

FOOTBALL.

LUTON AND THE LEAGUE. BEATEN AT SOUTHAMPTON. AN UNSATISFACTORY GAME.

DICKERSON BADLY HURT.

Last season Luton Town and Southampton St. Mary's were second and third respectively on the League list, the "reds" winning both their games with the spectators. This year they have started somewhat badly, though, for on Saturday they were defeated after a rough and tumble game by two goals to one. The "Saints" had played five matches, all away from home, and of these only one (that against Royal Ordnance) ended in a victory. The terrible drubbing which the Southampton men received at the hands of Clapton on the previous Saturday was remarkable for the heavy scoring, the Southerners having seven goals to three scored against them. The Lutonians had done remarkably well on their own ground; but their solitary match away from home (against Millwall) had resulted in defeat. It was with considerable trepidation that Lutonians anticipated the encounter at Southampton, for while it was generally thought that the "reds" were the better lot it was conceded that the enemy would fight hard to retrieve some of their lost laurels. The fight was anticipated with general interest, even good judges being doubtful to which side to award their preference.

The Luton team made the journey on Friday afternoon, a saloon being attached to the 3.10 Midland train for their convenience. They were not similarly accommodated on the London and South Western line; but as some compensation the trip from London was rapidly performed, the men landing at the Bedford Hotel at 7 o'clock or thereabouts. In the morning some time was spent in making a round of inspection, and later on some more Lutonians reached the Southern port. These had left Luton at 9 o'clock and arrived at Southampton shortly before 2 o'clock. Long before the hour announced for the commencement of the game there were visible signs of the extreme interest that was being manifested in the meeting of the strong rivals. People were flocking to the Antelope ground in large numbers, and ere the start was made there were several thousands present, the exact number being computed at about 6,000. The playing pitch is not quite so level as might be desired; but it is passable, and the high banks which surround the ground form magnificent coigns of vantage for eager spectators. These elevated positions were all taken advantage of before the fray commenced.

So far as the Luton team was concerned the changes were only those that had been foreshadowed. Jack was replaced in goal by Dickerson, and while McCartney partnered McEwen the post of left-half was occupied by Watkins, the captain (Dooherty) being absent. McCrindle made the trip as reserve man. The "Saints" had some alterations also. Taylor was brought from right half to left back, and while Angus was to be seen at inside left Turner became his partner. It was conceded that the home team was a strong one.

At the advertised hour the following performers took up their positions in the central ring:—

Southampton St. Mary's: Goal, Cain; backs, Meston and Taylor; half-backs, Dale, Littlehale and Marshall; forwards, Naughton and Baker (right wing), Farrell (centre), Angus and Turner (left wing).

Luton Town: Goal, Dickerson; backs, McCartney and McEwen; half-backs, Birch, Stewart, and Watkins; forwards, Gallacher and Couper (right wing), Galbraith (centre), Parkinson and Ekins (left wing).

Referee: Mr. A. Roston Bourke; linesmen, Messrs.

