

FOOTBALL.

LUTON v. MILLWALL.

SUCCESS OF THE HOME PLAYERS.

On Saturday the first meeting of the Luton and Millwall teams this season in the Southern League competition took place on the Town Club's ground. The attendance was in striking contrast to what was customarily the case some seasons ago, when the rivalry between the teams was particularly keen. There was, indeed, only a moderate attendance. It is possible that this may be accounted for not so much by the lack of enthusiasm as the fact that the weather was bitterly cold, a cutting wind sweeping over the ground during the afternoon. The turf, apparently, was slippery, and in the early part of the game the players seemed to find it difficult to keep their footing. The visiting side was fairly representative, though some changes had been made in its constitution. The home eleven was a curiously mixed combination. Sharp, whose suspension had been removed, resumed at left back, and the absence of Brown and Tierney owing to injuries let in R. Hawkes and Moody at centre forward and inside left respectively. The game was not productive of football of a very high class, but the Lutonians fully deserved the success which they eventually obtained, for they were undoubtedly the better team on the day's play.

The sides were as follows:—

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

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

Referee: Mr. A. Cooper (Bilston, Staffs.).

Lindsay won the toss and took advantage of the wind, though this rendered it necessary for the home side to face the sun. In the early part of the game the Millwallians attacked and Hamilton became responsible for a very fine shot, which was extremely well saved by Ord. The home captain was punished for fouling, and soon afterwards Bailey was similarly penalised for falling foul of Colvin. The home keeper brought off another excellent save, following a free-kick against Lindsay. At the other end the home forwards, who had not up to now been displaying to very great advantage, became dangerous, and Blessington headed in capitally. But, to the general disappointment, he was given off-side. The visiting left-wingers went off in good style and managed to make their way to the home goal line, where they were unfortunate enough to steer the ball wide. Durrant was subsequently responsible for a well-judged centre along the Millwall line, the ball being immediately afterwards forced out of play. The home outside-right next sent into Joyce's hands, and a splendid shot from the foot of Colvin travelled just wide of the mark. When Durrant had had another ineffectual try at goal-shooting, Colvin was badly charged in the back by one of the Millwall defenders. There were instant demands for a penalty, as the offence had been committed within the 12 yards line; but, to the amazement of the crowd, Mr. Cooper did not even give a free-kick. Williams and Durrant indulged in lofty shooting in turn and then came a beauty from "Bob" Hawkes, who was repeatedly conspicuous in the centre by reason of brilliant play. A first-rate centre by Colvin brought about the downfall of the Millwall goal, Durrant rushing up and beating Joyce close in. The shot was a very smart one and deserved the success which attended it. Shortly afterwards R. Hawkes gave the opposing defence some trouble with a shot that deserved a better fate than to fail. The interval was now approaching and the only event of importance until that stage was reached was another foul by the strangers, Colvin being nastily bowled over when he was getting well away. The positions at half-time were:—

LUTON, 1; MILLWALL, 0.

The standard of football considerably improved in the second half, a great deal more spirit being infused into their efforts by both sets of contestants. The Londoners were first to show up prominently after the resumption, and for some time they indulged in a very hot attack. Bailey brought about the repulse of his side by badly fouling Colvin. Later on the local front rankers indulged in somewhat wild shooting, Moody during this period having an unsuccessful try at goal. Following a corner to Luton Moody headed on to the cross-bar, the ball rebounding into play. Blessington, later on, missed what appeared to be a very easy chance of scoring just after Joyce had effected a particularly smart save. A corner fell to Millwall, though without result. A misfortune fell to Luton in the shape of an injury to F. Hawkes, which necessitated the carrying off of that player. He was soon enabled to resume, however, and continued to play during the remainder of the game. As the end drew near the rivals exerted themselves to the full, though without avail, and the final outcome of a fairly good game was a victory for Luton with these totals:

LUTON, 1; MILLWALL, 0.

Such facts as these seem to show that there is an urgent necessity for the forwards to pay more attention to their shooting. In the matches that remain to be decided this season there are several in which it would ordinarily be difficult to score, however good the shooting might be; and it therefore behoves the "blues" to see to it that no effort on their part shall be lacking to give trouble to the opposition custodian.



But to return to the Millwall game. Let me say that Colvin came in for some particularly rough treatment from Bailey, and that this culminated in the Millwall back being spoken to by the referee. Indeed, there was a good deal more objectionable play on the part of the visitors than there was any occasion for, and it was remarked that though this was a newly constituted team it seemed that the old tricks had not been forgotten.



I have already referred to the excellent display given in the centre by "Bob" Hawkes. I should now like to pay a compliment to Blessington for the really admirable service he did to his side throughout the game. He was in fine form and during the temporary absence of Fred Hawkes afforded assistance to the defenders.



The defence was very good, the members of all three lines acquitting themselves satisfactorily. Ord was frequently tested and he came through with flying colours. Lindsay appeared to be troubled at times with a leg weakness. Yet, on the whole, he did well.



The Millwall forwards were a fairly smart quintette, and Hamilton was especially prominent, some of his centres being very good indeed. The defence was steady and it must be confessed that it was a slice of ill-luck for Millwall that led to the scoring of the Luton goal. Still, the victors were the better team on the day's play, undoubtedly.



The referee was not an unqualified success. Some of his decisions in the early part of the game were open to considerable doubt and the members of the crowd expressed themselves in the usual way concerning these.



At the conclusion of the game a demonstration was indulged in by a section of the crowd, some of the Millwall players and the officials being hooted. The affair was not in any way serious, however.

