

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. READING.

Luton lost again on Saturday, and it would now be a "reviver" if we were just to pull off a victory. Still, defeat at Reading is not an event of momentous importance. Apart from the fact that the loss was by the smallest margin—one goal to love — our visit to the biscuit town has always resulted in a stiff contest. Last year we made a draw at Reading of one goal each, and at home we won by 2 to 1.

Then there were other considerations. Perhaps the chief one was the confidence which Reading had after their brilliant victory over the Spurs. Luton were in fairly good form. They took with them their usual team—Bob Hawkes included—and played a better game than recent performances had led the Reading men to expect.

Penman was again at centre, and Pritchard took F. Hawkes's place at half, "Freddy" being still absent on his "honeymoon." The gate at Elm Park numbered about 5,000.

The Luton centre missed a fairly good chance early in the game; he dallied too long with the ball, and was nicely robbed by Smith, the back. When will our men learn to "get done" with the leather as quickly as possible? The visitors' left wing soon became prominent, and Ross and Barnes gave Henderson plenty to do.

When it was Reading's turn to attack they did not get on as well as might have been expected. In mid-field their play was excellent, but the final effort somehow always lacked finish. Luton's two backs, however, were playing a sound game.

Eaton and Lamberton got away, and Naisby had to save from both players in quick succession. Lindsay had a regular "teaser" to deal with from McIntyre, and later Higginson was within an ace of scoring, having the hardest luck possible. The interval arrived with no score.

Play re-opened in favour of the homesters. Quite early a corner fell to Reading. The ball was well placed, and Long passed to McIntyre, who stumbled whilst in the act of shooting. Crombie, however, took in the situation, and with remarkable presence of mind dashed in and sent in a high shot, going clean into the net over Lindsay's head. This proved to be the only goal of the match.

Luton had the best of the remainder of the game, but Reading acted on the defensive. Penman experienced the hardest of luck. He managed to get through, and keeping in front of Smith, tested Naisby with a clinking shot. The Reading custodian just managed to put the ball outside, but it was indeed a very near thing.

Altogether, it was a well-contested game, in which all the honours did not rest with the victors.