

Luton Town Football Club.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON TOWN v. BRISTOL ROVERS.

A DRAWN GAME.

The return match between these teams took place on the Bury Park enclosure on Saturday afternoon in fine but windy weather, before 2,000 spectators. At Bristol, Luton lost by 4 goals to 1, and since then the Rovers have accomplished some smart things, and they expected to win on Saturday. The indifferent form by the Luton team has caused a great deal of disappointment, and it is indeed a sorry position in which the Town Club is placed at the present time.

The Bristol club had their strongest possible eleven. Luton had to play Hood once more, and as an experiment, Eling, of the Reserves, was brought in at inside left in place of Gall, who does not as yet give satisfaction. Harry Williams was also laid aside with influenza. The Red Cross Band was in attendance, and played some excellent music, including the contest piece at the Crystal Palace next month, under the conductorship of Mr. Angus Holden. The referee was Mr. C. C. Fallowfield, of Streatham, and the teams were:—

Luton: Frail; Hood and Lindsay; F. Hawkes, White, and R. Hawkes; Durrant, Blessington, Moody, Eling and Allsopp.

Bristol Rovers: Cartlidge; Dunn and Griffiths; Davies, McLean, and Lyon; Muir, Howie, Corbett, Wilcox and Marriott.

Luton won the toss, but there was not much advantage gained thereby, as the wind blew across the ground. The home club attacked first, and two centres from Durrant were well cleared by Cartlidge, and two corners to Luton were headed over the bar. Cartlidge nearly lost a fine shot from Eling, but he was fouled by Durrant. Marriott missed a fine chance at the other end. Frail saved from Howie, and Luton taking up the attack again, Allsopp centred finely, and Moody scored the opening goal after 25 minutes' play, the ball striking the inside of the bar and dropping into the net.

Luton played up well after this, and the game became fast and exciting. The Rovers tried hard to equalise, but the Luton defence were sound. Luton pressed strongly before the interval, which occurred with the score:—

Luton 1 goal, Bristol 0.

On resuming, Luton soon pressed, but were repelled. The Rovers got away and from a centre by Howie, Wilcox smartly equalised the score after 10 minutes' play. Dunn cleared two efforts by White and Allsopp, and Durrant just missed. During this half a drenching rain was falling, and made the ground slippery. However, Luton made some strong onslaughts on the Bristol goal, but they failed at the critical moment, and thus several good chances were lost. Once the Luton goal had a narrow escape owing to a misunderstanding between the defence, but happily for Luton, the ball rolled just by the post. Try how they would, neither side could gain the lead, the result being draw:—

Luton 1 goal, Bristol Rovers 1.

NOTES.

The chief feature of the match was the weakness of the Luton forwards, especially in the second half, when they missed at least two open goals. The Bristol eleven are a capable and well-balanced lot, all of them genuine triers, and they appeared to be far fresher at the close of the game than did the home team. The pace was very fast, and with the wind so high, it was no light matter to battle against the elements.

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As to the home team, Frail, although he did not have much to do, saved well on one or two occasions, but he does not seem to inspire one with the same confidence as at the beginning of the season. He has a tendency to leave his goal far too often. This has cost his side more than one goal. Lindsay played a champion game at back, though out of his proper position, apart from one serious mistake.

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Hood certainly shaped better than in the previous games, especially in the first half, but after the interval he fell off lamentably. Fred Hawkes was easily the most effective half on the field. White was indefatigable, while Bob Hawkes, although playing a clever game, tried to do too much, and as a consequence, was frequently robbed of the ball instead of using it to the benefit of his side. He has been seen to greater advantage, but this was perhaps due to the superior weight of his opponents.

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In the front rank, the palm must be given to Allsopp, who was the shining light of the whole quintet. He should have easily scored once in the second half, but shot wildly, and the chance was gone. His partner, Eling, was fair, but it was obvious that he is not strong enough to stand the strain of League football. Moody did well, but was too slow in the centre, while the home right wing was "off," and it is a long while since Durrant has been in such poor trim. Blessington was moderate, but was "done" before the close of the game. As a line, however, they did not compare with that of the Bristol forwards.

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For Bristol, Cartlidge played very cleverly in goal, especially during the second half, when some of his saves were of a marvellous character. His display largely helped the visitors to take back one point with them. Both backs were strong, Griffiths being a trifle superior to his partner, Dunn, who did not seem to be so safe as when he last appeared at Luton.

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All three of the half-backs worked untiringly, and never gave anything away. McLean, in the centre, was a tower of strength, but Lyon was the most effective. Davies was inclined to be a trifle too vigorous. Though perhaps not quite so clever in their method as the Luton halves, they were more energetic.

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In the front rank, Wilcox was conspicuous for clever play, and whenever he got away, was always dangerous; his goal was a real gem. Marriott, the old Wellingborough man and late of Aston Villa, who, it will be remembered, paid £300 for his transfer, was a mere passenger, and did nothing worthy of mention. Corbett made a fair centre, but found White almost too much for him at times. Howie was useful at inside right, while Muir was dangerous, but for the most part was held well in check by Lindsay. As a team, I think the Bristol Rovers show better combination than last season, and are stronger in attack. The referee was very fair, and gave satisfaction to all.

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To-morrow (Saturday) Luton are without a League match, and a friendly fixture has been arranged with Ilford at Ilford. Several seasons ago these teams used to have some rare tussles together. Luton supporters will remember the fine work accomplished for them by the brothers Porter, and I believe Edgar still plays for them and is one of the oldest members of the team. However, I think Luton should have no difficulty in winning. On the Town ground the Reserves meet St. Albans in the South Eastern League.