

FOOTBALL NOTES.

[BY "SPECTATOR".]

THE SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON LOSE AT BRISTOL.

Luton went down into the west on Saturday to play the Bristol Rovers in connection with the Southern League. No League points were recovered and none were really expected, so that local supporters were not disappointed. The teams were as follows:—*Luton*: Frail; Lindsay and Street; F. Hawkes, White, and Williams; Durrant, Blessington, Hilsdon, Moody, and Allsopp. *Bristol Rovers*: Cartlidge; Dunn and Griffiths; Young, McLean, and Lyons; Muir, Willcox, Graham, Howie, and Marriott.

The *Bristol Evening News*, which is an excellent football journal and quite up to the London papers, contained an excellent report of the match, and I am indebted to that journal for some of the particulars following. The weather on Saturday was not of the best and consequently there were fewer spectators than usual present, the number being about 5,000.

The Rovers won the toss, and that gave them an advantage, for they set their opponents to face both wind and sun. In spite of that Luton did the first aggressive work, and from a centre by Durrant, Moody had a good chance, but did not use it. Then the Rovers attacked on the left, but Lindsay was a match for Marriott. Later Frail saved from Lyon, and following that Willcox shot over.

A free-kick for hands gave Bristol a chance close in, and the play that followed a corner was forced. Exciting play followed its placing, and Willcox netted, but next second the whistle went for off-side. Again the Rovers attacked, and after pretty work Willcox gave to Graham, who shot wide, however.

Another time Willcox tested Frail with a good attempt that he got away, and this was followed by the visiting left wing getting clear, but Dunn stopped Allsopp, and though the opposite wing next tried forcing tactics they could not get in.

Bristol were not long in reversing the attack, and from a ground shot from Lyon, Frail saved well, whilst later Muir made a game but unsuccessful effort. Considerable praise, of course, attached to the Luton backs for good work, but the Rovers forwards were also unlucky. Once when Luton went off up the right a foul against McLean gave them a chance to come close, but they did not trouble Cartlidge.

Another rally by Bristol came in response, and Muir dropped in an excellent shot that went between Frail's legs. It appeared like a goal, but the Luton goalie scrambled the ball out, only to see Marriott put it into the net. Coming again immediately after this, Luton had a good shot saved.

In the next minute White, with a tricky long shot, beat Cartlidge, the ball dropping in a peculiar way. In less than five minutes Howie got the lead again from Marriott's work, this being a delightful effort. A long shot by Allsopp that took the upright at the other end looked like taking effect, but Luton were not allowed to remain long on the attack.

In a subsequent rush on the Luton goal hands was given against the visitors, and the free-kick being tapped to Dunn, the Bristol back sent the ball in hard, and it went in the net off the post. It was a hard goal and increased the comfort of the spectators. A similar experiment was tried later and did not come off, but Bristol kept up the attack. Half-time:

BRISTOL ROVERS, 3; LUTON, 1.

The Rovers attacked at the start of the second half, by which time the wind had considerably decreased, but the ball was very greasy as the result of a heavy storm in the interval. Frail was not called upon, but at the other end, when Allsopp got in a centre, Blessington gave to Cartlidge to get away.

Good work by Lyon, and then by Marriott, followed, and as a result the Luton defence had plenty of work. From Howie Frail punched outside at the expense of a corner. That was cleared, and a rush on the Bristol goal followed, Lyon, however, getting the ball away very smartly.

This was followed by a good get away by Muir, but he kept the ball too long, and Street tackled and cleared, the same back also stopping Howie just after when he seemed certain to score. A free kick against Young gave Luton a free kick not far from goal, but Griffiths got the ball away in an exciting rush on goal.

Blessington, the old Bristol City player, tried very hard, and with Durrant and Hilsdon changing places, the visiting attack was strengthened a bit. Once Hilsdon dropped in a good one that Cartlidge caught and dapped down, and then sending the ball away the Bristol forwards were again in possession only to find the Luton defence very solid.

The Bristol defence was also very good, and when Luton shot it had to be at long range. Willcox was once fouled when in a good position, and from the free kick Dunn sent another of his specials outside the post. A corner fell to the Rovers just after, and McLean tried hard but unsuccessfully to head in, whilst when the ball was cleared Young also returned it with a futile long drive.

After half-an-hour's play Willcox made a long attempt, and whilst Frail was hesitating Graham rushed in and scored. Luton were not done with, and forcing a corner it was well placed. Cartlidge cleared, but sending to White that player shot high over the bar when standing close in. Result: Bristol Rovers, 4; Luton, 1.

Luton, in attack, showed themselves to be a likely lot, says the paper quoted above, and much more dangerous than they were expected to be. They swung the ball across from wing to wing with great force, if not with consistent accuracy, and had they a forward in the centre who could have broken some of those passes it is quite possible they might have got the better of Dunn and Griffiths more than once, and the road to Cartlidge should then have been easy.

Luton have the reputation of playing football that is not always in accord with the rules, but up to half-time no real exception could be taken to anything they did, for though at times vigorous they were merely applying their legitimate weight, of which they, as a team, possess more than the Rovers. But Luton have always been blessed with plenty of pounds of avoirdupois when pounds sterling would have been the more acceptable.

The scoring of goals in the first half was certainly interesting, four coming in 20 minutes, even though the last 20 minutes before the interval gave the spectators plenty of entertainment. The solitary goal that went to Luton ought not to have been begrudged, for just previous to its scoring Cartlidge had saved wonderfully well from Hilsdon. After the scoring of that goal, too, Allsopp hit the crossbar with a ripping shot that must have taken effect had it been a foot lower.

The goals for the Rovers were all good, and Marriott was heartily shaken by the hand when he got the first through. Referee Carr ought to have given it as a goal when Frail let the ball go through his legs from Muir's shot. Dunn's goal came from a shot of the long and artful sort, and Howie made us think of auld times when he crashed the ball into the net from a foul. At half-time the Rovers could consider themselves a winning side.

The second half of the play was not so interesting as the first, and that was surprising, for the wind dropped considerably. On the other hand the ball was very greasy, as the result of a heavy storm that fell in the interval and the minutes preceding it.

There could be no doubt that the Rovers were fully entitled to their win, for they were all the way the cleverer side, and there was not one department in which Luton could claim to be the better side. Particularly were they the inferior side forward, and even after their attack had been rewarded it was not a very smart one. The Luton directors must have had their own reasons for altering the attack, for it brought no score.

To criticise the referee adversely is never a nice task, but Mr. Carr was too slow in giving his decisions, though in making his mistakes—and he made several—he was hard both on the Rovers and on Luton. It was not a very difficult game to referee, so Mr. Carr must be credited with a day off.