

Football Notes and News.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. WEST HAM.

A NARROW WIN.

Contrary to the general impression, it is now clear that several of the Luton forwards can score, given an opportunity of facing the opposing custodian alone. That was recognised by every one in the match with West Ham on the Bury Park ground on Saturday afternoon. It is something to be thankful for, though but for our magnificent defence we should this season have soon found ourselves at the bottom of the League.

As regards scoring, we have had this season nearly as many goals scored against us as in our favour. In the 27 League matches played, Luton have only scored 30 goals, whilst opponents have scored 26. It would be interesting to reckon how many of that 30 have been from the foot of a forward, because the halves have had a share in the scoring, and Bob Hawkes has scored a few from penalties at one time and another.

There is a remarkable difference between Luton's scoring record and that of Southampton, who are going fast for the championship of the Southern League. In their 29 League matches already played, the Saints have scored 67 goals to 27 against, and are well away at the top with 43 points, as against our 32.

Saturday was an ideal day for football—dull and calm, but mild, and the turf was in excellent condition. About 3,000 spectators turned out; the lateness of the season and the busy state of the local industry being responsible for a slight drop in the gate.

Luton put their last week's team in the field (with the addition of Bennett), Durrant and Moody being still unable to play. Bob Hawkes filled the gap in the forwards, Harry Williams taking his place at half-back. West Ham substituted Mercer for Barnes; otherwise, they played their usual team.

When the Hammers visited Strawopolis last season they were defeated by 4-0, and at Canning Town this season the match proved a pointless draw, though Luton lost when visiting West Ham last season.

The game opened very fast. Though Luton began the attack, they were soon repulsed, and their defence severely tested. Could this possibly be West Ham, one asked, as the energy and dashing form of the visitors were being made only too evident. Thompson was kept busy and saved admirably from Blythe and Lyon. Such form as the Hammers were showing was indeed marvellous, considering that they are running hard for the "wooden spoon," and the only explanation of such excellent play was that it was for the Londoners a "flash in the pan."

Next, it was Luton's turn to attack, but McKee was both fouled and robbed. Griffiths easily cleared from Allsopp, and play became more even. It was a lively and exciting game; indeed, one could not help thinking that it was a real battle between giants, but as class football I did not think very much of it. West Ham had certainly the best of matters in the first half and no one would have been surprised at their scoring at any time. Half-time arrived with no score.

It was now Luton's turn to attack, and though the backs and halves gave them every opportunity, the forwards failed in the attack. As usual, in the front line, McKee was all over the place, but was never able to do the needful.

Despite one or two mistakes made by Williams, the visitors failed to penetrate the goal. With such a magnificent back as Eccles, Luton were not able to do much. McKee missed twice, and Allsopp's mistake was shocking. As the game proceeded, a draw was anticipated. Thompson had very little to do just now, but at the other end Luton's shooting was rather erratic, both from centres and corners at times. Griffiths was fisting out some fine shots.

A few minutes before time, Eaton shot across, McKee sent in, and Griffiths was brought to his knees. He failed to get the ball away and stumbled with the leather just by his side. Neither of the West Ham backs got to the rescue in time. Against Griffiths were arrayed Allsopp, McKee, and Turner, with Bob Hawkes just in the rear. With such a combination Luton's forwards actually got the ball into the net.

The visitors, who were somewhat exhausted, did not give up and pressed energetically up to the close, the last shot from Satterwaite being a very near thing. Nothing further was scored, however, and the game ended in a victory for Luton, by one goal to nil.