

FOOTBALL.

LUTON AND THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

DEFEAT OF NEW BROMPTON.

A SMART GAME BUT A POOR "GATE."

On Saturday the New Brompton team visited Luton for a Southern League match, this being the first meeting of the sides this season. The visitors occupy a somewhat lowly position on the League list and it was not expected that they would succeed in taking points away. Nevertheless they brought with them a capital reputation, and they justified this by playing a very smart game. The weather was delightfully fine, but there was not a very large attendance, only about £40 being taken at the gates. Both teams were strong.

Mr. F. Styles (of Wellingboro') was the referee, and he had charge of the following sides:—

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

New Brompton: Harris; Killeen and Humphrey; French, Atherton and Blair; Scott, Frettingham, Leigh, Milward and Dunkley.

Luton lost the toss and started operations from the railway end. At the outset the brilliance of the sun-rays was a source of inconvenience to the players. The visitors were first to show up prominently, and at an early stage they attacked so hotly that they succeeded in making their way into the neighbourhood of the home goal, the final shot going wide of the mark. The "blues" retaliated, and the New Brompton defence was severely taxed. The game was well-contested and play was fast, and as a consequence enthusiasm ruled high. Some ten minutes from the start Hawkes became responsible for a very fine exhibition. The right half amid the well-deserved plaudits of the spectators transferred cleverly to Blessington, who beat Harris in capital style. This initial success of the home side was very well received. The locals further manifested their superiority in the next few minutes, and the forwards put in some really excellent work. They were quick upon the ball and displayed considerable smartness and admirable dash, the only flaw in the exhibition being an undue tendency towards indulging in individualism. The home right wingers were especially prominent hereabouts. A first-rate shot by Blessington which just failed was followed up by a beauty from Durrant which gave Harris little or no chance. The outside right got through splendidly, and he was deservedly cheered. A corner to the home lot just afterwards proved unproductive, and when Brown had had shocking luck with a good attempt another flag-kick was secured, this also proving abortive. Then Williams shot hard into the custodian's hands. Following an unfruitful effort by Durrant, the strangers pressed strongly, and their shooting was fairly good. The home defence was very reliable just now, however. The New Brompton men continued to exert themselves and evinced to the supporters of the home side that they were not likely to have matters all their own way. Their persistence was at length rewarded, for Dunkley hit the cross-bar with a capital attempt and Frettingham followed up with a neat goal. This served to stimulate both sets of rivals and from now to the interval the struggle was a fine one. The strangers had a trifle the best of matters, some excellent attacking work being credited to them. However, there was no more scoring before the change of ends, when the totals were:

LUTON, 2; NEW BROMPTON, 1.

Early in the second portion of the game the "blues" were seen in the neighbourhood of Harris's charge, and they looked dangerous when a free-kick for hands relieved the pressure. A corner was credited to the New Brompton men, and the Lutonians were further beaten back by a free-kick for fouling. The leaders were soon busy in the New Brompton half, however, and gave Harris some taxing work to discharge. At one period the keeper turned round in the goal-mouth with the ball in his hands and a confident appeal was made for a goal. The referee did not concede it, however. It ought to be said that Mr. Styles gave some very peculiar decisions during the game. The Luton men continued to display considerable smartness and there was no doubt which was the cleverer team of the two. The "blues" forced a corner, following which Durrant steered over the bar. Tierney had hard luck with a capable effort, but he was rewarded a little later by securing a lovely goal, and so making the position of Luton fairly safe. When the end was drawing near Brown was badly tripped within the 12 yards line. A strong appeal for a penalty-kick was disregarded by the referee. The home centre forward was responsible for a grand flying shot into the keeper's hands, and when time arrived the locals were still pressing. The final scores were:

LUTON, 3; NEW BROMPTON, 1.