and determination that has been lacking in other games. Within a minute of the start they were in arrears through an error by a linesman. Bland kicked the ball up the right wing and it was clearly over the touch-line when Grozier seized, but the flag did not rise, and play went on. Grozier went right through, beating Smith and Richards. A fine clearance followed, but back the ball came, and though appeals for offside were made against Grozier, he centred, and BLACK met the ball on the run and scored with a lightning shot.

The Argyle then had to defend, and apart from occasional raids by the wingers, little was seen of their attack for the next twenty minutes. On the other hand the Town forwards were playing magnificently. The halves were feeding and following up, and the formation was overpowering. As they warmed to their work the Argyle became more and more harassed. Craig got in the way of point-blank range shots, and the backs and halves cleared time after time when the goalkeeper was in a fog. Corner after corner was won, and at last Craig had to capitulate. From McInnes' corner kick he had punched away a header, but RENNIE headed in a great goal before the Argyle captain could recover.

The Town, having found the chinks in the Argyle armour, came again, and two minutes after Rennie's success McInnes tapped the ball in front, and Craig and Titmuss went for it and appeared to have it safe, but YARDLEY tore in between them and hustled Craig over the line and the ball into the net amidst a tumult of cheers. Craig was hurt, but resumed after attention, only to call a halt in the game a minute or two later, and he was assisted from the field. Titmuss, who deputised, had a hectic time, and in one attack of breathless intensity, he was beaten three times by shots that crashed against the woodwork. Rennie hit the bar; then Yardley dribbled and hit the post, and the ball came to Rennie, who shot and hit the other post.

When Craig returned the Town continued to have by far the better of the exchanges, and corner after corner was conceded by the Argyle defenders. The goal escaped in extraordinary fashion and shots from three or four yards range were sent against Craig and his colleagues, while time after time the coolness of Argyle players extricated the defence from tight places. The Argyle wingers were dangerous when they got away, showing fine control, and Banes was tested on three or four occasions. At the interval the score did not reflect the Town's superiority.

LUTON TOWN 2

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1

The Argyle were not happy when they left the field, but resumed in determined style, so that Banes had an early call. It may be said, however, that on the four or five occasions they were really dangerous, did not compare with many on-slaughts by the Town. The Argyle halves could do nothing with the sharp thrusts of the Town forwards, and it was soon apparent that miracles would be required to prevent the Town winning handsomely.

Craig's first big job was to save from Daly at a few yards' range, and again from the Town right winger, who seemed to be enjoying this game more than any he has played for the Town. Yardley did beat the Argyle custodian from an offside position, after Fraser had saved the Town goal when Leslie looked a certain scorer.

Rennie was balked of a good chance when the referee whistled owing to an incident among the crowd, but YARDLEY got the third goal with a fine header from a free kick splendidly taken by Millar. The Town defence stopped one or two Argyle attacks, and then Craig was the centre of lively assaults. The Town halves and forwards were combining beautifully and after several narrow escapes the Argyle goal fell to RENNIE, who received a fine pass from McInnes. The Town were now in clover, but a clash by the Argyle forwards brought an extraordinary goal. There was a scrimmage in the Town goalmouth, but Richards suddenly got in a terrific volley, and the ball struck MILLAR some distance out and rebounded swiftly into the farther corner of the net. Neither player was at fault; it was just an unfortunate incident.

For a few minutes it seemed as though the Argyle would make further reductions off the deficit, but Banes saved well from Bowden, and then the Town took command and never relaxed. They played champion football, and over and over again outwitted the Argyle halves and backs. Fraser paved the way for the fifth goal by brilliant footwork and co-operation with his wing, and after Craig had made a fine save from Daly RENNIE received and banged the ball home. Three or four more escapes were experienced by the Argyle in the closing stages, and Craig and his backs were lucky to prevent goals from Daly, Yardley, Clark, Drinnan and McInnes, but the end came without further score.

The Town gave a display of which we can say that it exceeded the imagination of their most fervid supporters. Had they won by mere smash and vigour the sweets of victory would have been marred, but the dispassionate and critical among the crowd were disarmed by the quality of the football, and the question on our tongues was how and when the change had taken place. Quite frankly, I cannot say how they came to this standard. They have shown nothing like the understanding in any game I have seen, and much as we admire the Argyle as a side, classing them well above third division class on the day's play, we could not wish to change teams. The Argyle showed great skill, but it was eclipsed by the heights achieved by the Town and we can only hope that now they have reached that standard they will never lose it.

To a man, they played grandly. Banes in goal did his work efficiently; there was no hint of slackness in the rear, where Richards and Smith were at their best, and the intermediate line touched a remarkable degree in all phases of their work. Fraser scintillated, and Clark and Millar performed extraordinary things, while in the attack Rennie got back to his very best; Yardley and Drinnan were consistently clever, and the wingers showed a speed and an accuracy in centring that outwitted the Argyle defenders. The combination was delightful and thrustfulness and courage completed all that was desired.

For the Argyle, Bland, Hardie, Grozier and Black were best. There were 9,000 spectators.

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PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2

LUTON.—Banes; Richards, Smith; Fraser, Clark, Millar; Daly, Yardley, Rennie, Drinnan, McInnes.

PLYMOUTH.—Craig; Bland, Titmuss; Mackey, McKenzie, Hardie; Grozier, Sloan, Bowden, Leslie, Black.