



LUTON v. WOOLWICH ARSENAL.

ANOTHER DISASTER, BUT BETTER FOOTBALL.

On Saturday Luton played the return match at Woolwich in the Second League. After the previous Saturday's performance a win was hardly thought of, but a draw was considered probable. The team had been altered somewhat. Little replaced Clarke at centre, and Perrins at right half supplanted Davies. The Arsenal were exactly as a week ago, with the exception of Stuart at centre. A guarantee train was run from Luton to Plumstead, and about 300 made the journey. It is a pity the speed of the engine was not likewise guaranteed, for it took no less than two and a half hours to cover the distance. The men had travelled by a morning train, or they would have been considerably late in starting. As it happened, the referee kept the game back a few minutes, and this allowed the Luton contingent to get settled down and lose themselves in the crowd of about 15,000 which lined the ropes. Teams:—

Woolwich Arsenal: Ord; M'Auley and Caldwell; Anderson, Farrell, and Davis; Brock, Crawford, Stuart, M'Avoy, and Haywood.

Luton: Williams; McCartney and McEwen; Perrins, Stewart and Docherty; Gallacher, Coupar, Little, McInnes and Ekins.

Referee: Mr. Starke.

Neutral Linesmen: Mr. Peter's (Kettering), and Mr. Rudkin (Loughborough).

Stewart lost the toss, and the Arsenalites cheered as though the spin of the coin spelt victory. A strong wind was blowing from end to end, and it was not to be wondered that Luton were sent to face it. From the kick-off by Little, Coupar got in the first shot. Ord returned, and Haywood and M'Avoy on the left got down. Perrins fell back and made a useful save. Unfortunately his kick lacked power, and the ball passed to the left, and Brock speedily returned. Williams had to save twice in quick succession, including a long drive from Caldwell. Brock got down again and centred with judgment. Unfortunately for Luton the ball had a considerable twist on, and as Williams stepped out it bounced over his head, Stuart helping it into the net.

Such success within three minutes from the start meant a great deal to both teams. The crowd were of course delighted. Shortly after the kick-off, Ekins got away and tried hard to equalise. Little also put in a fine shot. Ord fisted out, and the homesters dashed down on the left, Brock sending out eventually.

Little was working very efficiently at centre, the only complaint being that he did not feed his wing men sufficiently, but that is a matter of opinion. Two swift shots from him were undoubted triers. McInnes tried to convert one into a goal and failed, and a corner resulted from the other. Perrins placed the ball, dropping it in the midst of the men in the mouth of the goal. Quick as thought Coupar headed in, but with equal rapidity Ord returned in a marvellous manner, and the attack slackened.

Caldwell again tested Williams with a long, strong shot, but found him at home. Play was transferred, and only an offside against Gallacher from a pass by Little saved the Arsenal goal. Luton continued to attack, and Stewart gave Ekins a good opening when close in, but George failed to improve, much to the disappointment of the Lutonians.

From the goal-kick, Gallacher again piloted the ball back into Arsenal territory, running round Caldwell in splendid fashion, but eventually getting defeated. McEwen returned, and again Luton were within an ace of scoring when Little was pulled up for fouling.

After a foul throw by Perrins, McCartney made a mistake which let in the Arsenal, and danger was only averted by a foul on McEwen when tackling. Shortly afterwards, McAvoy got down and sent in swiftly, giving Williams an anxious time. Fouls of a harmless nature followed pretty frequently, Stewart courting disaster close in. After Coupar had got the ball away, it traversed quickly from end to end, Gallacher getting a fine run. Ekins did likewise finishing with a telling shot from the line. Ord threw out and effected marvellous saves from Little and McLones, pleasing the locals greatly.

From a foul on Coupar Gallacher centred, and McInnes had the easiest of chances to gain an equalizer. He should have scored but didn't. That's enough. A minute later Tommy appeared to have the goal at his mercy a second time. Instead of finding the net he skied the ball, astonishing even himself. Little was next seen shooting at goal, but as he was lying down to it he failed to do much damage.

The Arsenal attack then came down, and Stuart beat Williams close in. Deafening cheers went up, but as Stewart had been fouled a second earlier, the point was disallowed. Other and moderate play followed in mid-field, until Brock got through and with only Williams in front of him sent over rather wildly. The cries of disappointment heralded the whistle, and half-time ended with the score :

ARSENAL	1 goal
LUTON	0 ..

