

LUTON V. SOUTHAMPTON ST. MARY'S.

A VIGOROUS GAME, BUT LUTON WIN HANDS DOWN.

The visit of Southampton was the last of three successive League matches on Luton ground, and from the stand-point of the spectator promised to be the tit-bit of the second half of the season. The weather again was badly at fault, and a drizzling rain all Saturday morning, though certainly preferable to Friday's gale, presented a cheerless aspect. Happily, the celestial water-pots ceased operations soon after three, and the Town Committee, no doubt, were immensely grateful for even this small mercy.

The visitors brought a hundred supporters from Southampton, and the crowd altogether numbered about 3,500—by far the best gate this side of Christmas. The Red Cross Band performed some excellent selections before the start, and when the men came out, it was found that both sides had full strength. Luton played in white, as for the past few weeks, and the Saints donned the familiar cherry-squares, each wearing a band of crape, owing to the death of Mr. Button, a committee man. The elevens took up their positions as under:

Southampton:—Cain; Meston and Thompson; Taylor, Littlehales, and Hodgkinson; Baker, Naughton, Farrell, Keay, and Turner.

Luton: Williams; McCartney and McEwen; Watkins, Stewart, and Docherty; Gallacher, Coupar, Galbraith, Birch, and Ekins.

Owing to an accident, Mr. Saywell was unable to fulfil his appointment, and Mr. F. Johnson proved an unsatisfactory substitute. Mr. E. A. Barford took the line for Luton.

The start was made very punctually—if anything, a couple of minutes before the fixed time, 3.45. The Saints' captain, Farrell, had won the toss, and Galbraith accordingly kicked off against a slight breeze, the ground being very soft after the rain. The home forwards at once gave a forecast of the result, for Cain was early presented with three goal-kicks.

A foul against Watkins gave the Saints their first chance, Hodgkinson taking the kick. As a result, Williams had to save first from Keay, and then from Naughton. Another foul—this time against Farrell—enabled Luton to give tit-for-tat, McCartney placing, but Birch sending over.

The Whites had their opponents soon in hand. Galbraith got extremely dangerous, and must have scored but for the hustling of the Saints' backs, his shot just grazing the post. Luton continued to press hotly, and some dashing work by Stewart produced the first corner of the day. Gallacher placed the kick beautifully, and Stewart smartly headed through No. 1 for Luton, amid a great demonstration, 10 minutes from the start.

Undaunted by this reverse, Turner rushed away, and McEwen conceded a corner, but a foul against Hodgkinson, Gallacher being the victim, relieved the seige. Some very neat passing between Birch and Ekins soon transferred the play, and Galbraith was again frustrated in the nick of time, but the ball came out to the left, and Cain saved a quick return from Ekins.

The Saints were putting a lot of vigour into their play, most of it of a questionable character, Hodgkinson being quite unscrupulous with Gallacher. After a bit, the visitors had another chance from a foul on Baker, but Taylor placed hopelessly wide amid the jeers of the crowd. The indifference of the referee to the rough tactics employed by the Southampton players, brought him much disfavour, and when Mr. Johnson gave unfair decisions against the home team, things became worse. Galbraith slipped in the most harmless fashion, but a foul was given against him, and Williams had to throw out a long shot.

The most glaring mistake by the referee occurred when Ekins, getting across a lovely centre, Galbraith headed a fine goal, and was promptly ruled offside! This evoked a round of hooting, and it was an awfully bad decision. So effective, however, were the attacks of the home vanguard, that Cain saved twice before Gallacher scored No. 2 with a shot just under the bar from mid-field. There could be no doubt whatever about the legitimacy of this point, and the spectators cheered wildly as the men returned to the centre-ring.

A bad foul by Meston gave the Saints' defence a very warm time, and Docherty putting across, Gallacher struck the cross-bar with a resounding bang. In the scrimmage, Cain was seen to fall to the ground hurt, and a brief stoppage followed. The home forwards pressed repeatedly, but once the visitors broke clean away, and Williams saved smartly, Watkins completing the clearance. A brilliant run by Ekins aroused much enthusiasm, but the right-wing men just missed the ball. Coupar gave Cain a big handful, and then Stewart called forth a roar of applause by striking the bar with a grand shot.

Just 6 minutes before the interval, McEwen placed "hands" off Taylor with rare judgment right into goal-mouth, and Coupar rushed the ball through for the third time. The Saints took this reverse very sorely to heart, and Cain, who seemed in desperate straits, ran out to protest against Mr. Johnson's giving a goal. When the referee pointed decisively to the centre, the Saints showed a childish petulance in refusing to resume play for a few minutes, and, of course, there was considerable uproar from the crowd. Eventually, the ball was re-started, but apart from a rush by Turner, which McEwen cleared, nothing of importance occurred before half-time, the score standing:

LUTON	..	..	..	3 goals.
SOUTHAMPTON	..	0	..	

Having so substantial a lead, Luton could afford to take things more easily in the second half. Play became more vigorous and scrambling than ever, half a dozen fouls occurring in the first ten minutes. On the whole, however, exchanges ruled pretty even. Turner got in several runs, but his partners could do nothing with his centres. From some very tricky play by Coupar, Gallacher dropped the ball right in front of Cain, and Birch missed an open goal by aiming too high. Williams saved a couple of long shots from Littlehales, while Cain was troubled in the same way by Stewart. Keay and Turney forced a couple of corners, but these came to nothing, Williams saving from Farrell.

During the last half of the game, Thomson was badly "winded," and had to retire, Turner taking his place at back. Sundry spurts by the Saints' forwards were cleared by the home backs, and Luton were generally equal to retaliating. Coupar and Hodgkinson got at loggerheads, and the referee had to stop a kicking bout, the foul, of course, being given against Luton. A flagrant case of handling on the part of Littlehales brought about a save by Cain from Galbraith. The Saints had a last chance from a foul against Birch, but Taylor placed the kick miles too wide, the crowd amusing itself by ironically shouting "Goal!" The game had been settled half an hour before the end came, and nothing being scored in the second 45, the result stood:

LUTON	..	..	..	3 goals.
SOUTHAMPTON	..	0	..	