

# THE LEAGUE.—DIVISION II.

## NEW BRIGHTON v. LUTON TOWN.

Played at New Brighton Saturday. Result:—

|              |          |
|--------------|----------|
| New Brighton | 4 goals. |
| Luton Town   | nil.     |

It was a poor look-out for Luton when they started on Friday afternoon on their journey to New Brighton. If they could have taken their very best team, there would not have been much hope of beating the representatives of the Lancashire watering-place, but with Dow added to the list of incapacitated and Brook away in Scotland, the prospects were very cheerless indeed. Perhaps the one redeeming feature was that in all probability a good bit of practice would be provided for the new goalkeeper, a likely-looking youth from the Metropolis.

The following was the full team:—Palmer, goal; Hawtree and Williams, backs; Crump, Ralley and Birch, half-backs; Boutwood, Molunas, Kemplay, W. Ford and Ekina, forwards.

Spend your money to the best advantage, by purchasing your boots and shoes at Freeman, Hawty and Willis, 33, George-street, Luton, the largest boot retailers in the kingdom. New goods for present season. See windows and compare prices.—[ADVT.]

The weather at New Brighton was not of the best, but there was a very good attendance, and the spectators had the satisfaction of seeing their team win a comparatively easy victory, and thus secure the two points which are of such immense importance to them at the present moment, now that they are running neck-and-neck with Glossop North End for elevation to the First Division.

The Towerites were at full strength, and the game had not been long in progress before their superiority became evident. Thanks to the splendid defence of Williams and Hawtree, however, it was some time before Milward scored with a fast high shot which entered the corner of the net, well out of Palmer's reach. That was the only goal of the first half.

The second half was of a more one-sided character, in the scoring at any rate. For about twenty minutes Luton managed to keep their opponents out, but at length Milward obtained another goal from a corner. Directly afterwards, a mistake by Williams let in the ex-Evertonian again. The Luton back was waiting for the ball to go over the line, when Milward slipped round him, and planting the leather in front of goal, Hargreaves had very little difficulty in registering the third point. The fourth was added almost immediately by Oncliffe, the three goals being put on in less than five minutes.

Despite this succession of disasters, Luton played up pluckily, and though they did not put a different complexion on the game, they succeeded in preventing New Brighton adding to their score, the game ending in a win for the homesters by four goals to nil. So far as Luton were concerned, it was the same old story. The forwards were deplorably weak in front of goal, and never once looked like scoring. The half-backs showed up fairly well, and the backs acquitted themselves in a highly creditable manner.

Palmer, it may be interesting to state, is a member of one of the London junior clubs. He sent in his application for a trial at the time the news got abroad of Perkins' removal to Liverpool, and the trial was duly given him on Saturday. He would seem to have done very well according to the New Brighton correspondent of the "Athletic News," who speaks very highly of his display, but I am told the account brought home was anything but glowing, and Palmer is not likely to appear again for Luton. Brock's absence from the Luton team was accounted for by the fact that he had been called home by the death of his mother.

There was one match on Saturday which perhaps attracted more attention from Luton enthusiasts than the final at the Crystal Palace, and that was the match between Blackpool and Gainsborough Trinity, on the ground of the former. Unfortunately for Luton, Blackpool won in quite unexpected fashion by four goals to nil, and are thus only a point behind Luton on the League table for the same number of matches. Luton have 21 points for 33 matches, and Blackpool have 20.

Luton, of course, are a point to the good, and under ordinary circumstances, their prospects of escaping the bottom three would be much better than those of Blackpool. They have the advantage of ground on Saturday, in their match against Lincoln City, whilst Blackpool have to go and disport themselves on the Manchester City enclosure. In the usual way, the Blackpudlians would not have the ghost of a chance, but the conditions are a little bit unusual.

The two points are of no particular value to the City, whose position at the head of the Division is absolutely safe and unapproachable, and at the same time they are of very great importance to Blackpool, who, by attaching them, would be safe and sound for another year. Of course, I am not hinting at the possibility of any arrangement between the two teams, close neighbours as they are, but is it not probable that whilst the one side may make no special effort to secure a victory, the other will strain every nerve to that end?

To make sure of their position, therefore, Luton will have to beat Lincoln City, and though that is by no means an impossible task, it is one which will want some doing. Certainly a little more energy and method than we have seen in recent displays will be required, but I hope that for once in a way the team will rise to the occasion, and give us pleasanter memories of this season than we should otherwise have.

For the Season—All the Latest Designs in Tweeds, Angoras, Cheviots, Fancy Worsted Serges, Vicunas, etc., for Suits, Trousers, Coats and Vest, Covert Coats, and Chesters. Perfect fit. Best value at S. Bassett's, Gentlemen's Tailor, 28, Wellington-street.—[ADVT.]

