

LUTON V. SOUTHAMPTON ST.
MARY'S.THE REDS DEFEATED AFTER MANY
MISFORTUNES.

It was Luton's second League match away on Saturday, and Southampton's first (out of five) at home. The Reds made the journey on Friday to the Hampshire port in pretty good spirits, and everyone anticipated a close fight; for once, the prophets were right. It was a hard struggle indeed, and the hardest part about it was the misfortune which dogged Luton's efforts from first to last.

After their surprising downfall before Clapton the previous week, the Soton supporters, though hopeful, were scarcely sanguine of victory. Even the players who met the Reds exploring the harbour, on the morning before the match, I hear, told the Lutonians that they ought to win. Of course, you may take this with as much salt as you like. As far as the betting went, the odds were slightly in Luton's favour, but some folk wisely put it as "evens and a toss-up."

The morning was foggy in Luton, and particularly so in London, even beyond Surbiton, the canals round Farnborough being coated with ice, and the ground covered with white hoar-frost. The little party of Lutonians on arriving at Southampton found the day bright and clear, but the air was decidedly keen.

The Antelope ground, which is the battle-field of the Saints, is a fine pitch. Though, pretty well in the centre of the town, and surrounded by houses, there is ample room, and being banked up round two sides, it affords every facility for a good view of the game. But the stand is not half the size of that at Luton.

A "record" crowd assembled to see the first Southern League match of the season, Luton's fame—and I should say our "drawing" power is quite equal to that of Millwall—having attracted something like 6,000 spectators. The Saints were first on the field, and appeared a heavy lot of men. The visitors, who turned out a few minutes afterwards, were greeted with a hearty cheer.

Unfortunately, the injury which kept Docherty out of the team against Grantham Rovers prevented the Luton captain's appearance at Southampton, Watkins taking his place at left half. J. Dickerson, of St. Albans, was kind enough to assist us in goal but, an accident unhappily compelled him to leave the field after 10 minutes play. The Saints mustered a strong eleven, but lacked Rogers, who had been suspended. The rival sides lined up as under:

Luton—J. Dickerson, goal; McCartney and McEwen, backs; Birch, Stewart, and Watkins, halves; Gallacher, Coupar, Galbraith, Parkinson, and Ekins, forwards.

Southampton—Cain, goal; Meston and E. J. Taylor, backs; Dale, Littlehales and Marshall, halves; Naughton and Baker, right; Farrell, centre; Angus and Turner, left, forwards.

Mr. Roston Bourke, whose refereeing was very unsatisfactory, had as linesmen Messrs. G. H. Barford and Thomson.

The start was made very early—indeed, three minutes before 3, the appointed time. Luton won the toss, but there was nothing in it, and amid a buzz of excitement, Farrell set the ball rolling. The Reds attacked at once, Gallacher sending wide, and a foul against McCartney on Angus, gave the Saints a chance. Taylor placed the kick, but the danger was cleared. McEwen then distinguished himself by lifting the ball high above the pavilion out of the ground. A pretty combined effort by the Luton forwards, generously applauded by the Soton spectators, then followed.

Beating Taylor, Galbraith passed out to Gallacher, who centred, but Stewart sent behind with a good attempt. Owing to Birch wandering from his place, the Saints' left got dangerous, but McEwen headed away nicely. The Luton right next attacked, and Cain saved from Gallacher, and Watkins returning smartly into goal, Luton ought to have scored, but Galbraith fouled the goal-keeper. The home left again broke away, and Dickerson, running out, gave a corner, McCartney relieving well. Another hot attack from the same quarter, during which "Cartie" defended grandly had serious consequences for Luton. In attempting to kick away, Dickerson fell over the ball, and put his knee out, falling prostrate on the ground.

After a stoppage of some minutes, he was carried off the field, and there were loud cries of "Another goal-keeper" from the crowd. Recognising that they were in the same fix at Clapton the previous week, the Saints showed practical sympathy for Dickerson's mishap, by allowing McCrindle, who luckily came as twelfth man, to take his place, the onlookers cheering their approval of this sportsmanlike action.

