

The League.—Division II.

BOLTON WANDERERS v. LUTON TOWN.

Played at Bolton on Saturday. Result:—

Bolton Wanderers	3 goals.
Luton Town	nil.

The teams were as follow:—

Bolton Wanderers: Sutcliffe; Halley and W. Brown; Fitchett, R. N. Brown, and Freebairn; Morgan, Gilligan, Bell, Picken, and Jack.

Luton: Daw; Dow and McCurdy; J. Brown, Holdstock, and Williams; W. Brown, Durrant, McInnes, Eckford, and Dimmock.

Luton on Saturday says the "Athletic Field's" Bolton correspondent, made their first visit of the season to Lancashire. This was their first appearance in the centre of the fine-spinning industry, and though they left all the points and all the goals to their friends the enemy, they also left the impression that they are as clever in defensive play as any team which has visited Burnden-park this season; the verdict as the people were leaving the ground being summed up by one stalwart factory hand, when in his own dialect he said: "By gum, chaps, if yon' lads had been owt loike as good forrard as they are at t'other parts o' th' gam, th' Wanderers 'ud bin gradely well licked." Bolton had left out Scotchbrook and McAteer, who did duty against Woolwich Arsenal and Leicester, and brought in Freebairn and "Sparrow" Brown. Luton were represented as announced.

The weather had been villainously bad. There had been a rapid alternation of frost, thaw, snow, and hail; and the ground, covered with a thin coat of snow, was treacherous to a degree. Playing with the wind behind them, the Luton forwards, who did not seem at home on the slippery surface, were soon driven back, and the visiting defence was called on. It answered in a way which fairly surprised the spectators. Time after time the yell "Goal!" went up, but the goals did not come: for when the Bolton forwards did not slip or flounder, either Daw, or Dow, or McCurdy would pop up and deftly clear. The Luton half-backs were also fairly on their mottle, and whilst the spectators cried for the Bolton men to "play up," Holdstock and Co. would not let them. Besides, ever and anon, McInnes, Durrant, and Eckford would get away, and one shot, followed by a corner, bothered the home defence.

A penalty was awarded for Williams holding Morgan—a rough punishment for a very innocent affair; but again Daw was there, and was loudly applauded for his clever save against Gilligan's shot. Just before the interval, Jack, who had once missed an easy chance, scored from a scrimmage. This goal, and having to play against the wind in the second half, appeared to take a lot of sting out of the Luton play; but the custodian, backs, and half-backs still worked like heroes. One save of Daw's from Morgan was a veritable beauty, and Holdstock kept robbing Bell, whilst Dow held Jack and Picken at bay. McInnes and Eckford nearly got through, Sutcliffe having to run out to clear, and then from a cross from the left Bell tipped the ball to Morgan, who scored the best goal of the day. Strangely it was when the game had thus turned against them, that McInnes and his companions did their best work, and Dimmock certainly ought to have scored.

It was disheartening that after this miss the ball should be rushed back by the Wanderers and should be accidentally put through by one of the backs—I believe it was Dow. So it was, however, and a game, in which nobody but the Luton defenders had covered themselves with anything approaching glory, ended with the score: Bolton Wanderers, 3 goals; Luton, nil.

Bolton were disappointing to their friends, who did not always recognise the breaking-up tactics of the Luton halves. Only Morgan did well; Brown, of the half-backs, perhaps did best up to being winded, and Halley was most conspicuous of the others. Sutcliffe had nothing approaching the work he had at Luton. As may be gathered, Daw added to his fame as a custodian, and Lancashire judges of the game wonder how it is the Luton folk can get such men as this, and as Perkins. Daw's play was not merely safe, it was artistic. Dow and McCurdy were a capital pair of backs, who tackled and kicked with rare judgment; whilst Holdstock especially took the fancy at half-back. Forward, Eckford, McInnes, Durrant, and Dimmock were best, but the efforts here were not as sustained as they should have been, else the result would have greatly differed.

The "Athletic News" correspondent does not give quite so glowing an account of the proceedings from the Luton point of view. He sums up as follows:—"Several of the Luton players are worth places in a better team. W. Brown and Eckford in the front rank, Holdstock at half, and McCurdy at full back put in some good work, and Daw was very alert between the posts. As a whole, however, Luton are only a moderate lot, and if the Wanderers had been up to the mark the Southerners would have gone home with a much heavier beating. In their two engagements with the Boltonians they have dropped four points and five goals to none." The writer remarks that Luton were subsidised by Bolton to the extent of £5 in order to enable them to make the journey.

In an editorial, the "Athletic News" remarks: "Luton were only able to make their journey to Bolton through the financial help of their opponents. This is a pitiable position to be in, and does not say much for the enthusiasm of the Bedfordshire people."