



LUTON AT GAINSBOROUGH.

A LEAGUE CONTEST DRAWN.

The hopes of the sanguine were destined to fulfilment on Saturday when Luton journeyed to Gainsborough, and managed to retain their own against a team holding an unbeaten record on their own ground. The deluge of Saturday will be not easily forgotten. The men left here at 8.35, arriving at the Lincolnshire town at 1.40. They found the ground sodden and heavy, and a woeful contrast to the pitches on which they have previously disported themselves. But, nothing daunted, they took their place full of confidence, Mr. J. Cooper, of Blackburn, holding the whistle. Teams:

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

Gainsborough Trinity: Bagshaw; Bayley and Pumfrey; Foulstone, Morris and Munroe; Webster, Raby, Wigmore, Scott and Foxhall.

Linesmen (Neutral) Messrs. G. Wardle and C. A. Wilkinson.

In spite of the heavy ground, the home team set the pace a cracker, and within 10 minutes had opened the score, Webster doing the needful from a pass by Raby. The ball was as slippery as the average eel, and this, together with the heavy state of the ground, upset very materially the calculations of the Lutonians.

During the next 10 minutes Williams was kept busy, and the crowd of 1,500 spectators could not but applaud his splendid saves. After nearly half-an-hour's play, however, he was again beaten by Wigmore, and Luton's prospects were paler than they cared to think.

At length they got naturalized, and McInnes drew first blood with a well-directed shot seven minutes afterwards. This infused new life into the attack, which became so hot that Pumfrey endeavoured to effect a clearance by handling when within the fatal zone.

Davies took the penalty awarded and equalized the score. In the few minutes remaining to the first half both teams gallantly tried to gain a further point. Shooting was frequent, and scrimmages followed. During one of them Bagshaw, the clever home custodian, opened an old wound, suffering such agony that he fainted from the pain. He recovered quickly and tried to resume his charge, but he had to retire in the end. Half-time score:

LUTON	..	..	..	2 goals
GAINSBORO'	..	..	..	2 ..

Morris took his place, and acquitted himself in style, but the homesters felt his absence in the field. Gallacher had played well during the first half, but during the second moiety he improved beyond comparison and with Coupar he led the custodian an anxious time.

For 20 minutes the ball was forced into the Gainsborough camp, the attack being broken through occasionally by brilliant incursions to Luton territory. It was from one of these that Luton suffered a rebuff.

McEwen was hard pressed within the penalty line, and infringed the handling laws. He was detected, and Munro made no mistake in placing the ball. The lead regained, the Trinitarians adopted the customary methods of defence, hoping to kill the enthusiasm of the Luton team.

They stemmed the torrent for nearly half an hour, but at last the defence was engulfed in the whirlpool of attack, and Gallacher scored the best goal of the day with a magnificent shot, about eight minutes from the finish.

The balance restored, both teams were extremely wary, so much so that neither scored again, and a curious game ended in a draw:

LUTON	..	..	..	3 goals
GAINSBORO'	..	..	..	3 ..

NOTES.

Williams played an immense game, and ranked best man on the field. Gallacher comes next without a doubt. Luton's defence was again a strong feature. The Lincolnshire men did not fall into the mistake of holding the locals too cheaply, and their stubborn resistance, even after the loss of their goalkeeper, speaks eloquently for their determination and grim earnestness.

Already they had beaten Lincoln City, 4-0, Blackpool, 4-1, and Grimsby Town, 2-0, on their own ground, while at Luton, on Sept. 11, they lost to the tune of 4-0, the Arsenal the week after giving them their quietus with a similar potion. They entered the League last season for the first time, securing seventh place, and running Manchester City very close. At the present time they stand fourth from the bottom, falling to Luton's place on Saturday evening.

The "Athletic News" says of the game: "Although the weather was not good, no reasonable excuse can be offered for a gate of 1,500 for an attractive fixture like Luton. Gainsborough met Luton with a full team with the exception of M'Roberts, who was prevented from playing by domestic affliction, and Raby filled the vacancy. But even under these circumstances, they were considered good enough to secure the full complement of points; but a far more serious mishap happened when Bagshaw, their clever custodian, opened an old wound during the game, and fainted from the pain, and, although he made a plucky attempt to resume, he had again to retire, and what looked at that time like a certain victory gave way to gloomy anticipations of defeat. Both teams scored in the first half, one of the Luton goals coming from a penalty, owing to an infringement of the handling rules by Pumfrey. During the second half Gainsborough resumed with ten men, Morris going into goal, and after one or two brilliant attacks by the home team, Gainsborough, in their turn, were given a penalty kick, from which Munro scored amidst deafening cheers. Scott hereabouts was playing a grand game, and was applauded over and over again for his resolute work, and the home team, short handed as they were, had distinctly hard lines over and over again; but Luton equalised from a shot by Gallacher, and a remarkable game ended in a draw of three goals each. There is little doubt that had Gainsborough not lost Bagshaw they would have won, for well as Morris played in goal, he was not so good as the burly Grimsby youth, and, of course, Morris was greatly missed from the half-back division.

A Gainsboro' paper gives the following one-sided comments: "The Trinity were very unfortunate in their encounter with Luton on Saturday. In the first place, owing to a domestic bereavement, they were short of McRoberts' services, and to make matters worse, Bagshaw wrenched his knee and retired during the first half, so that for fully two-thirds of the game the home side had only ten men available.

"In the first three minutes three shots struck the Luton posts, and then the pressure brought to bear by the home side was something tremendous, and several times shots which deserved goals, and would have obtained them nine times out of ten, were saved simply by pure luck, and at the interval the somewhat unusual sight was witnessed of a team, decidedly inferior all round to their opponents, and had defended most of the time, cross over on even terms—two each.

"The Trinity captain sent Morris, the centre-half, in goal in the second half, and although playing but four forwards Trinity had the best of the game, and certainly deserved to score at least three goals. Luck, however, was dead against them, and many really praiseworthy attempts failed solely through this reason. On the other hand, during the whole of the second half only on one occasion was what might really be termed a shot sent in to Morris, and then the ball was landed into the net. As a matter of fact Morris never once used his hands to the ball during the whole of the last 45 minutes, while Trinity were almost constantly banging away at the goal, and yet the game ended in a draw of three goals each."