

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS.

On Saturday Luton made their first win on foreign soil, when they beat the Rangers at Park Royal to the tune of 2 goals to 1. Interest in the doings of the Town has ever since been in the ascendancy. I know it is the same in the case of many other towns, but there is no town that I know of where interest and support so quickly diminish after a defeat or two as is the case in Luton.

With the Rangers we have more than held our own, and last year we beat them at Kensal Rise by exactly the same score as this time—(2-1)—while at home we won 1-0. Luton sent the usual team, Bob Hawkes included. The following did battle for the Rangers:—

Collins: F. Lyon and Newlands; Bowman, Hitch and White; Murphy, Ronaldson, Bevan, Downing and Singleton.

The morning's soaking rain had rendered the ground a perfect quagmire, and winning the toss the home side decided to take advantage of the stiff breeze. The ball was soon rendered heavy and greasy, and the players were not long before they gave unmistakable evidence of having many times kissed mother earth.

The Rangers opened the attack, a smart shot from Ronaldson just going wide. White was the first to do anything for Luton, shooting for goal as soon as he got possession. Luton's left wing broke away, and Moody had a shot, Bowman stopping with his head, at the expense of a corner. A flag kick at the other end also came to nought. The visitors' left wing put in some sterling work, and Lyon had all he could do to pay sufficient attention to Barnes.

Getting away, the Rangers pressed home the attack, and Bevan beating Lindsay with a fine low shot, the homesters gained the lead after 25 minutes' play. The same player missed another easy chance, but nothing further resulted for some time.

It was apparent that Luton's splendid play must bring about the downfall of the home citadel, and at last their chance came. Moody and Barnes between them took the leather down the field. Eventually Lamberton received, and a tussle took place between the centre-forward and Bowman for possession, the result being that the ball flew backwards through the home goal. Thus Luton succeeded in drawing level before half-time.

In the second half play was fairly even. Luton secured the winning goal of the match in a sensational manner. Bowman conceded a corner, which was excellently placed. Collins caught the ball but was impeded, and a free kick followed. This proved to be the undoing of the Rangers. Newlands took the kick, but slipped, and Moody stopping, quickly shot for goal, and took Collins completely by surprise, the ball passing under the bar to the left of the custodian.

Though Newlands' misfortune may have been a lucky thing for Luton, yet the smart manner in which the goal was obtained reflected the highest credit on Luton's inside left. For the rest of the game the visitors managed to keep the Rangers at bay, and thus made a gratifying win. Result: Luton 2, Queen's Park 1.

In view of Millwall's visit to the Bury Park on Saturday, the following comments of a London expert on the Dockers' match with Tottenham last week, will be of some interest:—"Tottenham Hotspur were miles ahead of Millwall in their forward play, and quite deserved their two to love victory, but the two Millwall backs, and Joyce in goal, played a grand game, whilst Tait was not up to form for the 'Spurs, and Watson did most of the defensive work. Yet Millwall might easily have made a draw, for many times their forward line rushed down and seemed to have the goal at their mercy—if they could only shoot."

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Our win over Queen's Park on Saturday has benefited the Club in more ways than one. It has not only done justice to the team, but what is perhaps more important it has made our chances of re-election to the Southern League more secure, for I am bound to think that the position we were in last week did not speak well for our chances in this respect, especially in view of the new applicants. Some of the new clubs that are knocking at the door of the Southern League have not only some measure of influence at headquarters, but from the point of view of strength are not inferior to a few of the present day S.L. clubs.

I suppose it is certain that our Wellingboro' friends will not again figure for some time in the Southern League, and one wonders what would have happened to us if we had finished in the position we occupied last week. Though we have strong claims for being allowed to remain in our present League, it is very difficult to say what would really happen when there is so much rivalry for a place in the League. However, through Saturday's win, and the fact that some of our closest runners met with defeat, we have passed four of them, and at the present moment stand sixth from the bottom.

For our 26 matches played we have 21 points to our credit, and though for us the bottom clubs are all in an interesting position yet we ought to keep where we are. I notice that for their 22 matches Watford have 19 points, and on paper are in a more favourable position than many of the teams I have referred to.

Not only ourselves, but others have recognised that Luton's position this season was not its proper one, that as a matter of fact, with one or two of the other clubs in the Southern League we have had more than our fair share of ill-luck. The truth is we have not had a single stroke of good luck this season yet. As Mr. Arnold pointed out at the public meeting at the Plait Hall on Monday night, while if anything we have an improved team this year the results this season are in striking contrast to those of last season. However, that is largely accounted for by an over-dose of good fortune last season, and nothing but bad luck this season.

The championship of the League, too, is in a most interesting position. Says one writer: "The games of Saturday had a great bearing on the ultimate result. What a surprise to find the present champions beaten by such a margin as 6 to 1! And it was by no means a debacle at the end of the game as is often the case when there are huge scores. Playing against a high wind in the first half, the Rovers led by 2 goals to 1, so that the ultimate result shows consistent superiority throughout the game. The match at Reading reflects great credit on Fulham, who have evidently not been upset by their loss at Birmingham. Together with Watford they have the satisfaction of being the only teams to bring away points from Elm Park this season. Luton, the victors of Queen's Park Rangers, record their first win of the season on foreign soil. Mention must be made of the creditable win of Brighton by two clear goals over Plymouth. Though late in the season, this side is beginning to show excellent and consistent form, and at the end will be found not far from the top. Northampton and Wellingborough did not take part in the League tourney on Saturday."

The new ground which is at the back of the present one is just now being got ready, and of course will be finished for next season. It is understood that there will be improved grand stand accommodation; at any rate it is hoped the stand will be in an entirely different position on the new ground to what it is at present. The wind and rain being generally from the west, the grand-standers always get the full effects of it.

It is stated that the new ground has been bought for the Club Company, and it will be in the name of the Club. It was once stated that the present ground had been bought for the Club, and though that was the understanding it was never carried out. However, let us hope that that has been done in this case, or else in a few more years we may have to go farther afield for a ground. Many think that the new ground is too far away from the town, but when the new streets are made we may get used to the situation. However, it