

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. PORTSMOUTH.

When the result was made known on Saturday night that Luton had lost 1-0 to Portsmouth, the general feeling was that under the circumstances the Townies had done very well indeed. One grain of consolation was gained from the fact that it was a less damaging defeat than the one met with last year at Portsmouth, when three clear goals were registered against us.

There was practically only one alteration in the Luton team—Goodge keeping goal in place of Lindsay. As a rule R. Hawkes is not able to go with the team on a long journey, and once more his place was taken by Pritchard. The following did duty for Portsmouth:—Harris; Bowman and Young; Digweed, Buick, and McDonald; Salter, Cunliffe, Lee, W. Smith, and S. Smith.

About 5,000 people assembled on Fratton Park to witness the match. Losing the toss, Luton kicked off against the wind. Early in the game McDonald shot behind. The visitors played a skilful defence, both McEwen and Turner being in splendid form. So far Luton were doing well, and were actually attacking, principally through Barnes and Ross. The former was not long in trying Harris with a nice shot, but the home custodian was quite equal to the occasion. Then it came to White's turn to shine in the Luton ranks. He was particularly smart in breaking up the homester's tactics for quite a quarter of an hour. Then Goodge saved a lightning shot, and was very fortunate in doing it, too.

Hostilities proceeded in the visitors' territory. Lee had a nice opening, when receiving the pass from Salter, but he shot over the bar. Luton's left wing was doing wonders, and were the mainspring of the next attack. Indeed, up to that time the visitors had shown to better advantage than their rivals, who appeared to be slow at making the best of their openings.

Salter and Cunliffe then put in some hard, but serviceable work for Portsmouth. Salter sent in a fast shot, which found the net. Portsmouth were thus one goal up after nearly half-an-hour's play. Goodge had really no chance whatever at saving the shot.

Up to the interval there were practically only two other points of interest. Moody succeeded in forcing a corner from Harris, but the flag kick was fruitless. At the other end W. Smith missed a rare chance in not scoring from a pass by Lee.

Resuming, the homsters rushed away, and made a determined attack on Luton's stronghold. However, a magnificent effort was nullified by Cunliffe heading over the bar. It was now Luton's turn to make Pompey "sit up." Eaton dealt Harris a well-judged shot, and the home custodian only saved at the expense of a corner. Later Moody tested Harris, but the attack seemed to be spoiled by inaccurate shooting, a number of the shots going yards wide.

Play continuing even, Portsmouth journeyed to the other end, where Cunliffe hit the post, following a corner, which S. Smith had well placed. Luton tried their utmost to draw level, but the defence against them was admirable. The same observation must be made in regard to the visitors' defence. Nothing was, however, scored in the second moiety. On the day's play Luton deserved a goal, but their luck was dead out. At the same time they made their opponents go all the way for their victory, the sprints by Barnes being always a source of anxiety to the homsters.