

FOOTBALL.

LUTON AND THE ENGLISH CUP.

VISIT TO ILFORD.

A POOR GAME.

Saturday witnessed the decision of the ties in the third round of the English Cup qualifying contest, these being the divisional semi-finals. With the persistently bad luck which has pursued them throughout the competition the Lutonians had to journey from the town, their destination on this occasion being Ilford. Last season's meetings with the Essex club were of such a closely contested character that it was not without some misgivings that the admirers of the "reds" regarded the match. With Gallacher and Prentice still incapable of playing it was thought that there might be a repetition of the singularly bad exposition given on the previous Saturday, and that is what proved to be the case. The team departed in the course of the forenoon, and a good few of their supporters wended their way into the Eastern county.

The start had been announced for half-past 2, but the commencement was delayed somewhat by the non-arrival of Gallon, the homesters' centre forward; indeed, operations had been in progress several minutes when that player put in an appearance. There was not a very large crowd, despite the attraction offered by a fine day, the number present being little upwards of a thousand. The Ilfordians were in a measure as unfortunate as their opponents, for a couple of reserves had to be introduced into the front rank. Mr. H. Chase took charge of the following men:—*Ilford*: Goal, W. R. Cosburn; backs, J. O. Drummond and E. Markham; half-backs, C. D. Regan, H. G. Watts (captain), and F. Markham; forwards, E. C. Porter and A. Porter (right), J. Gallon (centre), G. Fry and J. C. King (left). *Luton Town*: Goal, E. Bee; backs, M. D. Nicholson and J. McEwen; half-backs, J. Watkins, R. McCrindle (captain), and A. Howe; forwards, W. Brown and J. Finlayson (right), H. Galbraith (centre), F. Allen and J. Dimmock (left). The linesmen were Messrs. E. Markland (Ilford) and G. Worboys (Luton).

The "reds" were unfortunate in losing the choice of positions, this necessitating their facing bright sunshine and a fairly strong breeze. Directly after Galbraith had set the ball rolling, the visitors were seen to make their way down the field in good style, and with a good attempt Dimmock compelled the Ilford defenders to grant a corner. The strangers again assailed Cosburn's charge, and Allen secured a pass by Galbraith only to send high over the bar. Following a free kick for a foul against Luton, the brothers Porter put in a good passing run, but they failed to beat Nicholson, who cleared with a long kick. Drummond retaliated when Allen threatened to become dangerous, though it seemed that the left-winger should have profited by a pass from Brown. The Bedfordshire contingent continued to press, but by means of some clever play by Gallon the home lot succeeded in bursting through, though they were pulled up before they managed to become very dangerous. Drummond, securing in mid-field, essayed a long shot, but the ball rolled harmlessly over the line. King was adjudged off-side, but this adverse decision did not long keep back the Essex players, who were exhibiting good form. Nicholson was called upon to clear, and then Bee was forced to handle. King received an injury and this occasioned a brief cessation, but fortunately the hurt was not severe. Allen escaped well-deserved punishment for jumping on an opponent's back, and thereafter the Ilfordians shot wide at the Luton end. Dimmock rendered himself conspicuous by sending in a badly-judged pass to Galbraith, who was being well watched by Watts and his companions. McEwen sent in a couple of long attempts, but neither scored, and it was left to Allen to open the scoring, the left-winger succeeding with a fast, low shot a quarter of an hour from the start. Just after the re-commencement McCrindle was penalised for fouling, though the offence appeared quite unintentional. The opportunity offered the Ilfordians was not accepted, the ball being carelessly steered into touch. Luton forced a corner, and Howe compelled applause from a very one-sided crowd by a very fine piece of play. Cosburn had a warm time of it in the next few minutes, but he acquitted himself very ably amidst a determined onslaught. Nicholson aroused the ire of the spectators

