

THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE

LUTON TOWN v. CHATHAM.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result :—

Luton Town.....	2 goals.
Chatham	1 goal.

The teams were as follow :—

RIGHT.	LUTON TOWN.	LEFT.
	Bee (goal).	
M. D. Nicholson.		McEwen.
Watkins.	M'Crindle.	Howe.
Brown.	Finlayson.	Galbraith.
		Allen.
		Dimmock.



Stanford.	Guthrie.	Quarrington.	Enfield	Humphrey.
Lewis.		Brisley.		Fletcher.
Brockwell.				Robertson.

LEFT.	CHATHAM.	RIGHT.
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Referee, Mr. A. Roston Bourke; linesmen, Messrs. J. Horn (Luton) and C. E. Boxall (Chatham).

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A recognised necessity by all football players, is a good, useful, comfortable fitting boot. These can be procured at all prices and guaranteed qualities from Freeman, Hardy, and Willis, Limited, 38, George-street, Luton. The Rugby and Association Boot, Patented, deserves special mention; the price of these boots is 6s. 11d., we sell many hundreds, and they give universal satisfaction. Gentlemen's Light Sunday Boot from 3s. 11d., special sewn ones at 6s. 11d. Competition defied.—[ADVT.]

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"The Winners" of several very important English cup ties will be exhibited by special telegrams on Saturday next, at Cain's, High Town-road, Luton. New Business Premises are now open.—[ADVT.]

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I went on to the Luton ground on Saturday with very small expectations indeed, but small as they were, I must confess that I was not quite prepared for the shocking display given. Fancy, only just scraping home against Chatham, the team which is making such a hard struggle with Swindon and the Royal Ordnance for the possession of the wooden spoon of the League.

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In common with the rest of the Luton people, I was terribly disappointed when I heard that Gallacher would not be able to take part in the match, and the disappointment was increased when the news came that Prentice was also incapacitated.

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Under these circumstances, it was hardly to be expected that Luton would make a brilliant show, but there's a long step between brilliant and fairly passable play, and we did not even get the latter. It was a very lucky thing that we had only got Chatham on.

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However, I will waste no more time over preliminary remarks, but will at once proceed to business. The kick-off was fixed for half-past two, and about ten minutes after that Mr. Roston Bourke whistled the men into position.

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Nicholson had not then put in an appearance, but the game had hardly been commenced before he arrived on the ground in the Midland 'bus. As he had got 'em all on, he at once took up his position, amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the spectators.

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There were about fifteen hundred people round the ropes at this time, but the turnstiles were kept busily at work, and ultimately the onlookers numbered fully three thousand. The Volunteer Band was in attendance, and with two teams of Reds in the field Luton ought to have stood a good chance.

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Whatever failures football players may meet with, they can rely on the fact that if they purchase boots or shoes from Freeman, Hardy, and Willis, Limited, 38, George-street, Luton, they never fail to secure a thorough good boot at a low price, which they can wear with confidence themselves, and recommend to their friends. F. H. and W. challenge the trade to deny that they are the largest retailers in the kingdom, and give best value for money.—[ADVT.]

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The homesters lost the toss, and played the first half with the sun in their faces. By the way, I must apologise for not having said anything about the weather. Well, would you believe it, it was simply delightful. No blizzard, no deluge, no nothing, in fact, except the generous rays of Old Sol, who seemed anxious to remind us of his continued existence.

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A foul against Brisley—not Bristley, mind you—was the first feature of note, and McEwen, undertaking the kick, landed the ball in the net, but the players had the bad taste not to interfere with its progress. The bullet found its billet, but nobody was any the worse.

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Soon after this, Galbraith made a lovely shot, but a Chathamite interposed his bulky body and the ball rebounded up the field. Another foul, this time against Lewis, led to a further attack on the Chatham goal, but eventually Watkins sent behind.

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A huge throw-in by Watkins was replied to by an equally big one by the right half on the other side, and Nicholson then clearing, Finlayson and Brown did a smart piece of travelling, but spoiled a good run by taking the ball behind.

