

A BLANK SHEET.

POINT PICKED UP AT BOURNEMOUTH

Defensive Merit on Both Sides.

(By "CRUSADER.")

BOURNEMOUTH nil

LUTON TOWN "

BOURNEMOUTH: — McSevich; Hayward, Brown; Halliwell, Coxford, Moralee; F. H. Sherman, Scott, Eyre, Webb, Russell.

LUTON: — Harford; Kingham, Hodgson; Clark, McGinnigle, Fraser; Heslop, M'Nestry, Yardley, Rennie, Slicer.

Referee:—Mr. S. L. Stenning, Ilford.

A POINT saved is a point won. We might well paraphrase an old saying in regard to Luton Town's performance at Dean Court, Boscombe, on Saturday. With a little good fortune they would have brought home both points, for they were the better side in the football sense for the whole of the game, and in the first half had the better of the game to such an extent that they had the ball at close quarters to McSevich more often than the home team took it into Harford's vicinity. The home goal-keeper had rather less than Harford, however, because the Town did not find the target well, and there were not so many shots from long range as were fired at the Town goal. Taking the game throughout, the Town were slightly the better side on the day's play, but their polished work was nullified by the kick and rush methods of their hosts. At times there was too much vigour, and the home backs and inside forwards in particular threw their weight about a lot. With the Town accepting the challenge in the second half, there were one or two passages that were really rough, but none was seriously hurt.

EYRE ECLIPSED.

Positively dangerous assaults were few and far between, owing to the quality of the defensive work, and the most remarkable feature of the game was that Eyre, who has ever been a terror to Luton goal-keepers, never got one chance to shoot from anything like a scoring position. He was very active, as usual, and in the early stages the Town backs were kept hard at work. Each goal had been visited several times before Harford had to come into action, and after a warm spasm round his charge, there was hot work at the other end, and it seemed as if the goal could not escape. Nearly all the forwards had a turn, but the target was well covered. A goal appeared to be absolutely certain a minute later, when a fierce attack ended with Yardley trapping the ball about two yards from goal, but before he could extricate it from between his feet he was rushed, and the danger passed.

THE CLEVERER SIDE.

The Town played very good football now, the halves being well up with their forwards, and the ball was flicked from player to player much more accurately than on the home side. Both Heslop and Slicer put across good centres, and Rennie was prominent with delightful footwork and brilliant passes. At times the home forwards made a spurt, but generally were well under control, and the balance of play was in the Bournemouth half. Yardley harried the backs continually, but they were strong fellows, and never shirked a tussle, especially when the goal was in danger. There was not a wide margin of superiority for the Town, perhaps, but they should have crossed over with at least a goal advantage.

DEFENDERS PREVAIL.

Bournemouth began the second half as though it were only a matter of moments before they were in winning street. Again the Town defended gallantly, and Harford made good saves, his anticipation being noticeable. His backs were hard worked also, but eventually the halves got a grip of the game again, and the home attackers were beaten back. Then the Town settled down to good football again, and though the play was far from fascinating, there was some excitement. Scott had two good chances of shooting, but mulled them both. At the other end, M'Nestry hit the bar with a surprise effort, and Slicer shot into McSevich's hands from close range. As the game grew older, however, the scientific aspect was lost, and towards the finish it was little more than a scramble, and there was nothing to write about for a long time.

AT THE TOWN END.

Harford did better than the previous week, and his judgment in coming out to take high balls merited praise. The backs played magnificently, and there was nothing to choose between them. They kicked much cleaner than the home pair, and were not so ready to find touch. More than once Kingham or Hodgson found his forwards with beautiful through shots, but opportunities were soon disproved when the backs got busy. It would be hard to say which was the best of the middle line. Clark came near to his Brentford game, particularly in the second half. His best work, however, was in supplying his forwards with passes, and he gave Slicer nearly as many as he gave Heslop. McGinnigle was not so much in the picture as in previous games, but did splendid work, and it is a long time since a Luton pivot was able to tie down Eyre so well. Fraser gave his customary fine exhibition, and it is hard to imagine a better half in football.

The forwards seemed disposed to play the "W" formation, for Rennie and M'Nestry were playing well back, and so Yardley had to bear the brunt of the work himself when the attack was carried close in. He did his work very well, and commanded the respect of the home backs. He distributed nicely, too, but his shooting was not so good as we

would like to see. Rennie played brilliantly again, his passing being superb, and he almost walked through the game, so neat and sure was his footwork. M'Nestry again caused the centre-half to seek a less busy situation, his speed and aggressiveness generally nonplussing the home halves. On the wing Heslop was hardly up to the standard of his other game with the first team, but centred well, and Slicer also found the right spot for a centre and the nice pace at which to lift it over.

Bournemouth's goal-keeper did not have a great amount of work, but his backs had to keep going for all they were worth, and had a harassing time. Hayward was splendid, and at half Moralee and Halliwell were very clever. Eyre I have spoken about, and the best forward was either Scott or Webb, for they not only tried to make openings for Eyre, but also shot hard when within range. The team were lucky to keep a point.