

FIRST POINTS

HATTERS JUST DEFEAT COBBLERS AT LUTON

Wingers' Goals

(By "CRUSADER")

LUTON TOWN 2
NORTHAMPTON TOWN 1

LUTON.—Imrie; Kingham, Hodgson;
Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Mills,
Hutchison, Tait, Rennie, Rowe.
NORTHAMPTON.—Hammond; Oakley,
Dawes (F.); Conway, Park, Davies;
Mortimer, Boyle, Dawes (A.), Forbes,
Wells.

Referee. — Mr. G. Hamilton-Jones,
Woolwich.

WE began the season with a victory, and have good reason to be pleased with the points. There were not a few Luton supporters, however, who were not altogether satisfied with the display of the team. Generally, they played well, but fault was found with the right-wing pair, and the improvement hoped for was not apparent. It should not be forgotten, though, that only three of the twenty-two players were not in the teams last season, and two of these formed our right wing. The other was the Northampton right-half, a position that does not reflect strangely to the same degree as positions in attack. Mills and Hutchison have yet to become acquainted thoroughly with Southern football, or with the Town ground in match play, and it is certain that they can, and will, play better. A further point that should not be overlooked is the fact that they were against the rugged Davies, who never stood on ceremony, and was disposed to deal out a lot of stuff that would have made for unpleasantness if there had been retaliation. On the whole, however, this match was as clean and well-conducted as any between the teams in recent years.

FIRST-HALF SUPERIORITY

Unquestionably the Town should have made the game safe before the change of ends. They had much the better of the exchanges, and with better finishing would have held a commanding lead. It was by capital football, too, for there were long periods when the visiting defenders could get no relief from

the speedily-executed movements of the Town forwards, supported by an admirable middle line. Then there was the skill of Hammond, who kept goal finely, but at least half-a-dozen shots missed the target by the narrowest margin when he would have been beaten had the ball been inside the mark. The first half-hour must have satisfied the Luton supporters that, given ordinary good fortune, the Town will hold their own with the best. The game was opened out well, the team spirit was keen, and the players found each other nicely; the only marrring features were the strain felt by the players from the great heat, and the right wing's misunderstandings.

THE FIRST GOAL

Now and then the Cobblers caused a flutter, and gave ample evidence that they were a strong and determined lot, though there was not the quickness in combination that marked the Town's advances. Perhaps this was because the Town half-backs were taking such a conspicuous part. With McGinnigle largely in a defensive role, Kean and Fraser were joining in the attack, and for every shot at the home goal there must have been half-a-dozen at the other end. Mills was unlucky when he trod on the ball once when he was sent away with a clear field, and Tait and Rennie could not get on Hammond's blind side with any effort. With thirty-five minutes gone, and the Town having done so much pressing with so little result, it began to appear as if we would get to the interval without a goal. Hammond saved shots from all quarters, and his backs and half-backs took no risks. With seven minutes to go before the whistle called a rest, Fraser came tearing up the field and darted into the middle. Crowded there, he sent the ball to the right; MILLS closed in and took it. For a moment it seemed he would lose possession, but he held on and shot very hard from the edge of the penalty area. The ball was going straight to the billet, but

Hammond threw himself across goal, and it seemed that he had it, well covered, though the pace might have beaten him. It was not that, however, but the head of Park, for the centre-half leaped up and, in attempting to head away, turned the ball right away from the goalkeeper, and it went high into the net. There was a lot of pace on the ball, and it might have beaten Hammond in any case, but everybody felt sorry for the custodian, who was helpless to save when the ball was diverted so.