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Referee: Mr. A. Roston Bourke; linesmen, Messrs. Thomson (St. Mary's) and G. H. Barford (Luton).
The visitors won the toss and Farrell started operations against the wind. The "reds," amid encouraging shouts, went down well in the first minute and Gallacher sent high over the bar. A foul against McCartney on Angus was noted, and Taylor sent in capitally; but McEwen was thereabouts and the danger was averted. Some laughter was caused by "Mac" hoisting the leather over the grand-stand in kicking away. The "reds" forwards went away at a rattling pace after the succeeding throw in, and Galbraith and Gallacher showed admirable style, Stewart eventually sending out. A foul against the visitors' centre half led to Turner centring admirably, only to see McEwen head away cleverly. The Lutonians got away by some pretty passing and Gallacher tested the custodian with a beauty. "Gally" was pulled up for fouling and immediately afterwards the home left were well in evidence, Turner doing especially useful work. On one occasion Dickerson ran out in an endeavour to clear and disaster almost ensued, a corner being conceded in order to avert the danger. Nothing tangible resulted from this though, and later on Luton advanced by successive throws in on the right wing. It was not for long that the "reds" continued to advance, for the defence opposed to them was admirable, and the home quintette were soon found rallying for an onslaught on Dickerson's charge. A great misfortune happened to Luton just now. Dickerson came out in order to deal with a good effort and he fell heavily, his knee being put out in doing so. After a few minutes' cessation the unfortunate player was assisted off the field and the "reds" were left with only ten men. A hurried consultation took place, and the crowd expressed their feeling in the matter by raising a general cry of "Another goal-keeper." This popular demand was at once acceded to by the authorities, a sportsmanlike action which was appreciated at its true worth by the visitors. It was agreed that McCrindle should fill the breach, and while the ex-captain was preparing himself for the fray Stewart filled the vacancy. The "Saints" were going great guns just prior to Dickerson's enforced retirement, and they continued to give the Luton defenders plenty of work to do. Hands against them afforded the Lutonians some relief, and after McCrindle had relieved Stewart the "reds" attacked hotly. Galbraith forced a corner and McCartney shot splendidly from a long distance, only to see the ball get away. The downfall of the "Saints'" citadel was not long delayed, however. Following a foul against the Southerners Watkins placed splendidly and the ball went through off Meston. This success was generously applauded by the spectators, and the little knot of Lutonians present were now in the seventh heaven of delight. Soon after the re-start Farrell looked dangerous, but McCrindle behaved extremely well and cleared as well as could be expected seeing that he was wearing only ordinary walking boots. This drawback, by the way, was soon remedied. "Mac" in the meantime was palpably nervous, his excited marching up and down under the bar being noted with anything but satisfaction by the Luton supporters, who dreaded that he would make a bad display. Such gloomy forecasts were pleasingly belied, and "Mac" gave an admirable exposition. It has been said that McCrindle saved cleverly from Farrell. The ball dropped a comparatively short distance from goal, and immediately after Ekins headed towards his own fortress, the ball eventually being steered over the Luton line. Galbraith pushed an opponent with the inevitable result, and the fray was carried well into the visitors' half. The "Saints" attacked capitally but McEwen cleared cleverly, and hands against Galbraith when in a good position was a further rebuff to the strangers; McEwen, however, repeated his good display. McCartney was hooted for taking a man in determined style, though the occasion for thus expressing disapprobation was difficult to understand. When Galbraith had been adjudged off-side—the ball going through, and the point disallowed—the "reds" were beaten back for a minute; but they came again with an irresistible rush and the next thing that was seen was that Ekins was steadying himself right under the bar for shooting. The score appeared a certainty; but Meston rushed in and fouled his adversary in very condemnatory style. A penalty kick was awarded, and this was taken by McCartney. The fact that a yell of mingled laughter and hooting arose will suffice, perhaps, to betoken that "Mac" kicked wide; the attempt missed by a yard, but had the shot been straight no goal-keeper could have negotiated it, for there was any amount of powder behind it. As though to atone in some measure for this lack of success McCartney kicked grandly, and a little later Gallacher struck the post with a beauty. Birch cleared well at the other end, and in a minute or so a hot attack by Southampton led to a corner, Angus striking the net in endeavouring to place the ball in front of goal. Parkinson was punished for fouling, and the same player and his partner put in some pretty passing, the inside man ending with a capable attempt to lower Cain's colours. From a free-kick for a foul by Birch McCartney headed away excellently; but a nasty foul by one of the Southampton men when near goal was apparently un-noticed by the referee. An extraordinary decision was given immediately after by Mr. Bourke. The ball had been sent on by Angus to Naughton, and the latter deliberately handled it, the ball going through. The Lutonians confidently appealed for a free kick; but to the amazement of those present—even the Southampton players themselves—the referee decided that the point was a legitimate one, and must be allowed. This terrible mistake was of the utmost importance, for its eventual result was that Luton lost the game. Soon after the re-commencement a foul against the "Saints" was awarded, and McEwen sent right into goal, though without scoring. A lovely over-head kick by "Gally" deserved better luck, the only result being that an unproductive corner was obtained. Watkins was penalised for fouling, and Gallacher got off-side, while other fouls were awarded against McEwen and one of the "Saints." When Parkinson had tested Cain with a hot one, McCrindle was afforded more than one chance of distinguishing himself—and he did it. In rapid succession he fluted away shots that would have beaten many keepers. A corner accrued from the second save, and the Southampton men swarmed to the attack; but "Mac" was in surprisingly good form, and he got away one or two more difficult attempts in fine style. The spectators expressed their admiration of the display "in the usual way." After a foul against Luton, Coupar sent in a long effort which forced Cain to grant a corner. Following this the "reds" attacked strenuously, and Parkinson almost scored. Naughton burst away at full speed just after and sent just over the bar; he had been lying off-side, but was not pulled up. Stewart gave the home defence some trouble with a well-judged one, and Meston headed over his own goal-line. The resultant corner was not turned to account, Stewart sending over after a keen struggle. Angus sent in magnificently, and McCrindle fluted out well, a corner which accrued being nugatory. Turner in the next minute beat Birch and sent in a fast shot which scored, and thus gave the homesters the lead. Decisions against Luton for breaking the off-side law and that relating to foul play having been given, the "Saints" were punished for handling the leather. Watkins was responsible for a capable centre, and the ball was almost rushed through, the failure being by very little. Despite all the efforts of the "reds," however, they were unable to do more, and the interval saw the score standing thus:
ST. MARY'S, TWO; LUTON, ONE.
After the resumption the homesters had the advantage of ground, and things did not look very promising.

