

UNITED LEAGUE.

LUTON V. WOOLWICH ARSENAL.

A ROUGH GAME DRAWN.

For the third time this season, the Luton team met the Woolwich Arsenal eleven on Tuesday on the Bury Park enclosure. Nearly 3,000 spectators assembled to witness the encounter, despite the howling wind and pitiless rain. The visitors brought a considerable muster with them from London. First-class football was not to be expected under such conditions, but the game proved better than the most sanguine could anticipate. In the home team, Moore re-appeared after a long absence, but Hewitt was still absent. Luton won the toss, and the referee (Mr. Tilston) set the under-mentioned 22 going punctually at 2.30:

Luton: Perkins; Dow and Moore; C. Ford, Williams and Crump; Brock, Maloney, Kempsey, Burgess and Ekins.

Woolwich Arsenal: Ord; McPhee and Anderson; Moir, Dick, and Davis; McLoach, Haywood, Hunt, Hannah and Shaw.

Hunt set the ball rolling and Dow had to defend immediately. His clearance was effective, and a mistake by McPhee let in Kempsey, who shot with fine precision at goal. Ord saved solid cheers, but Ekins shortly afterwards got the ball from Crump and centred from the line in his best style. Ord was taxed to the uttermost to save his charge, and only succeeded by tipping the leather over the bar.

The Arsenal defence was distinctly conspicuous for the time being, and Ord appeared to be the only one to keep his head. Anderson was guilty of fatal mis-judgment with Kempsey near, and the Luton centre-forward cleverly got through and beat Ord at close quarters amid tremendous enthusiasm.

To gain the lead within 10 minutes from the start was decidedly encouraging for the locals, and they returned to the attack with great vigour, smothering the heavy state of the turf. Brock was conspicuous for good judgment, frequently getting by Anderson and passing goal-wards. Nervic shooting on the part of the Luton front string satisfied many dashing spirits, and both Maloney and Kempsey were at fault in this respect, when a little coolness might have been invaluable in the scoring line.

Ekins was centring constantly, and Ord caught the ball each time. Once he held the leather too long, and was the victim of an onslaught by Brock and Kempsey, who were penalised accordingly. A subsequent shot by "George" brought Ord to grass and the ball hung dangerously on the goal-line for a second, Brock got it and another goal appeared certain, but Ord recovered himself in time to touch the ball out as it was entering the net.

The corner was fruitless, and for a brief interval the Arsenal took to the offensive. They found Dow in excellent form. McLoach was robbed of the ball by him when in front of an open goal, and his splendid defence was loudly applauded by the spectators. Williams, indulging in long shots, kept Ord busy, and for a moment the Arsenal goal was the victim of a combined assault. Repeatedly their custodian had to handle, but he preserved his charge from fresh overhaul.

If the Arsenal forwards broke away infrequently, their attack possessed considerable sting as Perkins was made painfully aware just before half-time. A misunderstanding between Kempsey and Maloney, let Hannah get down, and by the aid of Shaw circumvent Dow. Fortunately Moore was able to impede Hannah, who otherwise had an open goal, but the shot stopped by Perkins might very easily have made matters easy. At half-time, the score was:—

Luton	—	—	—	—	1 goal
Arsenal	..	..	..	..	0 ..

Moore did not enter the enclosure until several minutes after the interval. Ekins was the master of the Arsenal right defence, and after another of his frequent runs centred brilliantly. Both Kempsey and Brock took chance kicks and missed. Before Maloney could obtain possession he was considerably bottled, and his shot was hardly dangerous, and from the clearance the game assumed a more open character.

Unfortunately, the Arsenal were hit their keepers, and some shoddy tactics were practised. Moir was the chief offender, and he victimised

Elkins to such an extent that, at last, the referee had to administer a caution. The admonition was not very salutary, however, and "George" was illegally grazed by Moir no less than a dozen times—half of that number occurring after the official intervention.

It would have paid Luton to overlook these annoyances, but they naturally indulged in reprisals, and the game deteriorated appreciably. Perkins was more frequently in request until feeling exasperated. Dow carelessly loosed a man near the penalty line, and the hopes of the visitors rose high. They quickly pierced the home defence, and the cry of "goal" rose from some of the players. Yet the shout was premature; Perkins had saved, and Williams settled all doubts with a long kick up the field.

Time was flying, and with only 5 minutes to play both teams seemed to throw away all idea of combination and rely on individual effort. Elkins was busy at one end and Hannah at the other. It was a two-up who were to benefit by these haphazard methods, but luck fell on the Arsenal, for within 4 minutes of the final whistle Hannah got through and scored amid the painful disappointment of the Luton crowd. Thus the game ended in a draw—

Our Goal Earned.

NOTES.

The Arsenal were fortunate in carrying away a single point. On the day's play, Luton were 2 goals ahead of their opponents, and only lost a victory by want of cohesion in the dying moments of the game. The first half was one-sided to a degree. Thrice only did the Arsenal visit Perkins. The second half was more favourable to them, but the Luton men were, more or less, always on the aggressive.

All the Luton pack did well. If asked to single any out for praise, I should place the first five in the following order of merit: Dow, Elkins, McInnes, Williams, and Brock. Dow was the best back on the field. He never missed a kick, and never admitted himself beaten. Elkins was, unfortunately, the target for the rough treatment of both Moir and McPherson, to both of whom he easily showed a clean pair of heels, when honestly tackled. Williams was most useful, and Brock vastly improved, displaying both judgment and speed. Crump was not in good form, though occasionally he did one or two smart things.

Amongst the Arsenal men, Shaw at outside left was distinctly a passenger and, no doubt, Hannah, his partner, was handicapped. McPherson was the better of the backs, though faulty at times. The halves were not conspicuous. Both teams were about the same weight, so that neither gained any advantage from the heavy state of the ground.

The opinion prevailed that Mr. Tillotson should have ordered Moir off the enclosure in consequence of his seven fouls on Elkins, and his exhibition of bad feeling; and though I don't recommend extreme measures, there was certainly good ground in this instance for firm treatment being sorted out to the player who, undoubtedly, spoilt the play by his uncontrolled temper.