

THE UNITED LEAGUE.

RUSHDEN v. LUTON.

Played at Rushden on Monday. Result :—

Luton Town	3 goals.
Rushden	2 "

The Luton team was identical with that which did duty on Saturday, and the following turned out for Rushden :—Baldrey, goal; Attley and Lilley, backs; Clarke, Bailey and Parker, half-backs; Denton, Walker, Dunkley, Sale and Beddingfield, forwards. The referee was Mr. J. C. Tillotson.

Creditable as was Luton's victory over Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday, I think that achieved at the expense of Rushden on Monday was even more meritorious. In the first place, Rushden are a very respectable lot, in the second place they had the advantage of playing at home, which in the case of a Northamptonshire team is a very great advantage indeed, and finally Luton might have been pardoned if they had shown some signs of reaction after the excitement of the cup-tie.

Of course, Rushden had had a cup-tie, too, but their meetings with Wellingborough seem to be matters of such common occurrence, that it could only have appeared to them that they were pursuing the even tenour of their way. But at any time, and under all circumstances, a journey into Northamptonshire is to be dreaded, and the team which goes through the ordeal successfully is one to be heartily congratulated upon its performance.

A big crowd—for Monday—turned out to witness the match, and a big noise followed as a matter of course. I doubt whether there ever was a dumb person in our neighbouring county, but if so, I question whether he ever took an interest in football, and in any event I am prepared to take an affidavit that no such person formed one of the twelve hundred who patronised Monday's fixture.

When the teams faced each other they did so with the full knowledge that, barring a draw, the record of one or other of them would be spoiled, as each of them up to that point had an unbeaten certificate. Rushden, it is true, had only played two matches, but they had won them both, and they were hoping to win many more.

Stewart won the toss, and anyone who has watched Billy's luck with the coin would know that the winning of it on this occasion would not be an unmixed blessing. It was not. The ground sloped in one direction, and the sun shone in the other, and in turning their backs upon Old Sol, Luton had to give their opponents the benefit of kicking down hill. And of this advantage Rushden made the most. They rushed away as only Rushden can rush, but for a quarter of an hour, with all their rushing, they could not rush Williams.

The Luton custodian had some difficult shots to deal with, but he negotiated them successfully, until there came a grand run and a good centre from Denton. Before the Luton defenders could get the ball away, Sale fastened on it and sent it sailing into the net. But Luton's misfortunes were not yet ended, for before another ten minutes elapsed, Bedingfield got in another shot out of Williams' reach, and thus Rushden were two up.

To say that the spectators testified their joy in no unmistakeable manner, would but faintly describe the great rejoicing in which they permitted themselves to indulge. To get League points out of any club was a consummation devoutly to be wished, but to get them out of Luton—why, it was surely enough to justify their transports of delight.

But, as the old proverb has it, there is considerable danger attached to the process of counting one's chickens before they are hatched, and so Rushden, in adding two points to four and making six of them, performed an operation in mental arithmetic which subsequent circumstances showed to have been decidedly premature, and an undue exercise of the intellectual faculties.

Almost before the last echo of the mutual congratulations had died away, and whilst the merry-hearted people were still flattering themselves that everything was for the best in the best of all possible worlds, viz., the football world, a fly got into the ointment, in the form of a goal placed to Luton's credit, through the medium of a long shot by Gallacher, which the spectators thought Baldrey ought to have stopped. Of course he did, but then spectators find it so much easier to stop shots than the goalkeepers themselves do.

At the interval Luton were still in a minority of one, but in less than a quarter-of-an-hour from the re-start, Little added a little more to the querulousness of the onlookers by planting a shot out of Baldrey's reach, and five minutes later Ekins completed their discomfiture by converting a centre from Gallacher.

Luton for some time continued to have the better of the play, but towards the finish Rushden made a great effort to pull the game out of the fire. It was not to be, however, and when Mr. Tillotson gave his final tootle, it was Luton who had the two League points, and Rushden who were left to reflect upon what might have been.

The Luton men, as I have said, deserve to be congratulated upon their performance, which was in all respects a very fine one. It was a hard game, stubbornly contested every inch of the way, and if Luton had not kept their heads and played up in an exceptionally plucky manner they would never have secured the victory. Whilst all the men did well, a special word of praise must be given to Coupar, who was in great form. Denton and Bedingfield, Rushden's outside forwards, also played splendid football, and Lilley was very sound at back.

HAVING secured some choice goods in Cheviot overcoating, gentlemen requiring a really first-class overcoat at a moderate price, should see my goods. Fit, style and finish, second to none.—S. Bassett, the Up-to-date Tailor, Wellington-street.—[ADVT.]

Millwall, in their match at Loughborough on Saturday, did remarkably well in making a draw, especially in view of the fact that Calvey had the misfortune to place one of his side hors de combat early in the game. Jack Graham it was who saved the Dockers from defeat. No goal was scored during the game, except an offside one by Loughborough. The League table now reads as follows:—

	Goals				Pld. won lost drn. for agst.pts.		
Luton.....	7	7	0	0	23	3	14
Woolwich Arsenal	3	3	0	0	9	3	6
Tottenham	4	2	1	1	4	7	5
Kettering	5	2	2	1	10	12	5
Wellingborough ...	9	2	6	1	11	26	5
Millwall	7	1	3	3	9	11	5
Rushden	3	2	1	0	6	3	4
Southampton	4	2	2	0	6	4	4
Loughborough ...	6	0	5	1	4	12	1