

# The Southern League.

## LUTON TOWN v. NORTHAMPTON.

Played at Luton on Boxing Day. Result:

|             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| Luton Town  | 4 goals |
| Northampton | nil     |

The teams were as follows:—

Luton: Frail, Landay and Williams; F. Hawker, White, and H. Hawker, Durrant, Blasington, Gell, Moody, and Alsopp.

Northampton—Cook, Durber and Dilkes; Marrell, Dulvey and Howe; Frost, Crompt, Bennett, Brown, and Wilson.

Referee: Mr. Partridge.

There was a big holiday crowd on the Town ground to witness the game, which was played on the afternoon of Boxing Day. The spectators numbered about four thousand, and it was generally expected that a capital game would be seen, for Northampton occupy a good position on the Southern League table, and they have won distinction by being the only team that has managed to beat Portman both in the League this season, and at Fratton Park last.

The game certainly was interesting, but I must confess that I was disappointed with the display of the Cobblers, for with the exception of the first few minutes they never shaped like a winning team, and Luton were streets in front of them. And yet on the very next day Northampton, playing on their own ground, had all the best of the argument in the game against Millwall, who were very lucky to escape defeat by only two goals. Truly football form is remarkable.

As I have intimated, play was fairly even for the first quarter of an hour or so, but after the Luton forwards got into their stride there was no hope for the visitors. The home team were not long in getting the ball into the net, but the referee disallowed the point for offside. At length, however, Durrant received the ball right in front of goal and banged it into the corner of the net. Blasington really ought to have scored this point, but he let the ball go out to Durrant who signalled his first appearance as a Bonedict by scoring with a grand shot.

After this Luton had by far the greater part of the play, and several good efforts went just wide of the mark. Of course, the visitors occasionally broke away, but none of their attacks were really dangerous, and Frail had a fairly easy time of it, Landay and Williams again being very safe. Before the interval Gell scored two points for Luton, who were leading at half-time by three goals to nil.

Luton continued to have most of the play after the resumption, but there was not much sting in the first efforts of the forwards, and Cook, too Northampton custodian, seemed to be much more successful than he had been in the opening half. Considering the fact that Luton had so much of the game it is really remarkable that they only managed to score one goal during this half, and I think everyone will confess that there was an element of luck about that point.

Moody was standing on the goal-line nearer the corner than goal when he sent the ball across, and Cook caught it between the bar and post, but somehow or other he fumbled it, and the ball went over the line. Three or four of the Northampton players changed places during this half, but did not meet with much success, although Wilson, who went from outside left to centre forward, put in about the only really serious shot for his side.

I don't know whether the visitors had been eating too much Christmas pudding, but I can not account for their display, which was very different from what I had expected. They were outclassed in every position, and had Luton not about their work in the second part of the game in a systematic fashion the score might easily have been doubled. No doubt the fine work of the Luton halves had a lot to do with the superiority of the home eleven, for a good half-back line makes a wonderful difference to a team.