From the kick-off, Little broke away, and it looked odds on his scoring. M'Aulay stopped him in the nick of time and cleared. Stewart sent up and Coupar shot wide. Shortly afterwards, Gallacher shot in swiftly, and with the ball in his hands Ord moved out of goal. Gallacher appealed, and rightly, for, no doubt, the "carrying" law had been infringed, but the appeal was not sustained.

Little evoked some enthusiasm by dropping the ball on the bar, and he again sent in a swift, low kick that Ord had trouble in negotiating. In fact Luton were on the rush and with the least encouragement at this point would have held the game. When a goal looked a certainty Ekins was grossly fouled by M'Aulay within the line. The referee gave a penalty, and everybody thought Luton's chance had come.

So it had, but it was not taken advantage of. For some seconds it was undecided who should take the penalty, but at last Stewart called on McCartney. An ill-advised choice, for "Mac" took an unnecessary run. Ord took an illegal one, passed over the six yards limit, and had his hands on the ball before "Mac" had touched it. The performance was full of grim humour for undoubtedly Ord displayed great cleverness.

Again McCartney took a run. Nearly the same thing happened, and of course Luton lost the goal. It must be admitted that the referee was unfair to McCartney. He forced him to take the kick without delay, yet overlooked Ord's trespass over the six yards' limit—a distinct breach of the law.

With such encouragement little wonder if the Arsenal were rejuvenated and McCartney lost his head. At least both were apparent, and the Luton defence had a hard time of it. After an abatement, Little worked up the centre and shot grandly. The next minute he was stretched on the turf, Caldwell having winded him. The fact is Little was bothering the defence too much, and Caldwell displayed bad feeling by deliberately kicking out at him after one of his successful sallies. A caution was administered by the referee, but such tactics should have been dealt with summarily.

Soon afterwards the Luton goal witnessed a fierce onslaught, and Brock increased the lead after 25 minutes' play by a very fine shot. From the kick-off McLones got clean away and shot splendidly, keeping the ball down. Ord stepped out, just managed to reach with one hand, and saved marvellously and luckily.

A corner in favour of the Arsenal was bad. Williams made one fine save, but a scrimmage ensued, and he was well beaten once more. But with everything against them Luton did not give up, trying to the last to lower the colours of the home custodian. They failed, however, and the game ended :—

ARSENAL	3 goals
LUTON	0 ..

NOTES.

The were two great features about the game. The superb goal keeping of Ord and the lack of systematic combination by either team. The home custodian was certainly the best man on the field and Little easily ranks next.

The game was not a pleasant one. Excitement was far too prevalent. On the day's play the Arsenal deserved to win, but not by so handsome a margin. A score of 1-0 in their favour would have been a fair indication of the game.

and had not the defence on both sides been so good, heavy scoring must have followed.

It sometimes happens that one team has all the luck. Saturday was an instance of it. Certainly three shots sent in for Luton by Little (2) and McInnes (1) would have taken effect in the ordinary run of things, while, of course, a penalty kick is the next best thing to a goal.

It was excessively unfortunate that it was muffed on Saturday, for it came at a time when Luton were working the Arsenal to death. Success then would have spelt victory, while ill-luck undoubtedly heralded defeat.

How the referee justified his ruling is a mystery. With the recognised code it certainly does not agree. His duty was to see that none of the players crossed the line and the goal-did not advance more than six yards from his goal before McCartney kicked the ball. Both these points were infringed, yet Mr. Starke did not see fit to interfere.

From that time forward Luton played as disappointed men, while their opponents were exactly in the reverse frame of mind. Such opposite conditions were bound to tell, and they did, as seen by the increased score of the Arsenal.

Towards the end McCartney lost his head completely, and as he had a dangerous wing opposed to him, the results might have been serious. The half-line was again Luton's weakest place, even Stewart falling short of his average form. As already said Little was the best of the forwards. As the centre-man perhaps he did not feed the wings sufficiently, yet he never kept the ball unless he had the chance of an opening. Gallacher and Coupar were good, but both have been seen to better advantage. McInnes was effective but Ekins hardly had enough to do.

The Arsenal displayed the same characteristics shown by them at Luton. They are a strong team in both senses of the word and an *esprit-de-corps* seems to prevail. If they continue their progress of victory it seems likely that they will supplant Millwall in being Luton's bogey. At the same time there is no reason why they should, for it was apparent to every observer that they were playing at the top of their form whilst Luton were below their average on both occasions.

This reflection does not unfortunately alter the score, but it may be a comfort to those convinced that Luton's eleven is superior to any in the South.