

POINT DROPPED

Ironsides Who Well Deserved Their Name

(By Crusader)

FOLLOWERS of Luton Town had their first big disappointment on Saturday when Newport County took a point away from the Town ground. The lowly position of the visitors in the League had given rise to the opinion that there would be a repetition of the feast of goals witnessed in the match with Torquay, but the result indicates how far short of fulfilment of those hopes the Town team fell.

THERE were but two goals scored, and after the visitors had taken the lead the chief concern of the Town supporters was whether there would ever be another goal. It seemed just as likely to be chalked against the Town as against Newport, for while there was an almost continual blockade of the Newport goal, the occasional forays of the visitors set us atlingling with excitement or fear.

THERE was not a big margin of superiority in the first half, for at times Newport threatened severely, but the ball was more often in the vicinity of their goal, and certainly the chances that fell to the Town were the more numerous. More snap and forcefulness was required along the front line generally to break down such an active rearguard, and as far as the actual marksmanship was concerned the calls upon Mittell were of a more dangerous character.

IT was a very fine goal that Higgins scored just before the change of ends, and followed clever play on their right wing, where the pace and deadly intent of Reynolds were always big factors in attack. The Town defenders were drawn away from the area fronting the goal, and so the inside-left received when unmarked, and a prompt shot flashed into the net just inside the upright, Mittell having no chance.

THE second half resolved into a persistent attack by the Town forwards and halves, with spasms from the visitors that nearly always chilled the spine of the crowd. The tricky wingers middled well, and the inside forwards, following up well, had usually a lot of space in which to manoeuvre for a shot. Several times Mittell saved brilliantly during these raids, and not less to him than to the visitors was due the salvage of a point.

SOMEHOW, the Town forwards could not find anything like the number of openings their aggressiveness merited, and the reason for that appeared, in a large measure, due to the dilatoriness of the left wing in completing their work, and the amazing resourcefulness of the Newport halves and backs. Wherever one saw a Town forward, there also, was at least one defender who fought fiercely for possession, and if he failed, another popped up to take his place.

IT must be conceded that during the greater part of the time, however,

there was a lack of fire in the methods of the Town, and it was not until they grasped the fact that time was getting short, that they pulled out something of the resolution of the visitors. Many chances were missed, even allowing for the packing of the County goal, and the consistency with which the forwards ballooned the ball was astonishing.

WHEN the longed-for goal came it was a gem, and the reward of a directness that had been lacking previously. A pass from the rear was helped along first time by Rennie, and Bell pounced on the ball, swept past Robinson, and then shot past Emery as the goalkeeper darted out. In the subsequent play the Town hammered away fiercely, and had there been a few more minutes for play, it is conceivable that their pressure would have prevailed, but they had delayed their liveliness too long.

NEWPORT evidently played to a plan, and their merit was appreciated by the crowd, whose only complaint was the frequency with which the County players held up the game by petty infringements, particularly in the first half. On one or two occasions the referee would have been better advised to have permitted play to proceed, for the stoppage meant a benefit for the offenders. This apart, however, the Ironsides well deserved their name.

THE defenders fought grimly from first to last kick, and they never courted danger by hanging on to the ball and trying to dribble when a big kick would bring relief. Backs and halves were strenuous in all their work, and Emery was a fine goalkeeper. The forwards were nippy and alert, and required only a little rope to make use of their freedom.

MITTELL played splendidly in the Town goal, and again thrilled the crowd by his courageous saves. Kingham and Mackey were steady at back, and the halves, if they have not touched their best of last season, provided plenty of work for their forwards. In attack there was plenty of cleverness but not enough punch, and the ball was too often in the air. Bell rarely saw the ball coming along the ground, and he had to fight for it all the time. Pease was the most dangerous, the dallying on the opposite flank spoiling the skill in approach.

LUTON TOWN 1
NEWPORT COUNTY 1

Scorers: For Luton, BELL. For Newport, HIGGINS.

LUTON: Mittell: Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Pease, Martin, Bell, Rennie, Pearson.

NEWPORT: Emery: Hugh, Robinson; Jones, Jordan, John; Reynolds, Wooliscroft, Millar, Higgins, Thomas.

Referee: Mr. E. Pinckston, Birmingham.