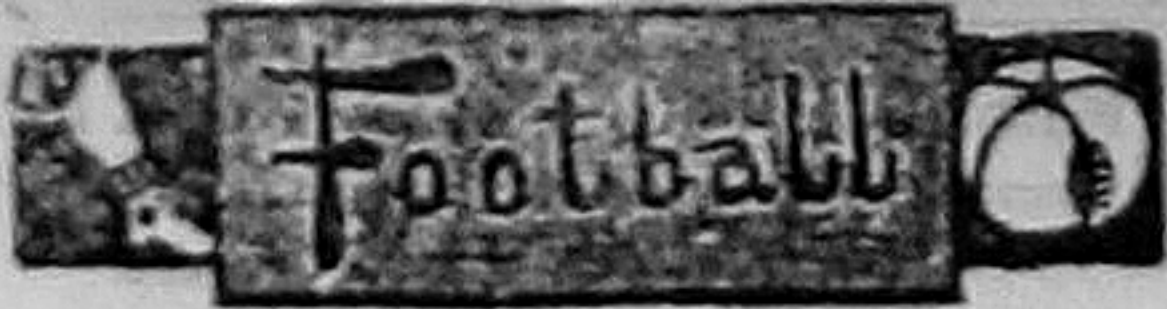




SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON TOWN v. MILLWALL.

A NARROW VICTORY.

The first meeting of these teams took place on the Bury Park enclosure on Saturday afternoon. Owing to the ground difficulty at the end of last season, it was very doubtful whether the Millwall club would not have to disband, but with a supreme effort the directors decided to have a team at all costs, and although they may not have a company of "stars" they possess a hard-working eleven, who go all the way. Luton's defeat on the previous Saturday had somewhat damped the ardour of their supporters, and the attendance no doubt suffered therefrom. Beautiful weather prevailed, but the "gate" was very disappointing, only about 1,500 being present.

Luton were not at full strength, but Ord turned out at the last moment, while Brown and Tierney were absent, their places being taken by R. Hawkes and Moody respectively. Sharp had also been reinstated, and partnered Lindsay, while Almond played vice Hulse, who was injured, in the visitors' eleven. Mr. A. Cooper, of Bilston, Staffordshire, was the referee, and he had the following 22 under his command:

Luton: Ord; Lindsay and Sharp; F. Hawkes, White, and Williams; Durrant, Blessington, R. Hawkes, Moody and Colvin.

Millwall: Joyce; Dunn and Bailey; Morris, Dove and Riley; Hamilton, Bell, Almond, Watkins and Miller.

Luton won the toss, and Almond started with the sun in the faces of the Millwall eleven, but the strong cross-wind favoured neither side. Millwall were the first to attack, and Ord had to clear from Hamilton, while two "frees" to each side proved unavailing. Offside against Blessington lost a good opportunity, and Watkins shot behind at the other end, while Sharp headed away a fine centre from Miller. Joyce kicked away a centre from Durrant, and Ord saved from Morris, while Colvin and Durrant both shot behind. Luton should have been awarded a penalty for a deliberate foul on Colvin, but only a goal-kick was given, to the great disgust of the crowd.

A foul against Millwall was cleared, and Durrant shot over a lovely pass from R. Hawkes, while the same player caused Joyce to clear. After Blessington had shot over, the Luton forwards got away splendidly, and Colvin centreing well, Durrant rushed up and completely beat Joyce with a flying shot. This gave Luton the lead after 25 minutes' play. The success put new life into the locals, who went at it for all they were worth, and Hawkes skimmed the bar with a clever drive, while Durrant put across a good centre, but the ball went behind. Nothing tangible resulted before the interval, which arrived with the score:

Luton 1 goal, Millwall 0.

On resuming, the visitors attacked strongly for some minutes, but the Luton defence prevailed, and the home forwards transferred play to the other end, where pretty passing by Hawkes and Moody was nullified by the latter shooting behind. Durrant put wide a nice pass from Blessington, and Joyce fisted away from Colvin, after which Durrant forced the first corner of the match, but Joyce brought off a fine save from Moody, and Dove cleared. A foul against Millwall was futile, and Sharp headed out finely from Miller after Ord had left his charge. Offside against Hamilton, and a foul against Luton both came to nothing. Ord saved from Watkins, and Joyce, only partially clearing from Moody, left Blessington with an open goal, but he missed in some unaccountable manner.

After this very narrow escape, Millwall forced a corner, but Hamilton and Bell both placed behind. Two fouls against the visitors gave no advantage to Luton, and a corner given by Dunn was cleared by Bailey. Miller hurt F. Hawkes, but he was able to resume, and clear twice from Almond and Dove, while Lindsay stopped Watkins finely when he threatened danger. Play was of a very scrambling nature right up to the finish and nothing further resulting, Luton won a poor game with the score:—

Luton 1 goal, Millwall 0.

NOTES.

The games between Luton and Millwall used to be the keenest of the season, but this match was not at all brilliant and the form of both teams left much to be desired. The weakness of the referee was partly to blame, while the strong wind also militated against good football. Under the circumstances, Luton are to be congratulated on their victory, and they fully deserved it on the day's play.

As to the winners, Ord did his little well. Lindsay, however, was fairly "off" in the opening half but he improved later, and never gave anything away. The re-appearance of Sharp in the team was very welcome. He gave a capital display, tackling fearlessly and kicking with fine precision. He kept out some dangerous onslaughts, once especially when Ord had left his goal.

The middle trio all worked hard, but White was not so effective as against West Ham. Williams wandered a little too much from his wing, but otherwise played a very fair game. F. Hawkes was certainly the pick of the halves, and for individual effectiveness would be hard to beat. He frequently called forth the cheers of the crowd for his skilful tackling, and broke up all attempts at combination by the Millwall left wing. Towards the close, Miller began to show temper and adopt foul tactics, but he found his mark.

As to the forwards, considering the alteration made, they all showed up well, Hawkes and Moody not being the least prominent. Indeed, young Hawkes played an admirable game at centre-forward, and made some neat passes to his wings. Moody also gave Colvin some fine touches during the game, and the latter appeared to get on much better than of late. Blessington and Durrant worked well together, but the latter appeared to have some difficulty in keeping his feet, and his play, as a consequence, suffered. His shooting was not of the best, although his goal was a fine effort. As a line, however, the Luton forwards on Saturday showed an improvement on the previous week.

In the Millwall team, Joyce kept goal well, but the way he shaped at some of the shots gave one the impression that when pressed he was not of the safest order. He had no chance with the shot that beat him. Both Dunn and Bailey kicked and tackled strongly, although the latter was not over scrupulous in his methods with little Colvin, and got into great disfavour with the crowd before the close.

The half-back line are only very moderate, Dove, the old West Ham man, being the pick. He found in young Hawkes a very lively opponent to deal with and at times found himself beaten by the Luton lad. Riley was energetic, while Morris showed up only at intervals. As a line, however, the trio need strengthening.

The forwards are all a hard-working lot, and against a less reliable defence would take a deal of stopping. Almond, lately secured from Sheffield United, played a decent game in the centre, while Bell and Hamilton made a dangerous wing, Hamilton showing capital speed. The other wing was not so effective, but Watkins tried hard. Taking the team as a whole, they are a rather poor representation of the old Millwall team, and have nothing like the dash and vigour exhibited in years gone by.