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Galbraith making a nice pass to Dimmock, the latter was for the first time given a chance of distinguishing himself, and his centre afforded Brown a first-rate opening, which unfortunately was not taken advantage of. Watkins having had a foul recorded against him, made amends directly after by putting in a fine shot, the ball grazing the cross-bar.

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M'Crindle was hereabouts showing up with some splendid play, and Galbraith got in one of those pretty overhead kicks of his, right into goal, but Chatham cleared finely. Then from a centre by Dimmock, Galbraith spun round on his heel, or his toes, and gave Jones a handful, but the custodian was equal to the emergency.

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After the Luton centre-forward had had another try, the ball once more colliding with a Chathamite, the visitors broke away, and Fletcher was responsible for a magnificent shot, which Bee saved just under the bar. It was a narrow squeak, and the spectators were thankful enough when they saw the ball in play again.

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The Lutonians now got down, and Dimmock made what we all regarded as a bad centre, but Brown happened to meet the ball and sending into goal, Allen took charge of Jones while the leather rolled into the net.

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This point, scored after eighteen minutes' play, gave us some hope that others would follow, and for a time it seemed as though the homesters were going to do something, the pressure being kept up very strongly. The shooting, however, was very weak, and though the custodian was repeatedly called on, the difficult shots were far from numerous.

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A foul against Brisley, with Galbraith for the victim, placed the Chatham goal in jeopardy, McEwen judging the kick to a nicety, but Jones was not to be had this time, nor the next, when Watkins tested him with a beauty. From a corner placed by Brown, the ball was kept bobbing about in a very tantalising manner, until at last Galbraith put just over the corner of the goal with a fancy kick.

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Again, from a middle by Dimmock, Galbraith put all the powder he could behind his shot, but it was like trying to get through a brick wall, so sturdy was the defence of the Chatham men. The next item on the programme was a little foolery by Nicholson, whose contribution to the afternoon's amusement was not to be despised. However, he managed to come out right side up, and his effort was rewarded with applause.

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Then Dimmock was given a chance, and he seemed to take kindly to the comic part of the business, putting in what would have been a lovely shot had the goal-posts been situated on the other side of the ground near where the linesman was standing. As they were not, the shot may truly be described as a fruitless one.

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After that we were treated to a little more serious play, Galbraith making a good attempt, which was frustrated in capital style by Jones, who later on elicited applause by successfully negotiating two or three smart shots from Allen.

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Things went on like this until just before half time, when Brisley again fouled Galbraith and was cautioned by the referee. Nicholson placed well down, and Dimmock receiving and putting in front of goal, the ball was rushed through by Allen, I believe, though I would not like to take my affidavit on it, as Brown was also in the vicinity.

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Thus Luton at the interval found themselves leading by two goals to nil. Previous to the teams leaving the field, Mr. Bourke made a careful examination of the twenty-two pairs of boots worn by the players, but apparently he found nothing amiss, no one being asked to retire. If I were inclined to be funny, I should say this examination of the boots was a bootless one.

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The play during this half had been anything but gratifying to the local enthusiasts, the weakness of the forwards in front of goal having been very pronounced. Nearly all the aggressive work had been done by the homesters, and the two goals credited to them ought to have been doubled at least.

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But it was hoped that the second half would tell a different tale, and that opportunities would be more freely taken. Alas, the hope was a delusive one, for though the play during the first forty-five minutes had been poor, that during the latter portion of the game was very much worse.

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When the ball was again set in motion, Dimmock received and centred and Brown put through, but was

given off-side, and a minute or two afterwards Roland was again ruled off-side to another of Dimmock's centres.

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The Chathamites now woke up, and putting plenty of spirit into their play, caused the Luton defence some trouble. McEwen was loudly and deservedly applauded for the clever way in which he robbed Humphrey, and following that a couple of corners were conceded Luton, but nothing came of them, Dimmock and Brown both missing what appeared to be easy chances.

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McEwen having cleared from a shot by Fletcher, Luton went up the field, and a middle by Dimmock led to some very exciting rough-and-tumble work in front of the Chatham goal, and while it must be admitted that there was more bashing than football, credit must be given to the visitors for their plucky stand, Jones especially acquitting himself splendidly.

