

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. NEW BROMPTON.

This match was played on the Bury Park enclosure on Saturday, before a rather poor gate of some 3,000 or 4,000 spectators. The result was satisfactory, and the match was by no means an uninteresting one. The directors have made many shifts and changes, but with Saturday's combination they grouped the players better than might have been expected. Mr. Spencer was dropped in favour of Lamberton, who did much better than the amateur. Bob Hawkes was also placed in the front line, playing inside right to Eaton, while Moody took the place of Ross, the latter being confined to his bed. The quintette on Saturday did well; I don't say but what a smarter outside right would be a great improvement, but with the material we have we ought to give a better account of ourselves.

I have always maintained that Bob Hawkes plays far better as a forward; with him in that line we are more likely to get goals, because generally the Luton forwards are too anxious to shoot. Besides, I have an idea also that Pritchard plays much better at half than Bob. This was again only too evident on Saturday. Lamberton made a very decent centre, and as a result of having a plucky forward line, Luton showed some of its old form.

Our encounters with New Brompton have generally been close things. Last year at Luton we just managed to win by an odd goal (1-0), and away we made a draw of 2 goals each.

On the present occasion the visitors were without Barnfather, Turner, and Lloyd, so they could not be considered as being at top strength.

Play opened very fast, and the visitors set the ball rolling with a strong wind behind them. It was plainly to be seen that Luton was in fine fettle, and they were not long in taking up the attack. Barnes sent in a couple of good centres, but the leather went behind each time. Though the wind was against them, Luton were attacking desperately. Moody was twice dangerous, Walton saving a certain goal by holding our inside-left. Shortly afterwards Lamberton shot clean into the net, but at the same moment the whistle went for a foul. This was extremely hard lines for Luton, but Referee Pitts decided that the point must be disallowed.

Eventually the visitors managed to get away but nothing came of their efforts, Lindsay clearing rather easily. Numerous corners fell to the home team, but the wind made accurate shooting difficult. The first half was a blank score.

Upon resuming, the visitors played up well, though they were scarcely ever dangerous. There could be no doubt that Luton were having the best of matters. Moody, from a centre by Eaton, just headed by the upright. At the other end, Morris nearly found the net, but eventually the home defence beat back the attack, a foul on Lamberton enabling Luton to get round the farm goal. The game was most prolific of corners, but Griffiths exercised conspicuous judgment. Once Bob Hawkes came within an ace of getting the ball into the net, but it swerved by the post.

Barnes was fouled within the penalty line, and Bob Hawkes, taking the shot, netted the first goal for Luton amidst tremendous cheering. Just at the close Griffiths made a fine save from Lamberton. However, the game ended in a win for Luton by a single goal.

Though I am not very jubilant over winning from a penalty yet on the afternoon's play, Luton were the better team and deserved to win; for them it was a well-earned victory. The surprise was that there were not more penalties against New Brompton. They certainly played a very rough game, the halves especially, and Walton was not free from blame in this respect. The visitors shone better in their defence; they have two powerful backs, and a decent goal-keeper as well, which explains why they have fared so well. We gladly welcomed our old friend, McKee. He played inside-right, and did very well, too, I thought.

Of our own men, Lamberton and Pritchard were probably best. We missed Ross, but if our forwards always played as well as they did on Saturday we should not grumble much. What a difference such form would have made at Craven Cottage! All the Luton men played a very decent game, and White would do much better if he did not foul so often. He gets off very well considering, but referees have eyes, though their decisions, as was the case on Saturday, may sometimes be weak.

Luton now holds a much better position in the Southern League thanks largely to our victory and Millwall's defeat on Saturday. We have gone three up, and enjoy the same points (11) as Fulham, though we have played one match more.