

FOOTBALL NOTES.

[BY "SPECTATOR"]

THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS.

A WELCOME BRACE OF POINTS.

Luton was at home to Queen's Park Rangers on Saturday. The weather was not of the best, but there was a good attendance of spectators. The following were the teams:—*Luton*: Frail; Hall and Sharp; F. Hawkes, White, and R. Hawkes; Durrant, Blessington, Hilsdon, Moody, and Allsopp. *Queen's Park Rangers*: Collins; White and Edwards; Newlands, Hitch, and Skinner; Colvin, Hamilton, Abbott, Wilson, and Busby. Referee: Mr. Jamieson (Woolwich). Linesmen: Messrs. F. W. Wildman (Leicester) and H. O. Wynne (London).

The Luton men kicked against the wind in the first half, and from the railway end towards Bury Park farm. Within a couple of minutes of the start Colvin got down and put across a shot, which Frail cleared. Then the Rangers were forced back on the defensive, and Durrant made a good attempt to bring about the desired result but was not able to do so, one of the Luton forwards being given off-side, though there was a little bit of doubt as to whether he was or not.

From some mid-field play White secured the ball from three opponents and passing ahead to Hilsdon the latter passed again to Durrant, who raced by Edwards and placed across to Moody, who had a splendid opportunity of opening the locals' account. Moody shot the ball by the post, and thus a golden chance was missed.

Hands against the Rangers kept play in their half of the field. Hall took the kick, but could not lift the ball far, as the wet ground had made it very heavy. Allsopp at length secured and tried a shot at goal from a difficult position. The ball went just by the post.

The referee next gave two decisions which were absolutely inexplicable to those round the ropes. First F. Hawkes was penalised for some offence and directly afterwards, when Luton were well towards the Rangers' goal, Hilsdon was treated the same. The crowd booed and yelled and some uncomplimentary observations were addressed to Mr. Jamieson.

Soon afterwards the Rangers were making tracks for goal and White did a good piece of work in stopping a rush. The chance of doing anything was nullified by a foul on F. Hawkes. The ball about this point was repeatedly put across to Colvin, and this led to a discussion of the ex-Luton player's football qualities between a number of local supporters and a few of the Rangers' followers, but each side was unconvinced of the other's right views.

The shouting against the referee grew louder at this point and that official came across and lectured somebody on the grand-stand or amongst the spectators at the Bury entrance end. Sharp was hurt at this point. After stopping one of the opposition players he was seen to be on the ground unable to rise. When he appeared to get no better the Luton back was carried off the field. It was concluded that his knee had been twisted, but fortunately this proved not to be the case.

Then Luton played with 10 men with the inevitable consequence. The whistle was going continually for off-side. Colvin made a run down the field and was applauded for putting in a shot which went just by the post. White, the Rangers' back, put in a shot at the Luton goal, but Frail was at home and vigorously replied.

After this Durrant and Allsopp were responsible for canters down their respective wings, and Colvin imitated their example. He beat R. Hawkes and Sharp, and Hall, in coming to the rescue, accidentally conceded a corner, which was most vigorously applauded by the Rangers' supporters. Frail fisted out and another corner from the opposite side resulted.

Sharp, who had returned on the field, was again injured, and had to be assisted from the field. One of the Rangers' supporters advised the visitors to play the one back game, and his words were no sooner uttered than there were shouts of derision from the Luton crowd.

Luton had the better of the next few minutes' play, and from a *mêlée* in front of the Rangers' goal Hilsdon should have placed the ball in the net, but just failed to do so, landing it just the cross-bar. From a long pass forward Luton at length secured an advantage.

White, the Rangers' back, received the ball, but instead of returning it at once he hesitated and Moody, rushing up promptly, dodged the back and placed the ball in the net to the great delight of the crowd. Sharp again returned, determined not to leave the field until he was absolutely obliged.

A foul was given against the Rangers and from this Blessington and Durrant made a passing run down the wing, but one of them was given off-side. Sharp was afterwards compelled to leave the field, though evidently he did not like the idea of going.