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The rushes of the Chatham forwards had now ceased, and Luton were in a position to keep peppering away, but the only man that could shoot was too well looked after to get a chance of making himself dangerous, and the other forwards threw away their openings in the most lamentable fashion.

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At length Chatham turned the tables, and Stanford getting clear, shot across the mouth of goal. Bee threw himself down in an attempt to get at the ball, but did not succeed in clearing, and Enfield promptly put it between the sticks.

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The success of the visitors was rewarded by the cheers of the spectators, who evidently hoped by this means to so rile the homesters as to get something better out of them. But cheers or no cheers it was all the same—one deadly level of mediocrity.

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Nearly a quarter of an hour remained for play, and just before the finish Allen scored another off-side goal. That was the only incident worth noting, and the game ended in a lucky win for Luton by two goals to one.

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Thank goodness, the victory, such as it was, counts, and that the two points are ours. This is the only possible satisfaction that can be felt over the game, which was about as wretched a one as can be imagined. How jubilant it would have made the Ilfordians could they have seen it.

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I have seen Luton under all sorts of circumstances, and have known them show a little in and out form, but never, I should think, has there been a greater contrast than that furnished by the matches against Clapton and Chatham on two successive Saturdays. At the Spotted Dog, the Reds were in their best form; at Luton, they were in their worst.

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But then on the former occasion we had our full row of forwards, and that makes all the difference. Leave Gallacher and Prentice out of our front string, and it becomes a miserable one-eyed affair, neither useful nor ornamental.

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Galbraith and Finlayson worked very hard, but as to the support they received, the less said about it the better. From the commencement of the game, Galbraith was never given a chance. He had three or four men shadowing him the whole time, and it was almost as difficult for him to make a pass as it was to get a shot.

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I heard some complaints because he did not do better. I should like to have seen the best of the grumblers put in Galbraith's place for five minutes and given the same amount of attention that Galbraith received. After such an experience, I guess the individual would have held his peace for the rest of his natural life.

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It was said that Galbraith did not pass freely enough. If he didn't, it was not his fault. It is a comparatively easy matter for a man to pass the ball when he has only one player to deal with, but it is a different thing altogether when they swarm round him like bees round a sweet-stuff shop.

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And then, who was he to pass it to? There's the rub. It can't be said that either Dimmock or Brown did not have plenty of openings. They had any amount, the Chathamites leaving them pretty much to themselves, but their attempts were the most milk and water sort of things that it has ever been my lot to see. I can't understand what's come over Brown. He is not playing up to anything like his last year's form.

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The half-backs played a sterling game. In the first half, M'Crindle easily carried off the palm, but he slowed down a bit afterwards, and Howe came on. There's no mistake, the Wellingborough man thoroughly believes in pegging away. Watkins also was in good form, doing a lot of smart work.

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One of the best men on the Luton side, however, was McEwen, who played up grandly all the way through. He got a shaking up towards the finish, but he stuck to his work splendidly. Nicholson was not nearly so good as at the Spotted Dog, indulging a little too much in gallery play. Bee had scarcely anything to do.

Of the Chathamites, Jones perhaps was one of the most conspicuous, but both backs rendered a capital account of themselves. Brisley was a clinking good centre-half, and Fletcher, whose throws-in were prodigious, and Lewis also did well. But the forwards were a very poor lot, Stanford being the only one to show any capabilities. Take them altogether, they were not worth picking up in the street.

But if Luton could not get much comfort out of the Chatham match, they derived a great deal from the result of the Millwall and Southampton encounter. These clubs made a draw of it at one goal each. This gives us our chance of topping Millwall in the League. Let's hope it will be taken. But we shall have to improve on Saturday's form.

HOW TO CENTRE? Why, centre your attention on the well-selected stock of hats, ties, shirts, and under-clothing, at S. Bassett's, 28, Wellington-street.—[ADVT.]

The struggle between Ilford and Clapton on the ground of the former was a fierce one, and Ilford just got home by three goals to two, though at the interval Clapton were leading by two to one. The result points to the fact that Ilford will take some knocking out of the Cup Competition.