The following is the League table up to date:

|                      |      |      |      |       |     |       | Goals |  |
|----------------------|------|------|------|-------|-----|-------|-------|--|
|                      | Fld. | Won. | Let. | Draws | For | Agst. | Pts   |  |
| Manchester City      | 33   | 22   | 5    | 6     | 88  | 34    | 50    |  |
| Glossop North End    | 33   | 19   | 8    | 6     | 72  | 39    | 44    |  |
| New Brighton         | 32   | 18   | 7    | 7     | 70  | 42    | 43    |  |
| Newton Heath         | 33   | 19   | 10   | 4     | 66  | 42    | 42    |  |
| Leicester Fosse      | 32   | 17   | 7    | 8     | 60  | 41    | 42    |  |
| Walsall              | 33   | 14   | 7    | 12    | 77  | 56    | 40    |  |
| Small Heath          | 32   | 17   | 9    | 6     | 85  | 48    | 40    |  |
| Westwich Arsenal     | 33   | 17   | 11   | 5     | 69  | 41    | 39    |  |
| Burslem Port Vale    | 34   | 17   | 12   | 5     | 56  | 34    | 39    |  |
| Grimsby Town         | 34   | 15   | 13   | 5     | 69  | 55    | 35    |  |
| Barnsley             | 33   | 12   | 14   | 7     | 52  | 53    | 31    |  |
| Lincoln City         | 33   | 12   | 14   | 7     | 51  | 54    | 31    |  |
| Burton Swifts        | 34   | 10   | 16   | 8     | 51  | 70    | 28    |  |
| Gainsborough Trinity | 33   | 9    | 19   | 5     | 51  | 71    | 25    |  |
| Luton Town           | 33   | 9    | 21   | 3     | 49  | 95    | 21    |  |
| Blackpool            | 33   | 8    | 21   | 4     | 48  | 86    | 20    |  |
| Loughborough         | 32   | 5    | 21   | 6     | 32  | 87    | 16    |  |
| Darwen               | 33   | 2    | 27   | 4     | 21  | 140   | 8     |  |

Sweet May Cigarettes, 7d. per oz., now the popular smoke; increasing sales weekly. None are better. Sold by all tobacconists. Wholesale of E. Gibbs, 19, Upper George-street, Luton.—[ADVT.]

The meeting to take into consideration the position of affairs in Luton was to have taken place on Monday or Tuesday, but the Hall in which it was to be held was not available, and the gathering was therefore deferred until to-night (Thursday). I hope the meeting will be a large and enthusiastic one, but however large and enthusiastic it may be, I doubt whether the four or five hundred pounds spoken about for close season money will be forthcoming.

As I said last week I am not sure whether the spending of four or five hundred pounds in the close season would be an unmitigated blessing. Indeed, the more I look at the question, the more I am convinced that the only practical way out of the difficulty is on the lines suggested in my last notes, and that opinion has been confirmed by most of those with whom I have spoken on the subject.

The only doubters I have met with are persons in authority, and they have said "It's all very well, but how are you going to get a good centre-forward and a good centre-half?" My answer to that is that it must surely be very much easier to pick out a couple of good men than a dozen, though I will candidly admit that it might be more difficult to get the two real good players than to sign on any number of duffers. If we had the money now that has been spent on "wrung 'uns" during the Club's few years of professionalism, we might almost get through next season free of any additional expense.

My idea of the men we require is that they should not only be capable players themselves, but that they should also have had such experience as to enable them to coach the local members of the team. The mistake this season has been in having too many inexperienced men, men who have been willing enough, but who have spent too much of their energy in doing each other's work and getting in each other's way. If we had only had a clever and experienced centre-half, I believe it would have made a world of difference to our team, and one or two of the men would doubtless have left off with very much better reputations than they now possess.

Really, I don't see why it should be so extraordinarily difficult to get men for the positions referred to. It might have saved trouble if they had been "spotted" ere this, but that not having been done, the case calls for the exercise of the more discretion now. Discretion and moderate means often succeed in the making up a football team where mere enthusiasm and a long purse fail.

The plan I suggest has at least the merit of saving the greater part of the close season money, and this is a very great consideration. Only by the strictest economy and the cutting down of expenses in every possible direction can the pos-

tion be retrieved. Even if the four or five hundred pounds were forthcoming now, the directors would probably find themselves in just as big a hole next season as they have been this, because lavish expenditure in the close season means a very big wages bill when play begins.

Perkins is evidently beginning to feel his foot. On Saturday, he was playing at Glasgow against the Celts, who beat Liverpool in a friendly by two goals to nil, and "Jonathan Oldbuck," the Scottish representative of the "Athletic News," reports: "Perkins played with great pluck in goal, and Tom Watson has laid his hands on a good man." The "Scottish Referee," in describing the same match, says "The Liverpool contingent had to thank their goalkeeper for keeping the score down," and further, "Tom Watson's latest capture, Perkins is a likely custodian, and if Saturday's exhibition is his usual form, then Tom is to be congratulated on his choice."

Stirring News. Freeman, Hardy and Willis are now showing at 38, George-street, Luton, the largest and most varied assortment of boots and shoes in the district. Come and see windows and judge for yourselves.—[ADVT.]

Luton went to Reading yesterday to play a United League match, and were defeated by six goals to nothing, despite the good goalkeeping of Farr, who was at last given a trial. The other members of the team were Dow and Moore; Ellingham, Williams and Crump; Brock, Moloney, Kemplay, W. Ford and Ekina. On Saturday, Luton will at home to Lincoln City, and that will give them about the last real chance of redeeming their character.