

FOOTBALL.

LUTON AND THE LEAGUE.

ROYAL ORDNANCE BEATEN.

On Saturday the Royal Ordnance team visited Luton in order to play their return fixture with the Town Club in the Southern League. It will be remembered that on the occasion when the sides formerly met the Londoners won a rough-and-tumble game, in the course of which a player of either team was ordered off the field. The far from admirable displays which the "reds" have been giving recently did not augur well for a victory on this occasion. There was a good attendance, the ropes being well lined. The weather was fine, though wintry; but the ground had not recovered from the recent thaw, and was in a very sloppy condition. Considering the slippery state of the turf some admirable play was witnessed. The home-sters were unfortunately deprived of the services of Galbraith, and the vacancy was filled without any of that changing in the front string which has been so frequently observed lately. Howe was brought up from the half-back line to fill this post of honour, while his place was taken by Collins. Otherwise the team was constituted as usual. The Ordnance eleven was not quite so strong as usual; but it was just about as good as when the "reds" received their defeat at Maze Hill.

It was a few minutes late when the men took up their positions as under:—

Luton Town: Goal, Bee; backs, Cheshier and McEwen; half-backs, Watkins, McCrindle and Collins; forwards, Gallacher and Finlayson (right), Howe (centre), Prentice and Jack (left).

Royal Ordnance: Goal, Gilmere; backs, George and G. Bryan; half-backs, McKenzie, Stewart, and Munro; forwards, F. Bryan and T. Bryan (left), Kirk (centre), Brown and Gollan (right).

Referee: Mr. S. R. Carr. Linesmen: Messrs. H. Sawyer (Ordnance) and Knight (Luton).

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For once in a way McClindle secured choice of positions, and he decided to give the visitors the benefit of the hill, though this brought them brilliant sunshine full in their faces. The start was an exact repetition of that of the previous week. Kirk passed the ball back instead of forward when kicking off, and a free kick was promptly awarded to the locals. The latter attacked hotly, but the opposition defenders proved reliable. Good passing on the home right was noticed, and then the Ordnance left made a capital run which led to an assault on the Luton lines, though this was easily staved off. The homesters went down in force, and in the next minute or two the Ordnance defence was sorely taxed. During this period Brown was slightly injured, but he continued playing. McEwen exhibited first-rate form, and he was a terror to the enemy's forwards. Collins, presented his opponents with a rare opportunity by kicking towards his own goal; an Ordnance man pounced on the ball and sent it in at a great pace, but Bee cleared splendidly. Hands against the Royalists led to the "reds" going very close at the other end. A foul against Collins was followed by a corner against the home combination. Gallacher, who was playing grandly with his partner, sent in a beauty which was only disposed of by Gilmere with difficulty, and then at the expense of a corner. From this Collins kicked just too high. A minute or so later the home side burst through and got into the neighbourhood of Gilmere. The custodian rushed out and endeavoured to rob Finlayson; but that player was not to be beaten and ultimately lodged the ball safely in the net. This success was deservedly cheered, for the point was admirably worked for. Immediately after the re-start a second notch was narrowly missed, Finlayson heading over from a pass by Collins. The home contingent were now doing most of the pressing and the strangers were having a particularly warm time of it. Following a foul against Luton, Gallacher was pulled up for lying off-side, and then Prentice sent into the goal-keeper's hands. A corner against the Ordnance led to another determined struggle; twice the leather was sent in, and as many times it was cleverly cleared, and then Gallacher sent the ball the wrong side of the post. Yet another free-kick was chronicled against the Greenwich men; McEwen sent this in well, and Gilmere was hard put to to steer it over the bar. The resultant corner was finely taken and another followed, this also being safely negotiated. Chasher sent in excellently, Gallacher heading over. The latter sent in another stinger from the wing, which was saved by Gilmere, and then one from Prentice went wide. After a corner some fine work was put in by Finlayson and Gallacher, and the last-named kicked past the goal-keeper. To the amazement of the on-lookers Mr. Carr disallowed the goal on the score of off-side. It seemed to most folks a perfectly legitimate notch, and the spectators did not forget to intimate their disapprobation. The misfortune did not damp the ardour of the Lutonians, however, and this was evidenced by Finlayson shaving the post with a terrific grounder just afterwards. The form of "Finny" was extraordinary; he was actually shooting, and shooting well too, and the bystanders expressed their satisfaction in no half-hearted fashion. Watkins was penalised for fouling in the back, and then a very amusing incident occurred. George, who had been repeatedly beaten by Gallacher, was floored by that player and evoked shouts of laughter by indignantly remonstrating with his conqueror. Mr. Carr made another mistake in punishing Gallacher for an alleged infraction of the off-side law. Gallacher was not deterred from his efforts, and next minute he was seen to beat George with the utmost ease; indeed, the Royalist did not seriously attempt to stop the fleet right winger. From a good centre by Prentice Howe sent in well, this leading to Gilmere conceding a corner. The Luton inside left was stopped for lying off-side, and subsequently Finlayson tried his skill once more, a very fast shot striking somebody in the back. This was particularly fortunate for the custodian, for it would have been impossible to stop the ball. Gallacher quickly returned and succeeded in securing another corner, which was as fruitless as its forerunners. Gallacher put plenty of powder behind his next attempt, and Gilmere saved marvellously. After a determined struggle a further corner was forced by Jack and Collins sent over, a like fate befalling another sapable effort by the homesters. When the interval arrived the totals were :

Luton, one ; Ordnance, none.

The second half found the "reds" with the sun in their faces ; but this did not seem to very materially interfere with them. A minute or so from the re-start Jack was observed to send into the keeper's hands, and Gallacher followed with an attempt which went just wide. The same pair again took turns in shooting at goal, both attempts being unavailing. An appeal for a corner by Luton was overruled, and Prentice was spoken to by the referee. Brown, at the other end, sent wide. The stay of the Royalists in the Luton territory was not of long duration, a foul against them once more transferring the scene of operations to Gilmere's neighbourhood. Prentice narrowly missed, and Gallacher struck the side of the net. Hands against the Ordnance near the penalty line was awarded and the ball was sent through. The score was disallowed for some inexplicable reason ; but that did not much matter, Finlayson once more sending past Gilmere out of a scrimmage. A bad foul by the Ordnance on Prentice was duly punished, and then George distinguished himself by cleverly negotiating a strong attempt by Jack. Prentice steered over the bar from a centre by Gallacher, and Jack added to the narrow misses by lodging the ball on the cross-bar. A foul against Watkins was followed by Prentice forcing a corner, and later on Howe essayed a shot which was almost successful. The home centre man had not begun very well ; but he was now playing capably. Fouls by either team were taken cognisance of, and thereafter Bee was called upon to save for the second time in the game. Finlayson was once more unlucky with a good one, and after the Royalists had paid a visit to the home end Prentice was stopped for getting off-side. Corners fell to the respective elevens, and just after Prentice secured goal the third. The Lutonians maintained the pressure and Prentice scored from a pass by Gallacher along the line ; but Mr. Carr declined to recognise this as a goal. In the remaining minutes free kicks were given against both sides, these being fairly equally distributed. The "reds" had all the best of the subsequent operations ; but they did not succeed in again scoring, and the eventual outcome was this :

Luton, three ; Ordnance, none.