

# Football.

## The Southern League.

### LUTON v. MILLWALL.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Luton .....    | 1 goal. |
| Millwall ..... | 1 goal. |

The teams were as follow:—

Luton—Thompson; Bennett and McEwen; F. Hawkes White, and R. Hawkes; Durrant, Turner, McKee, Storey, and Allsopp.

Millwall—Joyce; Storrier and Stevenson; Riley, McLean, and Millar; Moran, Maxwell, Hulse, R. Jones, and Astley.

Referee, Mr. H. E. Walker (Reading); linesmen, Messrs. H. T. Hunt and J. Corke (London).

Millwall have to thank their lucky stars and the referee for escaping defeat on Saturday. Their thanks are also due in some measure to the Luton forwards for the magnanimity they displayed in refraining from taking advantage of several opportunities which came their way.

Millwall were very keen on winning this game in order to avenge the humiliation they suffered on their own ground earlier in the season, and at one time it looked as though their desires would be gratified, but happily the danger passed and the result, according to the official reckoning was a draw. According to the opinion of the spectators, and in this I quite concur, Luton ought to have been credited with three goals instead of only one, and if they had taken a reasonable proportion of the chances that came their way in the first half, they should have obtained two or three other points.

The weather was as favourable for the game as it well could be, and fully five thousand persons were present to witness the match. McEwen, with his head bandaged, as the result of the injury received at Fulham, was greeted with a loud cheer as he came on the ground, and he was cheered yet again when it was seen that he had been successful in the spin of the coin. He elected to kick towards the railway end, thus getting the help of the wind.

Luton were quickly on the aggressive, and from a centre by Allsopp, Durrant secured a corner, from which, however, nothing resulted. The visitors responded on the left, but Bennett obtained possession, and was making a rush through when he was badly tripped from behind. Durrant was soon in evidence again at the other end, and finished up with a fine centre, which Storrier cleared, causing the spectators to make a loud appeal for hands.

The ball was trundled down the field, and Maxwell found himself well placed, but shot badly. Then the Millwall goal experienced a narrow escape. Durrant putting in a shot which Joyce could not properly clear, but McKee, making a dash, just missed the ball.

Bob Hawkes sent in another shot, which the Luton centre-forward spoiled by getting offside. Good passing on the right wing took the home-sters once again into the vicinity of the Millwall goal, and after Stevenson had raved a beautiful shot by Durrant, Turner very cleverly headed into the net quite out of Joyce's reach.

This early success—only twelve minutes had elapsed since the kick-off—elicited enthusiastic applause, and the spectators doubtless flattered themselves that for once in a way they were going to see the Luton forwards in a goal-getting vein. Perhaps that would have been the case if McKee had only accepted an opening which presented itself, or rather which was well worked for, directly afterwards. He got quite clear, and then, with only the goalkeeper to beat, passed instead of shooting.

Of course, passing meant sacrificing the opportunity, because opponents as a rule don't let the grass grow under their feet when their goal is in danger. Still, the Lutonians continued

to play a jolly good game, and Durrant sent in a clipping shot, Joyce tipping it over the bar. Durrant judged the corner-kick beautifully, and after a bit, Fred Hawkes made a capital attempt. Joyce saved, as he did again from Durrant, but in the latter case, Storey got on the spot just as the custodian was taking his kick, and the ball went high over the bar.

The visitors got away from a bad cross by McEwen, and Hulse sent in the best shot up to date at that end, the ball just skimming the bar. The Dockers renewed their overtures, but were not very effective, and Luton making a spirited response, Bob Hawkes put in a trimmer, and the ball cannoning off Storrier to Allsopp, the latter had a splendid chance, but shot tamely, and Joyce saved by giving a corner, from which nothing resulted.

Once more the Dockers got away, and McEwen relieved a somewhat dangerous situation and cleared splendidly from another assault. At this time Bennett showed signs of distress, and Mao thus had to be well on the alert. From a throw-in, Millar sent in a very hot shot, and Moran running up just as Thompson stopped the ball, the spectators held their breath. The Luton custodian, however, scooped the ball over Moran's head, and then cleared in a manner which called forth a hearty and delighted cheer.

Another corner for Luton was the next thing of note, and Durrant placed well and put in again splendidly when the ball came out to him, but offside against McKee relieved. A similar infringement by Storey spoiled a fine opening a moment later, and then Luton returning to the attack, Durrant put in a good shot. Joyce saved, but before he could get rid, the three inside forwards were on him, and in his efforts to clear he had to turn right round with the ball in his hands. To me there seemed not the shadow of a doubt that he was well over the line, and Luton appealed strongly for a goal, but Mr. Walker declined to give it.

