

THE UNITED LEAGUE.

LUTON TOWN v. KETTERING.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Luton Town		3 goals.
Kettering		nil.

The teams were as follow:—

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.

Referee, Mr. F. Beardsley.

Somewhere about fifteen hundred persons turned out to witness the United League match with Kettering, but there was not much in it, except just at the finish, to arouse any particular degree of enthusiasm. Kettering occupy a higher place on the Southern League table than Luton, and in their home matches with the Bedfordshire men this season they had a victory and a draw to their credit. They might therefore be supposed to be a pretty good team, but little or no proof of it was afforded by their play on Saturday.

For the greater part of the game Luton were a lot below their proper form, and the forwards have never given a much weaker exhibition. What with Barker's blind play—I can find no other term to anything like fit it—and Tierney's disposition to play entirely on his own, the men never knew what was going to happen, and the consequence was that they were all at sixes and sevens.

White, too, seemed to be a bit stale at centre-half, and but for the very strong play of the two backs, Luton might have had a bad time, even against Kettering. Street, it may be at once said, showed surprisingly improved form, and indulged in some very powerful kicking. Now and again he seemed inclined to the old weakness of hesitation, but an admonition from friends in the crowd kept him up to the mark, and altogether he came out of the ordeal remarkably well.

The visitors were the first to attack, but their stay in Ord's vicinity was of very brief duration, and the play was taken on to Kettering territory, where it was maintained for some time without any particularly exciting incidents, though Barker once put just wide with a really smart shot. Soon after this McMain hurt his knee and had to go off, but he came on again and remained to the finish, without, however, being in a position to do himself justice.

Winterhalder, the speedy Kettering left-winger, secured a fair chance but shot wide, and then from a free kick Lindsay placed and Durrant scored with a fine shot, but was given offside. Barker had another try, and then Blessington put in a beauty, which was well saved by Baldry. The custodian next negotiated shots from Durrant and Tierney, but the best came from Hawkes, and to this a corner had to be conceded.

Durrant placed without result, but a little later the right winger, from a pass from his partner, completely beat Draper and put in a lovely long shot. Brown and Barker followed it up, and Brown had the satisfaction of driving it into the net. This was the only goal of the first half, and Luton therefore crossed over with a useful lead.

Soon after the re-start Draper and Baldry both showed temper, and there appeared a likelihood of reprisals, but happily the feeling wore off, and the men played football, even though the football was not of a very high class. The referee, too, was quite off-colour, and his decision, or decisions, in a foul which was ultimately given against Blessington, but which appeared at first to be given against the Kettering man, provoked some amusement. After Barker had spoiled a splendid chance by shooting wide, Durrant gave Baldry a handful and the custodian failed to clear, but McMain just beat Barker in a sprint and succeeded in clearing.

After a corner for Kettering, from which Winterhalder sent just by the post, the play was taken to the other end, and Brown was given offside when the Kettering goal was full of players, while directly after Blessington, from a dead offside position, was allowed to sail away undisturbed. Still, little things like this served a useful purpose in relieving the general monotony of the proceedings.

The crowd had almost given up hope of any alteration in the score, when Tierney found himself in possession at nice shooting distance, and with a fine shot he scored a lovely goal, Baldry being unable to reach the ball, which entered the net at a rattling pace. This success was quickly followed by another attempt, Tierney feeding Brown, who sent across. Durrant, however, failed to score, but just on call of time, after Barker had lost a good chance, Blessington did the needful.

The honours of the game rested with Lindsay, who was given a pretty wide berth by the Kettering forwards. His efforts, as I have said, were well backed up by Street, and Ord, as a consequence, was very little troubled. Williams and Hawkes were the best of the halves, and Durrant, Blessington, and Brown did well among the forwards. It is a pity that so clever a player as Tierney should mar his work by sticking to the ball until it is taken from him by an opponent. He did this repeatedly on Saturday, and completely spoiled his play. The performance of the Kettering team calls for no comment.