

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON TOWN v. READING

AN EASY WIN FOR LUTON.

The last but one Southern League match for this season took place with Reading on the Bury Park enclosure on Saturday afternoon in showery weather, before a gate of some 1,500 or 2,000 spectators. A shilling had been charged for admission to aid the finances of the club, but a large number had procured tickets before-hand at sixpence. It will be remembered that Luton gained an unexpected victory on March 9th at Reading, and it was only to be expected that they would repeat the same on Saturday. Luton were without Lindsay and Holdstock, while Reading lacked Watts and Barnes. The referee was Mr. J. H. Jamieson, of London, and he whistled the following teams into order:—

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

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

Luton won the toss, but Reading at once forced a fruitless corner, the ball going behind, while Durrant shot behind at the other end a pass from Tierney. A foul against Street was cleared, and Durrant forced a corner off Mainman, but Reading cleared from the kick, and two "frees" to Reading were both got away by Luton. A heavy shower of rain and hail now fell, and the players were drenched, while the ground became very slippery, making it difficult to get a foothold. The Luton forwards assumed the aggressive once more, and Cotton ran out to meet Brown, but before he could get to the latter he had passed to Tierney who transferred on to Blessington, and the latter beat Cotton—who had got back to his charge—with a flying shot after 20 minutes' play.

Directly after the last score, the Luton forwards got away again, but a foul on Tierney by Henderson stopped their course, the resulting "free" being futile. Two free-kicks to Reading were both cleared, and the home forwards got going once more, and some pretty play by Tierney resulted in Barker beating Cotton a second time. A special cheer greeted this point as it was Luton's 100th goal for this season. Barker again netted the ball from the kick-off, but the whistle had just gone for a foul against Reading, the point thus being lost.

Luton were having all the play, the Reading players being unable to settle down at all, while Ord had not been troubled on more than one or two occasions, and these were only a stray shot or two from the wings. Reading were penalised twice for infringements, and Cotton made a fine save from Tierney right under the bar, while the same player shot behind a lovely centre from Durrant. Blessington made a fine effort to increase Luton's lead, but the ball went just too high, while Cotton made two fine saves just before the interval, which arrived with the score:

Luton 2 goals, Reading 0 goals.

On resuming, Luton were the first to attack, but the visitors cleared, while Henderson was cautioned for a bad foul on Tierney. Barker spoilt a certain goal from a grand shot by Williams by heading over the bar, and a little merriment was caused by White and Tierney coming into collision, the former giving a corner, which, however, was got away, and Barker shot over a centre from Durrant. Blessington made two efforts to score, and Brown shot behind a corner given by Henderson, while Durrant shot over with an open goal before him, Cotton having left his charge.

Henderson badly threw Brown when he had got clear, but the kick was of no avail to Luton, who appeared to take things rather easy. Cotton had to run out to clear from Tierney, while from a dash by the visitors forwards, Ord had his first really dangerous shot to save, but he was equal to the occasion, and the danger passed. A grand save by Cotton from Blessington evoked applause, and Ord was badly tripped by Sharp when he had run out to clear an attack by the Reading forwards. Play was slow and uninteresting right up to the finish, and no more scoring taking place, Luton won as under:—

Luton 2 goals, Reading 0 goals.

NOTES.

Luton have broken the Reading Clubs' fine record in the Southern League by being the first club this season to beat them by more than one goal, while another feature of the game was that the home team scored their 100th goal for this season, Barker notching the point. Ord in goal for Luton was safe as usual, although he was only seriously tested once throughout the match, and Clifford showed great improvement on his previous display, making some fine clearances at times ; he was ably assisted by Street.

White was the pick of the middle line, and worked hard throughout. Hawkes also played a useful game, but Williams was off. Of the forwards, Blessington was the pick, and made some fine efforts to score for his side. Durrant played a good game, while Barker also showed up prominently in the centre. Brown and Tierney played well together, but both have been seen to better advantage.

For the visitors, Cotton in goal made some very clever saves. Clinch was the best of the two strong backs, Henderson spoiling his display by too much vigour. At half-back Holt, the old Everton International was best. Mainman and Bull both played a fair game, but it was evident that they had had enough.

The forwards would have been better on dry ground. Evans was best, but requires a better partner than Pangbourne. Logan played a fair game in the centre, but White prevented his getting away. Sharp and Spence played fairly until the latter got hurt. Some of the referees' decisions did not meet with approval.