



SECOND LEAGUE.

LUTON V. MIDDLESBOROUGH.

A DISAPPOINTING DRAW.

After having made a draw with Burslem Port Vale a fortnight previously, Luton were considered on Saturday to have a fair chance of bagging two full points from Middlesboro', who are 7 points lower in the League than the Pottery team. According to the balance of play, victory should have been easily secured, but some exciting attacks in the second half only left matters as before. McCurdy was hurt at Walsall and in consequence Harry Williams went back, the Luton team including five local lads. It was a dull afternoon and rain fell after the interval. About a thousand spectators saw the start as follows :—

Luton :—Daw ; Dow and Williams ; Brock, Holdstock and J. Brown ; W. Brown, McInnes, Draper, Eckford and Dimmock.

Middlesboro' :—Hughes ; McCracken and Ramsay ; Allport, Raisbeck and Percy ; Lamb, Gray, Osborne, Evans and Pugh.

Referee :—Mr. J. E. Carpenter, of Leicester.

The visitors were without their usual centre forward, Linton, and Gray filled the vacancy in front. The ground was heavy, and play ruled in Luton's favour during the first half, as throughout the game. There were only one or two exciting incidents. Once Draper got clear in front of the posts and missed scoring in marvellous fashion. The goalkeeper seemed to let the ball cross his lines, and one of the backs ultimately put behind. Dimmock lost another chance, and Eckford put a nice shot into the custodian's hands. "Roland" Brown got in a clever run, beat Ramsay, and centred right across the goal-mouth, but none of his men were up in time.

The Yorkshiremen worked hard and the wing men gave Daw occasional shots, the defence being very energetic. Luton had a narrow escape from a shot by Pugh, as Daw slipped down by the post and Holdstock just cleared. Raisbeck shot hard from a corner, but Daw saved. Half-time :

No SCORE.

Resuming, Luton began a smart bombardment, and Hughes had to clear three times in as many minutes. The crowd "enthused" likewise, and cheered on the locals to "buck up." Fortune favoured Middlesborough first, for after 13 minutes' play Osborne scored from an unexpected break-away after Daw had disposed of two shots. Only 3 minutes later, the home spectators had a chance to shout, for W. Brown landed a beautiful cross shot in the net from the right wing.

Directly afterwards, Draper got through, but was ruled offside. Hughes saved from Dimmock and several corners fell to Luton without result. Harry Williams brought off a brilliant shot, which the keeper succeeded in putting behind. Eckford headed behind from a second corner, and when Hughes returned the ball once more, J. Brown aimed wide of the mark, spoiling a promising attack. Luton continued to press, and, indeed, do everything but score, Dimmock having hard luck in shooting against the upright. From a foul, Dow placed the ball in the net untouched, and though the spectators cheered "like mad" up to the last minute in the hope of victory by the smallest possible margin, the fates were inexorable, and the score remained :

LUTON 1 MIDDLESBORO' 1

NOTES.

The end of the season is approaching, and there are only 5 more League matches to be played at Bury Park, while there are an equal number of engagements away from Luton. The Town eleven have now won only 3 out of 23 matches, 7 being drawn. The victories were at home against Burton, Walsall, and Barnsley. Of the games yet to play, we shall probably get all 4 points from Loughborough, and perhaps 2 from Gainsborough. Sheffield Wednesday, Small Heath, and Lincoln are the other teams due here, but Luton cannot hope for more than one point from this trio. Including Loughborough, already mentioned, the away matches are Lincoln, Bolton, Newton Heath, and New Brighton. On present form, how can Luton expect more than to be "let off" lightly in these four visits?

Of Saturday's game, not much need be said except that Luton should have won by at least 3 goals to 1. The forwards were again extremely disappointing in the scoring line. "Roland" Brown was easily the best of the five, but was poorly supported. McInnes did fairly, except in close quarters, and Dimmock lacked dash. At centre-half, Holdstock played a very useful game, and was always on the ball. Dow was not quite at his best, but there was not much fault to find with the extreme rear.

The "Iron" men played a vigorous game, and had a sound line of halves. Of the forwards, Pugh and Osborne shone most. Luton's record is now 37 matches played, 9 won, 17 lost, 11 drawn, 74 goals for and 92 against.