This was a very serious handicap, but, nevertheless, Luton attacked vigorously, and from a corner McCartney caused Cain to bring off a good save. A foul being awarded Luton, Stewart placed the kick splendidly, and the ball went through off Meston, the Reds scoring their first goal after 18 minutes' play amid cheers. On re-starting, McCrindle kicked away from Farrell, and then Littlehales sent over, the ball going several times behind the Luton lines.

A fine opening was now afforded the Reds. Ekins, when clear in front of goal, was tripped by Meston, and a penalty-kick was rightly awarded. Amid breathless suspense, McCartney took the kick, and there were loud shouts of joy when the ball just went outside the far post—a rather bad miss. The Saints retaliated, and McCrindle gave a corner, Angus, however, placing wide. Hereabouts, Ekins made his first run; but Parkinson failed to utilise the opportunity. "Cartie" headed away from a foul off Birch, and then McCrindle saved from Angus.

Now it was that Southampton equalised—or rather, were given their first goal. A rush was made by the forwards, and the leather struck the post, but Naughton, being at hand, DELIBERATELY FISTED THE BALL through, McCrindle hardly attempting to save, as he thought Mr. Bourke was bound to blow his whistle. Greatly to everyone's surprise, the referee gave it as a goal to the Saints! The Luton men strongly appealed against this unfair decision, but Mr. Bourke refused to listen, subsequently stating that he never saw the ball handled. Thus it was the home side drew level after half-an-hour's play. A terrific demonstration was made by the Saints' supporters.

This infused new life into the game, and numerous fouls, most of them simply technical, were given on both sides. Cain fisted behind a shot from Galbraith, and fouls against McEwen, Watkins, and Naughton followed. On three occasions, McCrindle saved really well, and in the midst of an exciting attack, McCartney averted what seemed a certain score. A long cross-shot from Coupar went out, and Stewart gave Cain a handul. A sudden dash gave Naughton an open goal, the home forward sending in a splendid long shot which just skimmed the cross-bar. An attempt from Stuart was headed behind by Meston, and then McCrindle saved cleverly from Angus at the expense of a corner.

Another disaster then befel Luton, for McCartney, dashing up the field, lost the ball, and Turner had a fine opening, the left winger beating McCrindle with a long screw shot. Great cheering greeted the Saints' second goal, and the Soton players seemed determined to maintain their lead. Taylor relieved times without number at back, but Cain had to save as a result of Ekins' centre, before the interval, the score then standing :

SOUTHAMPTON..	..	2 goals
LUTON		1 ..

Things were certainly not hopeless for Luton at this point, and their play distinctly improved for a time, the exchanges continuing to be very fast. The Reds at once rushed the ball into Soton territory, Cain saving. At the other end, Farrell lost a chance. Though two fouls in succession were given against the home team, Luton failed to get on level terms. However, a centre from Ekins gave Gallacher the ball a few yards from goal, but, alas! Billie shot miles too high. A decent attempt from Turner was negotiated by McCrindle. Another opening fell to Luton, when Taylor handled; Birch took the kick well, but the ball cannoned away—very hard lines for the Reds!

...and before he had sounded his whistle! A foul for Luton gave Watkins a chance, but "Connie" sent behind, McEwen then checking a run by Turner splendidly. Once again McCrindle behaved creditably in goal, but the Saints could not place a corner kick for nuts, every single one being placed wide of the

A desperate onslaught was now made by Luton, and Ekins crossing to Galbraith, the latter dashed close into goal; Cain was clean beaten, but Parkinson foolishly fisted the ball into the net without the slightest need for it. The consequence was that no score was allowed, though Mr. Bourke might well have given Luton the equalising goal, as it was scored in the same fashion as the Saints' first point. Unfortunately, he saw hands when Luton offended, but did not happen to be looking when Naughton fisted the ball through! That was the only difference, don't you know?

Once more Luton made a determined effort to equalise. Ekins ran down, and from Parkinson's pass, Galbraith shot very tamely, Cain clearing his lines by kicking out of the ground. I think "Gally" ought certainly to have scored. A new ball was provided, and Luton had several other chances. McCartney shot over, Ekins finished up a clear run by shooting wide—amid loud shouts of derision and relief—while from a foul against Meston, I was deeply disappointed to see McEwen spoil everything by kicking too hard beyond the lines. Time was now up, and Luton retired vanquished, the final score being:

SOUTHAMPTON 2 goals

LUTON 1 ..