

Swindin says this is more like it

By PAT COLLINS

Arsenal 1 Luton 0

RATINGS.—Skill: Arsenal 6, Luton 6. Entertainment 6.
Sportsmanship 7. Control 8.

ARSENAL players, who must be among the most criticised in the game, can at least enter 1959 with easier minds. That is official, even though manager George Swindin's Christmas message contained no good cheer whatsoever, and his criticisms were given another airing in the club programme for this match.

But after this win by 10 men—Vic Groves was a casualty—Swindin admitted that this was more like what he wanted. I'm glad for the players' peace of mind that they stopped the rot.

By gaining revenge on Luton for that 6—3 drubbing of a day earlier, Arsenal checked a run of three successive home defeats. Is everyone happy? I wonder. For this was no great treat which Arsenal set before us.

Docherty great

In fact I thought Luton worth a point. But everyone to his own choice; Swindin will now relax his search for fresh players—"if they can keep this up."

I don't think Arsenal can expect their faults to be covered too often by one man, as Tommy Docherty did in this game. I have never seen a player work so hard and so unselfishly for his team. He was tremendous.

But Bill Dodgin's display gave Swindin most satisfaction. Len Wills and Jack Kelsey had fine games. And Irishman Bill McCullough revived Arsenal memories of Lionel Smith in this, his League debut.

Certainly the newcomer had a good day against Billy Bingham, Luton's best forward.

Note that all these credit marks were gained in the defence. Making allowances due for Groves, no Arsenal attacker was particularly inspiring.

Luton great

Luton? If the two chances which Allan Brown normally takes easily had been converted, and if there had been a penalty instead of a free-kick for obstruction when Wills brought down Tony Gregory, I doubt if Mr. Swindin would have been quite so satisfied.

Luton moved better, and they had in John Groves a workman to rival Docherty. But they slipped up in the middle.

Arsenal see in Len Julians a cover for all three inside-forward positions. Perhaps the going was too heavy for him, but I doubt if he will be up to this class of football.

SCORER: Arsenal — Bloomfield (20 mins.).

ARSENAL: Kelsey 8; Wills 7, McCullough 7; Docherty 9, Dodgin 8, Petts 6; Clapton 6, Groves 6, Julians 6. Bloomfield 6, Henderson 7.

LUTON: Baynham 8; McNally 6. Hawkes 7; Groves 8, Kelly 7, Pacey 7; Bingham 8, Brown 6, Gregory 6. Cummins 7, Adam 6.

REFEREE: R. E. Smith (Newport, Mon.). LINESMEN: L. A. Hill (Reading), T. F. Hewinson (Portsmouth).