

LITON V. MILLWALL ATHLETIC.

A KEEN DISAPPOINTMENT.

For the first match at Liton on Saturday under the auspices of the United League, the weather was simply awful. Yet torrents of rain and abundance of mud did not deter some 4,000 football enthusiasts from braving the rigours of the English climate to see the great game between Liton and Millwall.

Last season, of course, the honours of football rivalry were pretty evenly divided between Bedfordshire and East Fenny-road. Anyway, though Millwall got home in both League games, Liton turned the tables in the two friendlies. This season, however, all loyal supporters of the Liton F.C. had made up their minds that history was to be written much more to our advantage, and if we could not beat Millwall from the proud championship of the Southern League, they should find our form in the United League far more difficult to combat.

A smart shower arrived just before the start, and all who could took refuge in the grandstand, which was greatly crowded in consequence. The Liton players turned out some minutes before the visitors, the composition of the eleven being:

Liton: Williams, goal; Davies and McKenna, backs; Watkins, Stewart, and Docherty, halves; Gallacher and Milnes, right; Gallowith, centre; Cooper and Ekine, left, forwards.

Millwall: Moore; Graham and Hobson; King, Aitken, and Matthews; Whelan, Calvey, J. H. Gellies, Davies, and Giddes.

Referee: Mr. Kingscott, Derby.

Umpires: Messrs. J. H. Bartlett and O. Coggill (the old Millwall goal-keeper).

Ekine made his first appearance in the Liton team since his injury at practice, and Watkins was specially included for the benefit of Mr. Alfred Giddes. The Dockers decided it best to put Moore in goal in place of Carter, and this selection was strikingly justified, while the assistance of J. H. Gellies enabled them to dispense with the services of McKenna, the wanderer home from Sunderland. Both sides had thus their best possible strength out for the occasion.

Just after 4.30, Liton kicked off towards the Workhouse end. Gallowith at once distinguished himself by leading a smart attack, and Milnes took a fine pass, giving Gallacher a glorious opening, but the back rushed across in the nick of time. From Cooper's pass, Gallowith tried a flying shot, which Moore fisted behind, and from the corner, Graham had some difficulty in heading away.

For the first quarter of an hour, Liton were slopily swarming round the Millwall goal. Twice, Gallowith got very dangerous, but was rubbed before he could shoot, while Milnes dashed across and gave Ekine a grand pass, but the Liton left-winger shot over.

The first foul was against Docherty, and another free-kick followed against Liton when Davies playfully faked the ball down to avoid getting his face begrimed by the muddy sphere. This was Millwall's first lock-in, Williams saving a hard shot from Davies. The home back of the same name as the Blues' forward was showing to great advantage, placing beautifully from a foul throw-in.

Giddes had so far been retiring out in the cold, but just as a fresh torrent of rain came down, the old West-Stron, got across a clicking centre, which Stewart prevented Gellies from converting. Thanks to a foul against King, the battle was soon raging at the other end. Davies again played well, and Docherty missed the mark with a hard drive. Amid applause, Davies checked Giddes just as he was bursting away, and then cleared nicely from Gellies.

The home team were pressing severely, and Moore was only a second too soon for Milnes, while from Gallowith's pass, Cooper headed up, and Gallacher sent in a terrific shot, which must have scored but for a ransom off King. Offside was given against Whelan and Gellies in turn. Central service was done by Milnes in averting danger from "blade" off Davies. After Giddes had stied the ball yards over the bar, the home forwards got down, and Gallacher put across a grand centre, which, alas! everyone missed. Directly afterwards, Moore rushed out and gave a threat to Ekine.

Two splendid shots from Stewart, who was working like a Trojan, were saved equally well by the Millwall custodian, whose display in goal exceeded all anticipation. At last—after 45 minutes of fast and exciting football—Whelan raced away and netted the ball, but the whistle had blown for offside five seconds previously. However, a moment after the free-kick had been taken, the Millwall forwards again got possession, and Davies scored a legitimate point with a swift, side shot. Warmest goal enthusiasm among the visitors.

Not few people were prepared for what followed in less than 5 minutes. Watkins had kicked wide, and then the Blues' defence gave a corner. Gallacher placed the bag-kick beautifully, and Stewart, amid a forest of heads, got his cranium broadside on and scored a magnificent goal. Hats and sticks were thrown up, and pure delight was manifested on all hands when Liton thus equalized the score.

The struggle was resumed with as much keenness as ever. A fine shot from Ekine compelled Moore to give a corner. But this came to nothing, and when McKenna "up ended" Calvey, the foul promised badly for the home side. The Reds averted disaster, and the whistle now blew with the score:

LITON 1 goal

During the interval, as at the start, the Laton Red Cross Silver Prize Hand discriminated sweet strains, the Looeoe visitors expressing very warm appreciation of their efforts.

On crossing over, Millwall became dangerous, and forced a couple of corners. The scene of operations was changed by a spirit of Eklin's, whose centre Robson put behind in self-defence. Stewart, however, failed to repeat his success of a short time back, though another corner resulted, Eklin placing wide.

We now saw a long spell of attacking by Laton. Two corners, two wonderful saves by Moore, and a foul against Uetline, from which Davies, the home back, almost grazed the cross-bar. Then Millwall raised themselves for a big effort. Gittins got clean through in company with Davies; the pair dribbled down in amid breathless silence, and Williams partially saved the shot, but Uetline caught the leather on the re-bound, and banged it into the net—No. 2 for Millwall after 15 minutes.

This was bad. The fact that their opponents had got the lead almost demoralised the Laton men for a bit, and Gittins broke through in exactly the same fashion as before, but, fortunately, Williams effected a fine clearance. Owing to injury, Matthews left the field for two minutes, and during this time Eklin missed badly, while Graham fouled Cooper. From Davies's place, Gallacher despatched the leather into the net like a shot from a 110-ton gun, but, unluckily, was given offside, and the ball's-eye did not count.

Laton seemed to be bent on drawing level, and McInnes nearly bursted through Moore, who saved grandly from Stewart. Then it was that Gallacher had the chance of a life-time, but shot miles too high. It was a heart-rending disappointment for the crowd, and a desperately bad aim.

The next incidents were a good attempt from Watkins and a foul against Alken. No advantage, however, accrued to Laton, and the only definite result was a rush by Gadden, who dodged round Davies and centred to Watkins, who could not help scoring with an open goal before him.

Only 10 minutes remained, and the game was practically over as far as Laton was concerned. A glorious rainbow now illumined the heavens, but brought little hope to the Whites, most of whom were showing signs of distress. Indeed, both sides had had more than enough, owing to the mud and wet.

Gallacher worked to the last, and eventually Cooper got in a lovely "grounders," which Moore saved in wonderful fashion. Though soon stunned by a nasty charge from Graham,

Elton was trying very hard, and head cheer broke forth when he scored from a centre by Gallagher.

As only three minutes remained, the excitement of the spectators was intense, but it was, alas! a case of hoping against hope. Elton ran down again, and Graham gave a corner, but the Whites failed to improve upon it. Time, therefore, came with the score as follows:

MILWAUKEE	..	3	goals
LEWIS	..	2	..