Royal Ordnance seem to be on the up grade now, for after giving Millwall a fright and Nat Whittaker a jacketing, they went one better on Saturday by defeating Reading by five goals to two. Poor old Reading!

A comforter for Millwall. New Brompton rubbed it into Bowes Park by fifteen to nothing. Looks as though the Bromptonians will make the Dockers go all the way in the English cup-tie, doesn't it?

Mr. Dick, the editor of the football *Sun*, continues the interesting process of roasting Mr. Whittaker, much to the delight of Luton readers. Candidly, I think Mr. Dick is perfectly justified in what he says, and Nat has only himself to thank for the hot water into which he has got.

"General notice to the players of all football clubs." When you have an important match coming on, look to your boots. If they are not in the best condition, you can, "and ought," to go straight away to Freeman, Hardy and Willis, Limited, 38, George-street, Luton, where for a low price you can get a Good Boot, which will materially assist you to defeat your opponents. For light, ordinary wear, F. H. and W. call attention to their 3s. 11d., 4s. 11d., and 5s. 11d. quality. See their windows.—[ADVT.]

Mr. Fred Horley, hon. sec. of the Toddington Star F.C., writes:—"Sir,—I beg permission to call your attention to the report of our football match in your last issue, which read as follows:—'On Saturday last a match was played on the Toddington ground at Alma Farm, between Toddington Star and Harlington Star football clubs, resulting in a win for the Stars by four goals to one.' I should think your correspondent must be one of the 'slumbering inhabitants,' as you were pleased to call Toddington people in your last issue—[We don't remember having been guilty of the libel.—Ed. *L. N.*]—or he would never have mixed the report up so. Most likely he and the Leagrave correspondent went to the same school, which must be a valuable institution, and you are indeed lucky to number them amongst your staff. We are a young club, and as I do not wish to damp the enthusiasm of our members by seeing them placed in doubt as to whether they were the conquerors or conquered, I will ask you to state that the result was—Toddington Stars, 4 goals; Harlington Stars, 1 goal."

I am sorry that the confusion arose, but it is perfectly excusable. The correspondent who supplied the report in question is a Toddington man, and as a matter of course, the only Stars in his little universe are Toddington Stars. As to the Leagrave gentleman, I must regretfully confess that he is not at present a colleague of mine, but I am still on the look-out for him.

Luton Town, it is expected, will have three teams in the field on Saturday. The premier eleven will go to Ilford to meet the Ilfordians in the English cup-tie. They will leave Luton by the 10.45 train. It is confidently expected that both Gallacher and Prentice will play. If they do, I have no doubt whatever as to the result of the game.

A reserve team will disport themselves on the Town ground, with probably the Kettering Reserves for their opponents, and another reserve team will journey to Bedford to engage the Bedford Town Swifts in the first round for the Bedfordshire County Cup.

John Jack, the new outside left, arrived safely on Tuesday evening. I am told a large number of enthusiasts went to meet him, thinking he would come by the train getting in at 7.50, and great was their disappointment when it was found he was not among the passengers. He reached Luton soon after eight, and the enthusiasts had then cleared off. A happy thing for John Jack. He is a well-built fellow, and the locals are satisfied with his appearance.

Bert Sanders played full back for St. Albans on Saturday, in their cup-tie with Maidenhead. He was in grand form, and is generally admitted to have been the best man on the field. The Albanians were so delighted with his display, that they are pressing him to play for them regularly.

The Management Committee of the Southern League have ordered the match between Luton and Clapton to be replayed at the Spotted Dog on a day, other than Saturday, to be mutually arranged. Clapton were fined a guinea for the late start. It appears to me the decision is a very unjust one, as at any rate, not more than the eighteen minutes should be played, while, considering all the fault was on the Clapton side, it would be only fair to give Luton the game. The Town Committee have asked that the matter, which is an important one, as establishing a precedent, shall be referred to the League Council.

Don't forget the grand concert in aid of the Excelsior F.C. on Saturday evening at the Cowper Arms. Chair to be taken at 7.30 p.m. by Mr. F. C. Janes. Admission 3d; a few tickets left.—F. W. Haddon, hon. sec.—[ADVT.]