

THE LEAGUE.—SECOND DIVISION.

SMALL HEATH v. LUTON TOWN.

Played at Small Heath on Saturday. Result:

Small Heath	4 goals.
Luton Town	2 goals.

The teams were as follow:—

Small Heath: Clutterbuck, goal; Archer and Pratt, backs; Dunlop, Leake and Robinson, half-backs; Hare, Oakes, Lewis, Abbott, and Wharton, forwards.

Luton: Williams, goal; Docherty and McIlwain, backs; Perrins, Stewart and Birch, half-backs; Gallacher, Coupar, Donaldson, Little and Molnes, forwards.

Referee, Mr. W. Henn.

Luton were a trifle unfortunate on Saturday in not being able to bring off the much-desired win at Small Heath. Although they had the team which performed so well against Walsall the previous week, they can hardly be said to have been at full strength, whereas the Heathens happened to be at their best. Then, again, Luton were unlucky in losing the toss, which on Saturday meant a good deal, the visitors having the advantage of a strong wind behind them.

There were about 5,000 spectators when Donaldson set the ball rolling, and play at once became exceedingly fast. The Heathens first got away on the left, but were pulled up by Docherty, and then Luton made a vigorous and well-sustained attack. Pratt, however, defended finely, and it was not until McIlwain got in a splendid run, that Luton really had an opening, but Coupar's shot was badly directed.

Small Heath replied, and Abbott sent high over the bar. From the goal-kick, Luton made another good run, some of the passing being very clever, but the home defence was sound, and Luton were driven on to their own territory, where Williams had to clear from a fine centre by Wharton. A minute later, there was a scrimmage in the mouth of goal, and Oakes registered the first point for the homesters.

This success greatly encouraged the Heathens, and several determined onslaughts were made on the Luton goal, but without success. Then the visitors had a turn, and Clutterbuck was called upon to save. He cleared in fine style, but directly afterwards Dunlop conceded a corner, and from this Stewart brought his side level with a shot which the custodian had no chance of saving.

Following upon this, Donaldson and Coupar showed up with some splendid work, but nothing tangible resulted, the backs clearing at the critical moment. By way of retaliation, the home forwards made a rush for the other end, and forced a couple of corners, from the second of which Abbott succeeded in giving his side the lead. For a time, the Heathens had all the play, and the Luton defenders were kept busily at work, but at last the visitors raced away, and Donaldson equalised.

If this state of things had prevailed up to the interval, there is no knowing what the result might have been, but unfortunately the referee, for some reason or other, gave a penalty against the Bedfordshire men, and Abbott scored. What the penalty kick was given for was a mystery, but one scribe alleges that it was because McIlwain "made a face" at Leake, the home captain.

Up to this point, the game had been a good one, considerable smartness being exhibited on both sides, but the referee's extraordinary decision appeared to be responsible for a lamentable change which came over the spirit of the play. One foul led to another, and some of the players were continually going for each other instead of the ball.

The consequence was science was given the go-by, and there was a rough-and-tumble exhibition which completely spoiled the effectiveness of the forward play, and practically eliminated whatever chance Luton might have had of retrieving their position.

During the first fifteen or twenty minutes of the second half, the exchanges generally favoured the home team, and then Luton went away, Donaldson and McInnes both getting in dangerous proximity to the Small Heath goal. The Heathens, however, returned to the attack, and McEwen, in attempting to clear a centre from Wharton had the misfortune to kick the ball through his own goal.

This was the crowning disaster, and the issue was never afterwards in doubt. If Luton had only kept their heads a little better, and not devoted so much attention to "getting their own back," it is quite possible that they would have succeeded in putting a different complexion on affairs. They attribute their demoralisation to the vagaries of the referee, but whatever his shortcomings, I don't think that altogether absolves them from blame.

Small Heath certainly proved themselves a very good lot, Wharton and Abbott playing an effective wing game, whilst Lewis did well at centre. The defence also was very sound. As to Luton, McEwen, for once in a way, was quite off colour. Docherty did well, and the same can be said of Stewart and Birch, but Perrins was unlucky enough to get hurt, and had to retire before the finish. Coupar and McInnes both played up very smartly, though the latter's shooting was a bit weak, and Donaldson and Gallagher worked well, the former's chief fault being that he attempted too much.

The "Sports Argus," speaking of Luton, says: "It is easy to understand the surprises they have given the football world, for both cleverness and vigour characterised their attack. Rather too much vigour sometimes—as the numerous free kicks which fell to Small Heath in the latter portion of the match fully testify!"

The Arsenal accomplished another good performance on Saturday, beating Grimsby on the latter's ground by four goals to one, thus going one goal better than Luton. Leicester Fosse defeated Lincoln City by three to one, and Walsall overcame Darwen by two goals to one. The following is the League table up-to-date:—

					Goals		
	Played.	Won.	Drn.	Lost.	For.	Agst.	Pts.
Burnley	22	17	4	1	69	13	38
Manchester City	21	13	5	3	48	24	31
Newcastle United	20	14	2	4	49	23	30
Woolwich Arsenal	21	11	4	6	48	36	26
Small Heath	20	12	2	6	43	34	26
Newton Heath ..	20	9	4	7	36	19	22
Luton Town	20	9	3	8	53	37	21
Leicester Fosse ..	20	8	4	8	32	28	20
Grimsby Town ..	22	8	3	11	43	49	19
Walsall	24	7	4	13	45	54	18
Glossboro' Trinity	17	7	2	8	35	38	16
Lincoln City	22	5	4	13	38	59	14
Darwen	20	6	2	12	23	50	14
Blackpool	20	5	2	13	39	61	12
Loughborough ..	20	5	1	14	18	64	11
Burton Swifts ..	19	4	2	13	25	48	10

It seems that Luton have not displaced Newton Heath after all. the Luton match card, from which my last week's table was taken, having failed to credit the Heathens with a match which they had played and won. Luton, therefore, are No. 7, with Leicester Fosse close behind.

We are daily receiving new goods in all departments. Gloves, Braces, Handkerchiefs, Ties, Hats, Caps, and Hosiery. M. Mares.—[ADVT.]