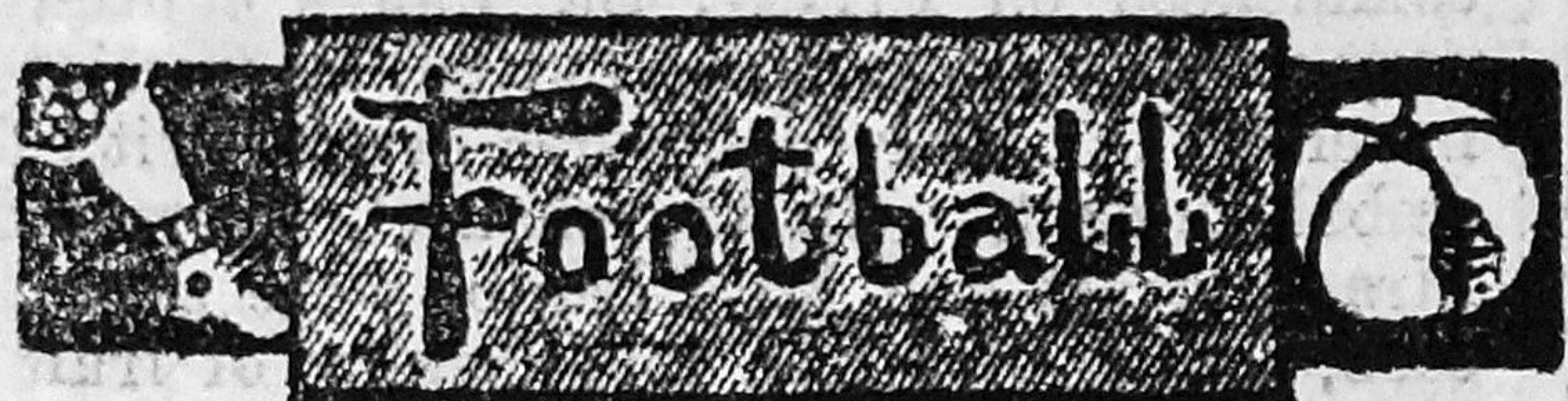




SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

BRENTFORD v. LUTON TOWN.

A CREDITABLE VICTORY.

Owing to the season of the local cricket club, from which Brentford rent their ground not being finished, the new comers to the first Division of the League were unable to open their home programme until Saturday, when Luton were their opponents. The local band had been engaged for the occasion, and considerably enlivened the proceedings with some capital selections of music. Criticisms have been very free as to the capability of the Middlesex club to support a professional team, but, if the "gate" on Saturday be a fair criterion, there should be no fears for the future of the club, as a large crowd of some 3,500 had assembled to give the club a hearty send off.

Brentford were not quite at full strength, McLeod and Robson being absent, while Luton lined up at full strength as under:—

Luton : Ord ; Lindsay and Sharp ; Hawkes, White and Williams ; Durrant, Blessington, Brown, Tierney and Colvin.

The home team opened the game, but Luton drove them back, and soon tested the home defenders, who, however, proved equal to all demands made upon them. On several occasions bad shooting lost Luton some fine chances of gaining the lead. The game was fought at a great pace, the Brentford forwards showing much improvement on previous displays, but they still lack the power to finish up with goals. Ord saved cleverly on three occasions from the home forwards, and elicited cheers from the crowd.

The players of both sides were very excited, and as a result many chances were missed. The Luton forwards were not showing their best form, although Colvin caused the home defenders considerable trouble with his runs and centres. Durrant missed a lovely chance from a centre by Colvin with only the goalkeeper to beat, to the great disappointment of the visitors. The home team got down well just before the interval, but on both sides the defence was too good for any goals to be scored. Half-time :

No Score.

In the second half play fell off considerably. Brentford started well, and Turnbull should have scored in the first minute, but the visitors cleared and play was transferred to the other end, where Colvin almost got through, but his final effort went just too high. Luton were staying better than the home eleven, who became disorganised, and the combination of the visitors was greatly admired by the crowd.

As the game proceeded and neither team appeared to be able to score, all the indications pointed to a drawn game. About ten minutes from the close, however, the Luton forwards made a strong onslaught on the Brentford goal, and Durrant getting possession, put across nicely to Blessington, and the latter taking advantage of a misunderstanding among the home defenders, ran through and beat the home keeper with a

very soft shot. Thus the first and what proved to be the winning goal was scored.

Play now became very exciting, and both goals were hotly besieged. In the closing stages of the game, Brentford made desperate efforts to draw level, and secured two or three free kicks for infringements. On one occasion when Ord was penalised for carrying, the Luton goal was in jeopardy, but the ball was got away successfully and the danger passed. The home team failed to overcome the Luton defence, and in the end retired defeated with the score :

Luton	..	..	..	..	1 goal,
Brentford	..	..	..	0	,,

NOTES.

This was a finely contested game, Luton probably winning owing to superior staying powers. Ord was safe as usual in goal, although his task was on the whole a light one. Lindsay and Sharp both played a strong game, and outshone the home pair.

The middle trio all played a hard game, Hawkes, White and Williams putting in effective work. Of the forwards, Colvin's runs and centres caused the home team a great deal of trouble. Brown also played a good game, and Tierney put in some useful work. The forward line might have shot more frequently with advantage.

The Brentford eleven have a good custodian in Spicer, the old Arsenal man, and he saved finely on two or three occasions. Both backs defended well, kicking cleanly, with judgment. The middle line is capable of improvement, and a little more cohesion with the forwards should be shown.

The forwards played a fair game, but fell off in the second half. Turnbull, the old Queen's Park Ranger, played well, and he was ably assisted by Andrews and McSwain, and it was from this quarter that Luton experienced most trouble. There is room for improvement among the front line, and with extended practice a good team should be evolved.

Some of the other Southern League games on Saturday proved very exciting. The great surprise of the day was the defeat of Bristol Rovers at Watford by 4 clear goals. Kettering made a good fight at Canning Town against West Ham United, but had to retire defeated by 1 goal to nil; Reading defeated Wellingborough at Wellingborough by 3 goals to 1; Northampton beat New Brompton on their own ground, after being behind at the interval, by 3 goals to 2; Millwall fell at Swindon by 2 goals to 1; and Queen's Park Rangers failed to penetrate the Portsmouth defence at Fratton Park, the latter winning by 1 goal to nil.

To-morrow (Saturday) Luton have to begin their cup ties, owing to an oversight in failing to make an early application for exemption, and hence they are called upon to meet Apsley. This will prove simply a matter of goal-getting for Luton. Notwithstanding the counter attraction of Sir William Gatacre's visit, it is to be hoped that adequate patronage will be forthcoming.