



SECOND LEAGUE.

LUTON v. WOOLWICH ARSENAL.

DEFEATED, NOT DISGRACED.

The Luton streets were made unusually animated on Saturday afternoon by the invasion of 700 supporters of the Plumstead club. They wore loud and aggressively red favours, and sang with boisterous vigour the latest music-hall ditties. The visitors seemed fairly confident of victory, although they lost at Plumstead to Leicester Fosse, while Luton gained a point at Grimsby. The afternoon was cool and beautifully fine. Both teams appeared at full strength as follows:—

Luton: Daw; Dow and McCurdy; Morrison, Stewart, and Williams; Inglis, Brock, Fairgreaves, McInnes and Eckford.

Arsenal: Ord; McNicoll and Jackson; Dick, Sanders, and Murphy; Hunt, Aston, Logan, McCowie and Tennant.

Referee: W. G. Jones (Leicester). Linesmen: W. J. Wilson (London), and A. C. Knight (Bedford).

Mr. R. S. Sievier, of Toddington Park, whose recent generous contribution of 50 guineas to the club will be remembered, received a very hearty welcome upon giving the ball the first kick of the afternoon. The Arsenal won the toss and had the advantage of the slight wind. However, the home side were the first to press through Eckford, who ran down cleverly and shot behind. McCowie did ditto for the Arsenal and some fine kicking was done by the backs on both sides, especially by Jackson. Brock was fouled and Eckford again showed up. The local players seemed too excited and nervous to play accurately during most of the first half.

Daw had to make his first save from Hunt. Then we saw a flash of smart play by Williams and McInnes. Still, the Arsenal gradually gained the upper hand, and their forwards became very dangerous. Aston slipped in front of goal when a fine chance presented itself, but directly afterwards Tennant sent across a swinging centre, and Logan headed the ball into the net. This was 12 minutes from the start, and, of course, the Woolwich visitors were frantic with joy. Luton did not lose heart, though, with the flush of victory, the Arsenal made things extremely lively for Dow and Stewart in defence. A good pass by Williams enabled Eckford to shoot hard across the Arsenal goal-mouth, where Inglis agonised the Luton spectators with an awful miss.

But for this bitter disappointment, Luton would have drawn level with the Arsenal 6 minutes after they had opened the scoring. The visitors were working hard to increase their lead, and Daw put behind a hot shot from Tennant, yielding the Plumstead men the first corner of the afternoon. Luton broke away from this, and made a brilliant attack on the Arsenal goal for a couple of minutes; Williams and McInnes commenced the bombardment, and Inglis gave Ord two very troublesome shots, the ball just grazing the post as the Woolwich custodian lay prostrate in his goal. The visitors quickly replied, and Hunt struck the cross-bar, while Tennant rushed up and got at loggerheads with Daw. Both parties put up their fists, but the referee soon stopped the dispute.

McNicol was inclined to be foul, though the referee seemed exceptionally lenient towards him. His partner, Jackson, was playing grand football, and Daw had to fist away a long shot from the old Newcastle back. For some time, the Arsenal made a sustained assault, and from a foul against Stewart, many people thought a goal had been scored, but McCowie shot over the net. Luton made a diversion and as they were bearing down on goal, McNicol punched the ball down. Mr. Jones awarded a penalty kick, and, of course, Dow took it. Ord, however, got too far out and thus saved the shot, but the referee ordered the kick to be taken again, when Dow safely landed the ball in the net. The local spectators rejoiced tremendously, the cheering being long and loud. In the remaining 7 minutes of the half, both teams worked hard, and the interval arrived with the score:—

ARSENAL	...	...	...	1
LUTON	...	...	...	1

From the vigorous fashion in which the locals started after the change-over, almost anything might have been expected. Stewart forced the attack, and McInnes headed in well. Three corners fell to Luton in quick succession, and the Arsenal goal underwent a regular siege. Fairgreaves made a splendid attempt to score, but the ball was kept out in marvellous fashion. Ord fisted away from Stewart, and Eckford just missed the ball on its return. A corner was given to Luton, when Stewart headed against the cross-bar.

With a foul against the Luton captain, a striking change came over the game. The Arsenal forwards raced away to the other end, when McCowie dashed up and scored No. 2 after 10 minutes play. This goal, which proved the deciding point of the game, came as a surprise to everyone. Dow effected a wonderful save from another rush by the Woolwich vanguard. A brief visit was paid by the home team to the other end, where another corner proved unavailing.

Assisted by free-kicks against Fairgreaves and Dow, the Arsenal left wing made a determined onslaught. Tennant banged in three or four hard shots in succession, and for a time it looked as if the Arsenal must increase their lead. Luckily for Luton, the danger was averted, and Inglis forced a corner by a fast run. Towards the finish, the home team rallied grandly and made a series of assaults, Ord saving finely from Eckford. The visitors, however, seemed sure of victory, and contented themselves chiefly with acting on the defensive and kicking out until time, when the result was:—

ARSENAL	...	...	...	2
LUTON	...	...	...	1