

UNITED LEAGUE.

LUTON TOWN v. KETTERING.

A VICTORY FOR LUTON.

The return match between these teams in the above League took place on the Luton ground on Saturday afternoon in fine weather, before about 2,000 spectators. The first match at Kettering resulted in a draw of 1-1, while the "Ketts" defeated Luton in the Southern League by 2-0. Interest was lent to the fixture by the fact that the winners of the game would be prospective champions of the League, and by their victory Luton take the head of the table with a lead of three points over their nearest rivals—Kettering. Mr. Beardsley, of Woolwich, was the referee, and he had the following 22 under command :—

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

Kettering : Baldry ; Bosworth and Draper ; Roulston, Panter and Pollock ; Webb, Garfield, McMain, Coleman, and Winterhalder.

Luton won the toss and Kettering kicked off with the sun in their eyes. They were the first to get away, but a foul against Kettering sent them into their own territory. Fouls against Blessington and Roulston for their respective sides were futile. Street cleared well from Garfield, while at the other end Durrant shot behind from a pass by Brown. Tierney missed a favourable opportunity, and a good try by Barker went over. Durrant forced Draper to give a corner, but Street shot behind, and at the other end White stopped a dangerous rush by Winterhalder in the nick of time. Two free kicks for offside against McMain were cleared by the visitors, and Durrant shot behind a good pass from Blessington.

Play was for the most part confined to mid-field, where the home team were superior, but they proved sadly wanting at the critical moment and allowed the visitors to clear on every occasion. About this time McMain hurt his ankle, and a little later he twisted his knee and had to retire for the rest of the opening half. Luton scored an offside goal through Durrant, while Baldry made three fine saves from Blessington, Tierney, and Durrant, and the same player gave a corner to a grand shot from F. Hawkes, but Brown shot over the resulting kick.

A good centre by Barker was put over by Brown, and pretty play by Blessington and Durrant was spoilt by Tierney shooting behind. However, after 40 minutes' play, some good play by the Luton forwards resulted in Durrant putting across a fine centre, from which Bosworth put the ball through his own goal, Baldrey having left his charge to clear the ball but misjudged it, while Brown rushed up and made sure that the ball was in. The interval arrived directly after with the score :—

Luton 1 goal, Kettering 0 goals.

On resuming, Luton at once got away, and Barker made a good try, but Panter blocked his shot, while hands against Pollock was futile. The referee had to caution Blessington and Baldrey for kicking at each other, and Draper stopped a nice centre from Brown in fine style. Baldry cleared well from Blessington, and a foul against Williams was futile. McMain, who had now reappeared, essayed an attack on the Luton citadel, but he limped badly and was merely a passenger. Blessington shot behind, and Panter gave a fruitless corner, after Baldry had partially cleared from Durrant. Hawkes dropped a splendid shot just the wrong side of the post, and Winterhalder made a good attempt at the other end, but the ball went behind. Barker badly missed a fine centre by Brown, and Baldry saved grandly from Blessington.

Brown sent across a fine centre, which Baldry caught and threw away in good style, but directly after Brown shot over with an open goal in front of him. The Luton team had been pressing the visitors in their own half for a considerable period, and at length Tierney beat Baldrey with a fine long shot, and five minutes after the last point Blessington again beat Baldry from a centre by Brown. The end was fast approaching and no more scoring taking place Luton retired victors with the score :—

Luton 3 goals, Kettering 0 goals.

NOTES.

The above was a hard, though not a very scientific game. The home team was much the cleverer, but the visitors displayed dash and earnestness. For Luton, Ord, in goal, had not much to do, but proved very capable. Lindsay was safe as usual at back, as the visitors' forwards found out. He was ably assisted by Street, who played better than of late.

At half-back, F. Hawkes was most conspicuous, and probably the best half on the field. Considering his youth and the fact that he has always played in the forward rank for the Reserves, he plays a clever game. White was unceasing in his efforts, and Williams was always on the move, although not quite so effective as usual.

Of the front rank, Blessington and Durrant combined very effectively. Barker in the centre, played a fair game. Tierney showed good individual form, but should make tracks for goal oftener and not forget his partner. Brown, on the outside left, made some good runs and put across some fine centres. The great fault as the line, however, is their shooting.

Of the visitors, Baldry, in goal, played splendidly all through. At back, the old hand, Draper, plays as well as ever, and seems to have got a trifle less vigorous. He was ably assisted by Bosworth.

Their middle line was only moderate, Panter, another ancient, being the pick in the centre. Pollock, the old Bristol City man, and Roulston, late of Loughborough, played a fair game. The forwards are quick and dangerous. McMain, the old Notts County man played well in the centre until he got hurt, while the left wing, composed of Coleman and Winterhalder, was the stronger, although Garfield and Webb on the right played a good game together, but the Luton defence was too strong for them.

To-morrow (Saturday) Luton journey to Gravesend for the return match in the Southern League. The first match at Luton resulted in a win for Luton by 5-2, but they will now have to play up well in order to return victorious. It is hoped that both Clifford and Holdstock will be available for this match.