ROWE'S GREAT SHOT

The Town were soon at it again, and after a couple of corners had been cleared there was another goal. The ball was being held close to the left wing, near the corner flag, where Fraser and Rennie were dancing round opponents. ROWE had the good sense to take position just clear of the ruck, and when Rennie tapped the ball inside to him. Without hesitation the left winger let drive, and a wonderful shot flew past Hammond, who was quite unable to get near the ball. It was a great goal, and deserved for the manner in which it was scored. But Northampton promptly made desperate efforts to get out of the Town defence, and a lot of trouble without looking like a goal. Then a sally on the right wing, and the ball came across to the middle. Kingham called for it, and Hodgson and McGinnigle let it go. Kingham missed it, and it went to the feet of ALBERT DAWES. Even then there seemed no great danger, especially as he could not control it quickly enough to run it. However, he drew a bow at a venture, and though there was not a lot of pace on the ball, Imrie had just left his goal as it came to his left. The shot was unexpected, and he dived too late, for the ball was past him before he reached the ground, and it went into the net. It was a soft sort of goal, but Imrie must not have known the game. The mistake was first with the other defenders. The interval came immediately, and the supporters were not so happy as they had been three minutes earlier.

LUTON 2
NORTHAMPTON 1

It was to be anticipated that after such a gruelling first half the play would not be so fast or so entertaining, and it fell away enormously as an attraction. The main concern was whether there would be a lapse by Town defenders that would give the visitors the equaliser. Play was about even for nearly half an hour, but Hammond still had more work than Imrie, and did it well. The players of both sides were rather frantic in their efforts to keep scorers off, but the visitors seldom got inside the home penalty

area, whereas the Town forwards often trespassed without being able to get in a scoring shot. So the game wore on, play mainly being in midfield, and the ball often in the air. Fraser and his wing made the best attacks for the Town, and Wells was a bother to the home defence.

BEST CHANCE

The best scoring chance came late in the game when Mills, who had not done very well with several opportunities, sent over a splendid centre that came right across the goal-mouth. Tait did not get any power at all behind his effort to get the ball through, and it went gently into the hands of Hammond, who cleared. Then Northampton went to work with great zest, and there were times when they seemed certain to draw level. Once Wells had a splendid chance, but could not shoot well enough, and the ball sailed across goal with none at hand to do the needful. There was much resource shown in staving off further attacks in the closing stages, for both teams were tired, and the visitors' forwards, having had little work in the first half, were the fresher and lasted the game out better than the Town halves and forwards. They did not get a lot of shooting opportunities, however, and were well in hand when the final whistle sounded.

TOWN DEFENCE

Imrie had not a lot of work, but made one magnificent save in the first half. With the other defenders he must have a portion of the blame for the goal scored against him. Kingham and Hodgson were occasionally bothered by the lively ball, but were a better pair than Northampton's, and there should be little to fear if they play as well as in this game. Kean played with delightful skill for an hour, but the pace told on him afterwards. Still, he had done enough work to have earned several goals. Fraser was the cleverest half-back, and very nearly the finest player on the field. He gave a great exhibition, and the "barrackers" of last season were the cheering folk in this game. McGinnigle was fine as a defender, and gave the visiting inside forwards very little room or opportunity, but when he sets out for a raid on the visitors' goal he should get back as quickly as possible, for his failure to return quickly once in the second half looked like giving away a goal.

ATTACK

Mills and Hutchison are good enough to do a great deal better, but it was apparent that both suffered from rather rough treatment, and there were occasions when the referee seemed to miss obvious fouls on them. Tait did not get much support from that flank, except what came from Kean, but had more from the left. He worked with great energy, but the ball did not run kindly for him any more than it did for Albert Dawes on the other side, and in the second half he had too little assistance from his colleagues, and was overweighted by opponents. Rennie played skilfully as ever, his passes being models of accuracy, and Rowe again demonstrated that he has the makings of a first-class winger.

Hammond played his customary good game for the "Cobblers," and Oakley did sterling work at back. He was the better, with Davies the strongest of the middle men, and a man one would rather have on one's side than in opposition. Mortimer and Wells played well on the wings, and Boyle was a hard worker inside.

There were 11,430 spectators, and the receipts were £661.