The spectators were greatly dissatisfied, and well they might be. This rather took the heart out of Luton, and Millwall for a time acted on the offensive. Bob Hawkes at last effected a clearance, but play had to be stopped for Bennett, who was again in difficulties. He soon resumed, but was unable to do much, and Millwall, as a consequence, threatened danger on one or two occasions. Astley, from a centre by Moran, rushed in and took a flying shot, but luckily was wide of the mark.

Luton retaliated, and Durrant receiving from Allsopp, sent across again, the left-winger making a gallant but unsuccessful attempt to reach the ball just as it was passing out. A corner was next forced, and after Allsopp had placed, Durrant got in a couple of hot shots at close range. Both deserved to score, but particularly hard luck was experienced with the second, the ball striking the inside of the bar and then coming into play again. It was the last thing of note before the interval.

So far the game had been very much in Luton's favour, and they really ought to have crossed over with a lead of three or four goals. The play, too, had been of a bright and attractive character all round, and the only fault to be found with the homesters was the lack of sting near goal.

Unfortunately, a very sorry change came over the play in the second half. Bennett came out and took his usual place, but it was soon seen that he was unfit to play, and it was by reason of his weakness that Millwall were able to draw level. The visitors were able to make their presence felt on the left, and Fred Hawkes, coming to Bennett's assistance, gave a corner. This was well placed, but it looked that Luton might have cleared easily. Some of them, however, tried to get the ball away by a series of little taps instead of good hard kicking, and Maxwell at last stepped in and scored with a shot that struck the bar and glanced off into the net.

Things now looked very bad for the home-sters, but it was not long before Mac sent Bennett off the field and resorted to the one-back game. The visitors could not adapt themselves to this at all, and were repeatedly pulled up for



offside. On the other hand, however, the Luton forward play deteriorated to an alarming extent, and the game rapidly developed into something approaching a mere scramble. Bennett was off for some twenty minutes or so, during which time he received attention from Dr. Rose, and he then came on and was able to perform very well.

Although Millwall for the greater part of this half were a lot the better team, they seldom looked like scoring, whereas from a breakaway Storey, taking a pass by McKee, had a splendid chance, and then threw it away by passing again.

Just on the finish, Durrant got away on the right, and swinging the ball across the mouth of goal, Allsopp rushed in, after the inside men had just failed to reach it, and scored what appeared to be a good goal, but to the consternation of the crowd, the referee gave it offside.

It was unfortunate for Luton in every way that they should have only been credited with a single point, for it was not till they were weakened and disorganised by Bennett's incapacity that Millwall had a chance. In the first half the homesters were all over the better team, and yet it cannot be said that the play of the forwards was anything like satisfactory.

They were all right in midfield, but they carry their passing tactics to ridiculous lengths when they get in front of goal and fritter away invitations to shoot in the most exasperating way. It is clear that some alteration must be made, and the sooner the better. We have been waiting for the turn of the tide long enough.

Really, it seems to me that Bob Hawkes must be given a place in the front string, for until we get someone there who can shoot, we shall look and long for goals in vain. In that case, Holdstock should be given another trial at centre-half, with White at left. If a better plan can be devised, all well and good, but it is absolutely certain that under present conditions we are not going to maintain our position long.

On Saturday, the weakness lay with the three inside men. Durrant played a fine game in the first half, but in the second, after receiving an injury, he allowed Storrier to hold him pretty well in check. Allsopp showed much improved form on the left wing. Of the halves, Bob and Fred Hawkes both played splendidly, but White was not at his best, though of course he was, as usual, a glutton for work.

McEwen played wonderfully well, especially considering his damaged eye. Thompson, taking the game all through, was not very seriously troubled, but when called upon he was always found to be ready.

Of the visitors, Joyce played a very good game in goal, though occasionally he might have been a little smarter in getting rid of the ball. He was all there, however, in dealing with corner kicks. The backs were pretty sound and improved as the game proceeded. The halves also were a very decent trio, though Millar's tactics were not always commendable. I liked Moran as well as any of the forwards, but the line, taken altogether, was not as effective as we had been led to expect.

Saturday was a day of draws so far as the Southern League was concerned, five other games being finished with honours easy. Tottenham drew with Queen's Park Rangers, West Ham with Plymouth, New Brompton with Fulham, Brentford with Reading, and Swindon with Brighton. Portsmouth, by their victory over Bristol Rovers, tie with Luton on points, but their goal average is not so good, and they have played one more match.