Luton, who were having the better of the play, got down by means of a clever run by Durrant, who put across and Blessington headed just by the post. Allsopp very neatly played the ball on one of the Rangers and got a corner but he failed to accurately direct the ball.

The Rangers, although they had 11 men on the field, played the one back game, and consequently the Luton players were frequently off-side. A fruitless corner was conceded the visitors.

R. Hawkes then showed a flash of brilliant play. He secured the ball when well down the field and made a single-handed run close up to Collins, but eventually placed the leather outside the net. Moody was given off-side directly afterwards, though the ball to all appearances came off a Rangers' player.

Colvin also was injured and just before half-time he, from the terrace side of the field, and Sharp along the opposite side, were seen painfully wending their way to the dressing-room. The only incident after this up to the rest period was a corner for Luton, which came to nothing. The half-time score was:

LUTON, 1; RANGERS, NIL.

When the teams returned it was seen that neither Colvin nor Sharp returned, so that both teams tried the one-back style again. The Rangers kicked off and a foul was given against Hilsdon very soon after the commencement. From this the Rangers got away and Hall nearly let them in through a misjudgment of the ball, combined, perhaps, with the greasy state of the sphere.

The referee cautioned Moody for charging the goalkeeper. A free-kick was given against Luton. The ball was placed right up the field and Abbott, securing, gave Frail no chance. Why he was not better looked after was a mystery, for none of the Luton men, except Frail, made apparently any attempt to stop either the man or the ball. The result was received with loud demonstrations of delight by the visitors' supporters.

The crowd on the terraceside shouted and yelled at the referee's decision and, as a consequence, something had to be said to them. Play was at length resumed and R. Hawkes put just by the post. There were a number of free-kicks for off-side at both ends of the field and the match became a farce.

Eventually the monotony of free-kicks for off-side was relieved by a dashing run by Durrant, who tricked several of his opponents and made a straight line for goal, eventually ending by beating Collins and placing Luton ahead. The crowd received this success with undisguised pleasure. Luton on the re-start went off in rare style. One of the Rangers' defenders did a dirty piece of business when the referee's back was turned, deliberately fouling one of the Luton players when the ball was nowhere near. The Luton team was showing what it could do just now, and getting down again Allsopp put in a well directed effort. The ball returned to Blessington, who evidently saw a pathway for it in between the players. Along this he placed it, and the ball rolled into the net.

With three goals to their credit the Luton men went at it for all they were worth. Moody put across a fine centre and Durrant placed the ball right in Collins's arms with such force behind it that the goalkeeper rolled back and gave Luton their fourth point.

Hall very nearly let in the other side, but he sufficiently recovered himself to kick behind. A goal-kick was, however, given. The only incidents of note after this was a contemptible foul on Durrant, and a fine shot by the latter which went just over the bar. The game eventually ended:—

LUTON, 4; RANGERS, 1.

On the whole the play was poor, this being chiefly due to the one back trick. The Luton forwards were well up to form, especially in the second half after the second goal had been scored. The half-backs were found reliable players, and Sharp, until he was hurt, was a host in himself. Hall played a good game, but it would be too much to expect that he could take the place of Sharp as well as his own when Luton were a man short. Frail was not to be blamed for the goal scored against him.

Until he got hurt Colvin was the best of the Rangers' forwards. Busby was a thorough trier, but the other men, thanks to the way the local half-backs looked after them, performed no great things. The halves, back and goalkeeper were up to the average.

The defeat of Portsmouth on their own ground for the first time in the history of the club's Southern League career came as a great surprise in football circles. Portsmouth do not lose their place at the top of the list, as although the Bristol Rovers by drawing rather unexpectedly with New Brompton are level as regards points, Portsmouth have rather the better goal average. Reading, too, by their victory over Millwall, have also scored 10 points, while Southampton, who have played a couple of games less than either of the three "dead-heaters," are also well in the running. It will thus be seen that the defeat of Portsmouth has added to the keenness of the competition.

Southampton were certainly expected to do more than draw with Kettering, while the Hotspurs' victory over Brentford was gained by 3—1. The victory of West Ham over Watford was in accord with previous form.