by some vigorous play, and it was interesting to note a few of the oburgatives that were showered upon him. The crowd, thus rendered hostile, continued to display the utmost partiality during the remainder of the game, and the "reds" were subjected to insult very freely; in fact, in point of badness of behaviour the Ilford spectators were an easy first amongst all the crowds which the Luton men have faced this season. Nicholson was stopped for a foul, and then the hooting and uncomplimentary epithets streamed out again, but the visitors were undeterred by this exhibition, their defence being excellent. Bee was called upon to save, which he did capably, and then Drummond came in for some deserved applause for some good kicking. Dimmock made the mistake of shooting when he should have centred, and Drummond gave a corner. The Lutonians entered into a determined siege of their adversaries' fortress, and things looked ugly for the homesters, but once more the pair of backs performed wonderfully well. Hands in front of Cosburn looked ominous, but Galbraith sent the ball into the net without it touching a second player, so that no score resulted. The "reds" once more advanced to the attack a minute after, and Allen showed up prominently, but the ball went out. Dimmock threw away a grand opening, and then Nicholson was penalised for an alleged foul, the referee addressing some remarks to that player. When they had been stopped for offending against the off-side law, the Luton men got up splendidly, and Drummond had hard work in clearing. A strenuous attempt was made to lower Bee's colours, and a corner was secured by the Ilford men, but this was resultless. When the "reds" had worked their way into a good position Brown foolishly played the ball, though he was distinctly off-side; and this led to the scene of hostilities being removed to mid-field. Allen again distinguished himself, and Dimmock secured another corner off Drummond, a further attack on the home uprights proving fruitless. Brown sent behind, and yet another corner was not improved upon. Galbraith and his men put on steam, but they were stopped by the backs, who were both playing a rattling good game. A free kick for hands against the locals enabled McEwen to put in finely, but despite a sturdy tussle the attacking force were unable to add to their total, which at half-time read thus:

Luton, one; Ilford, none.

Shortly after the resumption Dimmock sustained a nasty kick, but he soon recovered from the effects of this. Adverse decisions against either side were noted, and then a flagrant violation of the laws was allowed to pass unnoticed by the referee—Brown being hugged by one of his opponents. Edgar Porter shot too high, and a minute later Brown copied this example by sending very wide of the mark. The next noticeable feature was that three kicks for fouls were awarded against the homesters in as many minutes, this reducing the total against Luton which had been carefully chronicled by certain Ilford sympathisers. From the third free-kick the Lutonians shot over the bar, and Allen emulated this by finishing up a capable run by sending too high. Hands against Luton led to some grand volleying by both sides' backs, and then Regan struck the bar with a fine attempt. Another foul against Ilford was put down, and subsequently Watkins barely missed with a capital long shot. When Ilford had made a strong effort to redeem their fortunes, Dimmock took advantage of a clever pass from Finlayson and scored with a beautiful shot. The homesters confidently appealed for off-side, but this was not acceded to, and the visitors accordingly held a pronounced lead. From this time to the finish the exchanges were fairly even, the "reds" always holding their own, despite the dash which the amateurs infused into their display. In the few minutes that remained for play free-kicks for infractions of the rules were numerous, but no further scoring took place, and the game accordingly ended thus:

Luton, two; Ilford, none.

It should be added that on the whole the visitors were the better side, though some of them showed execrable style. The forwards were quite "off colour," Galbraith being sadly hampered in this respect. Howe was most conspicuous amongst the half-backs, while McEwen was more brilliant than his comrade at back. Bee had at times plenty of work to do, and he discharged his duty well. The great strength of the losers was at back, where Drummond and Markham did marvellously well, the first-named being the more brilliant of the two. Edgar Porter was the only forward to show to advantage, Gallon being far from prominent. Cosburn did well in goal. The behaviour of the crowd has been already alluded to, but it should be added that on leaving the field the winners were vigorously hooted with amusing impartiality, while the losers were as loudly cheered. The exhibition was more condemnatory than any which the Luton crowd has yet been responsible for.