for the strangers. Shortly after the re-start Gallacher trundled a soft one to the goal-keeper. For a space the Lutonians did not combine at all well, the result being that the leaders were enabled to press continuously, one shot going close to scoring. A foul against the Southerners did not long delay their onward march, for in a very short time they were to be seen once more in the neighbourhood of the "three Mace," the finishing up attempt being only "so-so." Three fouls against the "Saints" led the spectators to audibly offer advice to some of the performers, and they apparently profited by it, for there was no repetition for a time. A disappointing show was made by Gallacher hereabouts; he received a good pass from Ekins right under the bar, and, to the mortification of the band of Lutonians who were expecting to see him equalise, he steered the ball right over the bar—a feat that was saluted with considerable laughter. A magnificent kick by McCartney resulted in the ball dropping just in front of goal; but unfortunately none of the forwards were near enough to improve upon the effort. Free kicks against the respective sides were noted, and later on the "Saints" pressed hard, some admirable shots being dispatched at McCrindle's charge. Gallacher emulated this example, and hands against Taylor close to goal threatened danger, the defenders behaving splendidly. Hands against McEwan was followed by the awarding of three fouls against the Lutonians, though the occasion for one or two of them it was difficult to perceive. McCartney apparently got into Mr. Bourke's black books; for that gentleman stopped the game in order to specially address the burly back. A good exhibition of short passing was given by Luton, Gallacher finishing up by sending out badly. Hands and a foul against the "Saints" led to a great struggle near the Southampton goal, the ball bobbing about persistently amongst the knot of players. It would not go through, though, and eventually Watkins sent out. More pressure by the homesters gave "Bob" further opportunities of distinguishing himself. Subsequently more misfortune happened to Luton. In the midst of a hot struggle near the Southampton uprights Coupar centred and Parkinson sent through with his hands, though he appeared to have plenty of time to deal with the ball otherwise. The point was similar to the first goal allowed to the "Saints"; the difference consisted of the fact that Mr. Bourke disallowed the Luton score. Towards the finish the Lutonians struggled gamely to draw level, and more than once they came within an ace of scoring. All their efforts were in vain, however, and the final outcome was that the better team had to succumb with the following scores:

ST. MARY'S, TWO; LUTON, ONE.