

SHANKS CRACKER EARNs POINT

ALTHOUGH the outcome of Saturday's soccer results was that the Town slipped down another place in the League table after their draw at Highbury, there were signs that better things are on the way.

Twice the Town were behind — and twice they fought back to earn equality, and Arsenal could have had few complaints if the Town had grabbed both points.

In the end it needed a super-goal from the Town's man of the match Don Shanks to level the scores nine minutes from time.

Stern defence and good goalkeeping kept the Town alive in the first half, and in the second they came back with such purpose that Arsenal were shaken out of

their complacency. And the Shanks' goal was one to remember.

Equally memorable was the 90-minute performance of Adrian Alston, gaining in confidence with every match. In the first half he took a neat through ball from Anderson, left two defenders floundering and then hit a cracking 20-yarder which hit the post with goalkeeper Rimmer beaten, and had another drive well saved.

The defence had also done its part well, with Keith Barber making excellent saves from Radford twice, and Blockley.

The cover was split when Kidd put Arsenal ahead from a free kick after John Ryan was penalised for pushing, but the Town came back when Shanks put Anderson through in the inside right position.

His low cross beat Rimmer's advance, and

Alston whacked it into the net for his third goal in three games. Three minutes later Gordon Hindson missed an easy chance which would have put the Town ahead.

Instead, Arsenal scrambled another goal, from Kidd after Barber dropped a shot from Simpson, so the Town had to pick themselves up once more and come back from behind.

And the point-saving goal was a beauty. Shanks beat Nelson on the right wing, and Alston bicycle-kicked as the centre came over. Blockley headed out, Armstrong headed it further on, and Shanks thumped the ball first time into the net from 20 yards.

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MATCH DETAILS

ARSENAL 2, LUTON TOWN 2

Half-time: 1-0

TOWN: Barber, Shanks, Thomson, Anderson Faulkner, John Ryan, Hindson, Jim Ryan, Butlin, West, Alston. Substitute: Chambers, not used.

ARSENAL: Rimmer, Simpson, Nelson, Storey, Blockley, Matthews, Armstrong, Kelly, Radford, Kidd, Brady. Substitute: Powling, not used.

THE GOALS: Kidd for Arsenal, direct from free kick, 43 minutes; Alston for the Town, from chance made by Anderson, 53 minutes; Kidd for Arsenal after Barber dropped a shot by Simpson, 62 minutes; Shanks for the Town, the goal of the match, 18-yard left foot volley.

ENTERTAINMENT: Fair value for money.

ATTENDANCE: 21,629—fings ain't wot they used to be at Highbury.

REFEREE: Ron Challis, Tonbridge, Kent: played as well as anyone.

BOOKINGS: Nelson of Arsenal for a foul on Anderson; Faulkner—his third this season, for showing dissent. Silly.