

Crusader Comments ON THE TWO GAMES

At Walsall on Saturday:—

LUTON TOWN 1
WALSALL 0

WALSALL.—John; Walters, (F.)
Houldey; Godfrey, Bradford, Archer;
Parle, Bartley, Mays, Eyres, Barnes.

LUTON.—Harford; Kingham, Hodgson;
Clark, Richards, Fraser; Heslop,
M'Nestry, Brown, Rennie, Bryce.

Referee: Mr. G. C. Denton,
Northampton.

At Luton on Monday:—

CLAPTON ORIENT 1
LUTON TOWN nil

LUTON.—Harford; Kingham, Smith;
Clark, Richards, Fraser; Heslop,
M'Nestry, Brown, Rennie, Bryce.

ORIENT.—Wood; Jennings, Broad-
bent; Lawrence, Edmonds, Bolton;
Dudley, Cropper, Tricker, Fowler,
Fletcher.

Referee:—Mr. L. E. Gibbs, Reading.

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JUST when the Town were expected to do something particularly good they failed. Everybody was pleased with the success at Walsall on Saturday, but there was a lack of skill and combination on Monday night, and, conversely to what happened at Walsall, against the Orient, the Town players failed to keep their heads, and were so infected by excitement that they were, as last year, deprived of a victory simply because the Orient showed more team spirit while inferior in skill.

On Monday night there was an incident that resulted in Rennie being turned off the field for the first time in his career. He pulled the nose of an opponent who had fouled him and one or two others, and who had been in the crowd's bad books for a long time. Had Rennie remained on the field, it is likely that the Orient defence would have capitulated for they had stood out against a hot attack for a long time. Had the finishing of the Town been better, the game would have been decided before the interval.

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AT WALSALL

IT was a hard and fierce struggle at Walsall, for the home team were very keen to win, and they put their utmost into the game. In consequence there was a lot of rough stuff served out, and the game, which was never much of an entertainment, developed into a scramble, especially after the Town had taken the lead. Before then it was as though the Town were simply waiting for the opportunity that did eventually turn up.

Brown scored the only goal of the match about eight minutes after the interval, and it was the result of one of the few attractive movements that were made. There was no question about the merit of this goal, and the youngster deserved all praise for the celerity with which he seized one of the very few chances that came his way. Just before the end M'Nestry snapped up a pass after he had spurted from among a crowd of players, but his success was nullified by an offside decision.

Walsall never got the ball into the net. In the first half they shot well, usually from the wings, but Harford was quite safe, and though there was a lot of heavy stuff in the Town penalty area at times, Walsall's most dangerous attempts came in the second half, when the goal did escape rather fortunately. In the first instance Harford could not reach a ball that was centred by Barnes, but it went harmlessly behind. The second was the result of a determined mass assault in which the home forwards threatened to sweep the defenders and ball into the goal, but Harford just managed to get possession.

The principal need of praise must be awarded to the rearguard. Harford has been much more severely tried in several games this season, and his backs have had to encounter more skilful opponents, but they have never had to resist a more desperate lot, nor to meet players who have thrown themselves into the fray with less regard to risk. Kingham was superb, and Hodgson only less so because there was a trifle less work from the opposing wing. They tackled and kicked with skill and judgment, and were readily praised as the best pair seen at Hillary-street this season.

In the middle of the forceful tactics of the home forwards caused a good deal of trouble in the early stages, but gradually the line settled down to check the brusque attacks of the opposition, and it was the meeting of vigour with vigour

that gave rise to the reports that the Town were doing the rough stuff. Bigger and heavier than the home forwards and halves, the Town middle line merely copied the plans of the home side generally. All three did sound work, and Richards was a successful deputy for McGinnigle.

To Rennie and M'Nestry the halves owed something for assistance. When these found that their ordinary game was not suited to the small ground, they became re-inforcements to the middle line, which again was much according to the Walsall plan. Both did fine work, but their passing was less successful than usual owing to the restricted space. The wingers did very well, and Brown was very useful as a leader.

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THE game with Clapton Orient on the Town Ground on Monday night was disappointing in every way. There was much in it similar to the game at Walsall, for play was altogether too vigorous, though the extra acreage of ground helped to make for more combination. There could be no question about the superiority of the Town on the general run of the play, but the visitors hustled and hustled to such purpose that the Town attack was thrown out of gear, and it was this department that failed.

For the greater part of the first half the Orient were on the defensive, though throughout the game there was menace whenever they made raids, as they usually did, by virtue of their left wing. The other flank was seldom seen to advantage. Wood made many fine saves during this period, and it was then that Harford had the more work.

The Orient halves and backs, however, kicked and tackled stubbornly, and the Town forwards were far from incisive in front of goal. In spite of this defect, however, they gave Wood a fair amount of work, and he made several fine saves, the best being from a fast ground shot by M'Nestry, which he managed to push out by diving at full length. As a rule, the goal was so well packed that shots rebounded from defenders, unless Wood had plenty of time to get to the ball.

The Town began the second half in similar manner, and the Orient goal escaped narrowly two or three times. Then the Orient got away to score a very fluky point. Fletcher centred right across, and DUDLEY shot on the run; Harford appeared to think that the ball was going out, but it swerved near the upright, struck it and glanced in, the goalkeeper making a belated attempt to recover it. This was four minutes after the change of ends, and was about the only thing worthy of note done by the outside-right.

Afterwards the Town pressed heavily, but Wood and his backs were in form, and beat them back. An equaliser was due when Bryce was brought down very badly by Lawrence in the penalty area, within a yard or two of the goal. Rennie took the kick, but sent the ball straight to Wood, who knocked it down, and, though Rennie recovered the ball a yard or two from goal, he failed to turn it past Wood, and it went behind. This was a big blow, and an equaliser would probably have made all the difference to the result.

Worse was to come, for the game became rougher, and, at last, after a set-to between Lawrence and Rennie, the latter was ordered off for pulling his opponent's nose. The referee, who had been very poor generally, had no option but to order the offender from the field, for the offence was committed when he was talking to the two players. The crowd did not like the decision, but it was not an offence that could be overlooked.

In defiance of the handicap, the Town played up strongly, but the finishing was not good enough, and, as Wood made many good saves, the end came without addition to the score. For a long time play had been of a scrambling character, and the crowd of 4,000 showed their displeasure in no half-hearted fashion. Moreover, the roughness continued almost to the end.

Harford upheld his reputation and kept goal well in both matches, and Kingham won golden opinions for his skilful displays both at Walsall and at home. In the last minute of the game at Walsall, Hodgson sustained a kick on the knee that prevented him playing on Monday. He did remarkably well at Walsall, and was missed on Monday night, though Smith could not be blamed at all for the loss of the match. All the halves were in good form in both matches, and Richards played surprisingly well.

There was a lack of combination in attack, and there was scarcely a player that was consistent. Brown did better at Walsall than at home, and, taking the two games, Heslop was probably the best of the line. Bryce did some good things, and Rennie and M'Nestry were clever betimes, but none was good in front of goal.