

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON'S SURPRISING VICTORY AT READING.

The "Biscuit" team have not a wonderful record in the Southern League, but their English Cup career has far surpassed Luton achievements. Hence, Reading were expected to win on their own ground, if only as a decent preliminary canter for the Cup-tie with Tottenham, but Luton, with perhaps the poorest team on paper that they have sent out for several years, scored the only goal of the day. The spectators numbered about 3,000, and Mr. B. M. Lockyer refereed with the following teams:

Luton: Ord; Street and Lindsay; White, Cox and Williams; Durrant, Blessington, Barker, Hawkes and Brown.

Reading: Cotton; J. Sharp and Clinch; Bull, Holt and Mainman; Evans, Pangbourne, Logan, Spence and Barnes.

Mr. C. Green accompanied the Luton team.

While Luton had only 3 pro.'s, the home team were well represented, being only short of Pegg, Watts and Henderson. The visitors kicked off, and there was some good play in the first half. After 20 minutes, the ball came out from a corner to Hawkes, among a bunch of players, and he neatly kicked it into the net. It was a well-deserved point and, curiously enough, was the only time the ball entered the net during the game.

Crossing over a goal to the good, the Luton captain (Lindsay) naturally decided to play on the defensive in the second half. Reading had most of the play, but were kept out by Lindsay's big kicking and determined defence. However, Durrant, who was not at all well, had a chance of scoring from Brown, though Luton only crossed the centre-line about half-a-dozen times.

In the last 15 minutes, a number of fouls were given against Luton, Williams being the chief offender. Harry had been upset by Johnny Holt, who got cautioned by the referee, and it is only fair to say that he was first provoked. Some of the free-kicks were near the Luton goal, but nothing serious happened. About 7 minutes before time, Ord made a wonderful save from Logan, dashing out of goal and turning the ball literally off his toe. Some Reading people imagined Ord had held Logan's leg and claimed a penalty, but Mr. Lockyer awarded a corner, which came to nothing. The game ended:—

LUTON, 1 goal; READING, 0.

NOTES.

When the result wire arrived in Luton, astonishment was generally expressed that a team of 8 "locals" should have lowered Reading's colours. There was no doubt, too, that the "Biscuit" team really tried hard to win. Though a number of Reading supporters hooted Lindsay for kicking out so much in the second half, it was only natural for Luton to play on the defensive under the circumstances.

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The match proved fairly attractive, and produced a £60 gate. This is a little below Reading's average, but there is no doubt that the Luton directors would be delighted to receive such a figure. The best man on the Luton side was Lindsay, with Ord next. Street was good, Blessington and Brown shone most among the forwards.

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For the home club, Clinch and Holt did best, and Evans would have been much more dangerous at outside right, if he had not had Lindsay and Williams against him. Reading's record in the Southern League is now equal to Luton's, viz., 15 points.

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For the great English Cup match, Tottenham are certainly favourites. They offered Reading £500 certain to play at Tottenham, but the Berkshire club refused to accept. The gate at Reading will probably not exceed £500 but the Spurs were confident of nearly doubling this on their own ground.

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In regard to various rumours, it may be stated that Luton will certainly fulfil all engagements to the end of this season. In fact, it would be foolish for them to do otherwise, as of the remaining Southern League matches, 5 are at home and 3 are away. On Saturday, Kettering visit Luton for a United League match.

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To-morrow (Saturday) Kettering visit Luton for the first time this season in the United League, and the match should be an interesting one, as the championship of the League is likely to be settled with this match. Luton, who at present head the table, should further strengthen their position. The first match at Kettering ended in a draw of 1-1, while in the Southern League the "Ketts" defeated Luton by 2-0 on Christmas Day.