

# Luton Town Football Club.

## SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON TOWN v. QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS.

### A GRAND VICTORY FOR LUTON.

The first meeting this season between these clubs was eagerly anticipated by Luton enthusiasts, as a lively encounter generally takes place when the clubs meet. The Rangers have as yet to gain their first victory on Luton ground, while I think they have only beaten us twice in London and two meetings resulted in drawn games. Last season Luton defeated the Rangers here in the League by 2 goals to nil, while the return was a draw of 2 goals, and in the English cup-tie Luton were victorious by 3 goals to nil.

The Rangers have got together a good team, and interest was given to the fixture by the fact that Colvin was operating at outside right for the visitors. The Red Cross Band also proved a fine attraction, and their playing was greatly appreciated by the London visitors, of whom there were a good number on the stand. Both teams had good elevens in the field, the Rangers playing Newlands in place of Bowman, while Luton had the same team as at Reading with the exception that Bob Hawkes played in place of Harry Williams. The weather, although very threatening during the early part of the day, fortunately turned out fine for the match, and a good crowd of some 2,500 spectators were present when the referee, Mr. J. H. Jamieson, of Woolwich, started with the following teams:

Luton: Frail; Hall and Sharp; F. Hawkes, White and R. Hawkes; Durrant, Blessington, Hilsdon, Moody and Allsopp.

Rangers: Collins; White and Edwards; Newlands, Hitch and Skinner; Colvin, Hamilton, Abbott, Wilson, and Busby.

The visitors won the toss, and the opening exchanges were very even. Durrant got across a fine centre, but Moody just missed converting and a foul against Skinner on Allsopp was futile. Early in the game Sharp got kicked and had to leave the field but he soon resumed, although he was practically of little use to his side for the rest of the afternoon. Skinner robbed Durrant just as he was getting dangerous, while two corners to the Rangers proved futile, Frail saving in fine style.

After Moody had skimmed the bar, F. Hawkes put up finely and the former securing, beat Collins with a fine shot, giving Luton the lead after 30 minutes' play. From the kick-off, Luton got down again and Hilsdon scored an offside point, and Blessington headed behind a fine pass from Bob Hawkes. Offside against Moody twice in succession was of no advantage to the Rangers. A brilliant single-handed run by Bob Hawkes deserved a goal, but the ball went just by the post. Half-time score:

|         |    |    |    |    |         |
|---------|----|----|----|----|---------|
| Luton.. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1 goal, |
| Rangers | .. | .. | .. | .. | 0 ,,    |

On resuming, each side turned out with 10 men, Colvin and Sharp being away from their respective sides. The Rangers were the first to get away and Hall miskicking, Busby was given a golden opportunity but he shot right across the goal-mouth, the ball going out. The play was spoilt by the frequent offside stoppages as each side was playing the one-back game. However, after 15 minutes' play, the Rangers were awarded a free-kick and Skinner placing finely, Edwards steered the ball into the net. Meanwhile, the Luton players looked on as if dumb-founded when the referee properly awarded the Londoners a goal. Thus the teams were on a level once again.

From this point a great change came over the game and Luton seemed to do just as they liked with their opponents. Bob Hawkes made a grand attempt but just failed. Directly afterwards Durrant, by a fine single-handed run, gave Luton the lead. Starting from the kick-off, Luton attacked again but was given offside. This was only a momentary check, for Collins saved grandly from Allsopp and before he could recover Blessington had beaten him for the 3rd time. Luton were making rings round their opponents. Just before the close Durrant got possession, and making a bee line for goal, sent in a grand shot which Collins was forced to carry over the line before he could save, and the referee promptly awarded Luton a goal. Play was all in favour of the home team right up to the finish, but nothing further was scored, the result being:

|                      |    |    |    |    |          |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----------|
| Luton                | .. | .. | .. | .. | 4 goals, |
| Queen's Park Rangers | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1 ,,     |

## NOTES.

There is always plenty of excitement when these rivals meet, and this game was no exception to the rule. The closing half hour of the game was full of exciting incidents during the persistent assault on the Londoners' goal. The Luton team are to be congratulated on their fine victory, and a pleasing factor was that they scored more goals than in any other game so far this season. It is clear that with Gall out of the team there is far more cohesion among the forwards, and the Directors would do well to keep the forward line as at present.

With regard to the teams, taking the victors first, Frail played a champion game in goal, and although he did not have so much to do as Collins, yet he had some difficult shots to dispose of at times. Hall played a surprisingly good game at back, and considering that he had almost all the work to do when Sharpe got hurt he came out of the ordeal with flying colours. Sharp ricked his knee in the first 20 minutes and left the field after the interval.

All the halves worked hard, but the palm must undoubtedly be given to Bob Hawkes, who was in brilliant form throughout. He is, indeed, a remarkable player for his age, and it is to be hoped that he will be fortunate enough to avoid injuries, as the Club can ill afford to lose so so valuable a player. F. Hawkes was very effective, whilst White, although perhaps not so conspicuous as in previous games, gave a very fair display. As a line, the Luton halves were equal, if not superior, to their opponents.

The Luton forwards took a long while to get into their stride, but when once they got going there was no stopping them. Hilsdon played a very useful game in the centre, while Moody also showed up well, but how he missed scoring in the first few minutes will ever remain a mystery to me. Allsopp was fair but he is a trifle nervous about his leg which does not appear to be quite sound yet. Blessington and Durrant were good, as usual, the latter especially being in fine fettle. Durrant's runs and centres during the latter part of the game were a feature of the match. Altogether, the team are to be congratulated on their fine victory.

As to the visitors, I was greatly disappointed with them. Collins had no chance with the shots that beat him, but he looked rather surprised when the referee awarded Luton their 4th point. Both backs, who hail from Grays United, kick very strongly, but at times they were erratic.

Hitch, who has returned to his old team after a season with Notts Forest, was best of the halves. Newlands did well, while Skinner, who comes from Grimsby, was very fair, but found tough opponents in the home right wing and had had enough of them before the finish.

The front rank was the chief failure of the team, combination being badly lacking. Abbott, the old Blackburn Rover, played fairly in the centre, while Wilson, who comes from Aston Villa, and was formerly with Millwall tried hard, but unsuccessfully. Our old friend Colvin was practically a passenger, and only touched the ball about three times during the opening half, and did not appear after the interval. As a team, I do not think that Queen's Park have improved on last season's eleven.

The crowd was by no means great and the "gate" realised only £52, which is poor for such a fixture. Unless the Club gets better support, I am afraid there is not much hope for brighter times. The referee was only moderate, but the spectators did not improve him. There is little wonder that any man can keep a game well in hand, when he has to endure continual "booing" from a section of the crowd. On Saturday play had to be suspended twice for the referee to caution certain spectators. One of the offenders was ordered off the ground for using bad language.