

The Southern League.

LUTON v. MILLWALL

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Millwall	2 goals.
Luton	1 goal.

The teams were as follow:—

Luton—Lindsay; Turner and McEwen; F. Hawkes, White, and R. Hawkes; Eaton, Ross, Lamberton, Moody, and Barnes.

Millwall—Joyce; R. McLean and Stevenson; Prondicot, J. McLean, and Blythe; Bradbury, Calvey, Hunter, Jones, and Watkins.

Referee, Mr. J. T. Howcroft (Bolton).

Something like the old excitement was aroused by the match between Luton and Millwall on Saturday. In bygone days the fight was one for championship honours; now it was one to see which should escape the humiliation of being placed in the "bottom two." In old times, Millwall always had the ability or the luck to come out on top, and history unfortunately repeated itself in this respect on Saturday, for Luton had the misfortune to get the worst of a somewhat unsatisfactory game.

The weather, with the exception of one brief shower, was gloriously fine, and there were fully four thousand spectators. The ground, however, was in a bad condition owing to the heavy falls of rain during the week, but the visitors easily triumphed over this, whereas the Luton players often showed a disposition to get "stuck in the mud." Millwall won the toss and started towards the railway end with a slight wind in their favour.

The opening promised to be sensational, for in the first half-minute Lamberton was seen to be clear away, no one being within yards of him. Unfortunately, however, he lost his head and shot for goal long before he need have done, the consequence being that Joyce easily saved. It was a thousand pities, because a goal then would almost certainly have meant victory for the Luton team.

The visitors at once replied and very nearly succeeded in getting through, but McEwen cleared at the critical moment. Then Watkins put in a nice centre, from which Calvey shot just over the bar, and directly afterwards a corner was conceded but was not turned to account. Barnes receiving from Lamberton, transferred the play and finished up with a shot which Joyce could not get away at the first attempt, but the other forwards were not in attendance, and the opportunity was lost.

The homesters attacking again, White put across, and Ross headed in, the custodian only just saving. A foul against Luton gave the visitors another chance, and Lindsay had to save from Bradbury. For a few minutes the play was of a give-and-take character, and then Lamberton, getting a nice pass along the ground from Bob Hawkes, sent in a regular beauty, which was cleverly saved by Joyce.

Millwall responded on the right, and Calvey being presented with an opening, scored the first goal with a smart shot. Luton made spirited efforts to retrieve their fortune, but unluckily Lamberton's knee went out again, and though it was put back at once and he went on playing, there can be no doubt that loss of confidence robbed him of much of his effectiveness.

Still, Luton came very near equalising, Ross being responsible for a magnificent shot which seemed bound to score, but by some means or other, by good luck one would say rather than anything else, Joyce got to it and brought off a brilliant save. A moment later, however, one of the forwards headed against the bar, and then Moody raised the siege by heading wide. The Millwall defence was soon tested again, and Stevenson gave a corner to Eaton, who placed well, and Joyce fisted out from a header by Moody.

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A foul against McEwan at the other end almost brought about another disaster, for Turner completely missed the place-kick, and the situation was only just saved by a smart bit of work on the part of Fred Hawkes. Then, once more, play was taken on to Millwall territory, and a centre by Eaton was handled, apparently with full intent, by Stevenson well within the penalty area, but the shouts which at once went up for a penalty were unheeded.

Moody next had a splendid chance from a centre by Fred Hawkes, and then, at the other end, Turner again missed his kick and let in Jones, but the danger was averted by McEwan. After Lamberton had experienced hard lines in not being able to get in his shot when he stopped a centre from Ross right in front of goal, Millwall raced up the field, and after a short tussle with the backs, Hunter succeeded in scoring the visitors' second goal. The Luton halves were much at fault on this occasion, for they let the opposing forwards get clean away and made no attempt to follow them, the consequence being that the two backs found it impossible to hold the five forwards.

Half-time was called soon afterwards, and Millwall thus crossed over with a lead of two goals. They did not deserve it on the play, although their forwards had shown some very smart passing and were always more dangerous when near goal. Luton started the second half with an evident determination to recover their lost ground, and Eaton and Barnes were quickly in evidence. Then Joyce saved a hot shot from Lamberton, and Eaton next had a glorious chance from a long pass by Moody, but shot high over the bar.

Still, at this time Luton were all over their opponents and success could not be long delayed. Ross forced a corner, Eaton placed, and after an exciting tussle in front of goal, Barnes netted the ball. The spectators enthusiastically applauded, but a painful silence ensued when it was seen that the Millwall right back (McLean) was on the ground bleeding profusely from the head, the injury proving to be of such a character that he had to be carried into the dressing-room.

It appeared that in the melee McLean had been kicked by one of his own comrades, sustaining a very ugly wound on the forehead. Luckily, there was a doctor on the ground, and he at once attended to the injured man, the cut being so bad that several stitches had to be put in.

The loss of their right back seemed to be a serious matter for Millwall, but so far as the play was concerned, it turned out to be anything but that. Luton had been playing in such irresistible fashion during this half that, in the ordinary way, victory seemed to be well within their grasp, but the moment Millwall resorted to the one-back game, as they did when play was resumed, the Luton forwards were all at sea. They could not accommodate themselves to the situation at all, getting off-side and the fear of doing so seeming to take all the life out of their efforts.

Up to this point the game had been as bright and lively as could be wished, but subsequently it degenerated into a mere scramble, and everybody was glad when it was over. Luton could ill afford to lose, however, and this fact seemed to have an irritating effect on some of the spectators, who abused the referee in their very worst losing style.

The referee made mistakes, of course, but on the whole there was not much to complain of, and the behaviour of the crowd was calculated to do the Club a lot of injury. These officials go about and talk of their experiences, and no one can tell where the mischief stops. To add loss of temper to loss of matches is the worst thing possible. If we can't win, we ought at least to take our misfortunes in a sportsmanlike spirit.

Luton lost, and despite some amount of hard luck, I really think they deserved to lose. In the first half Moody and Barnes seemed to go about their work in very lackadaisical style, and though, taken altogether, Barnes was as conspicuous as any forward, I think with a little more dash he might have done much better. Ross and Eaton put much more life into their efforts, but Lamberton was evidently handicapped by fears for his knee.

Under the circumstances, the astonishing thing is that he plays as well as he does. Would it not be wise to give him a week or two's rest, and try Ross in centre, with either Bob or Fred Hawkes inside-right, and Prit-

chard among the halves? White was, perhaps, the best of the half-backs on Saturday, but, with the exception referred to, no fault could be found with either of the trio. McEwen was indefatigable at back, and Turner, apart from his two misses, also played well. Landsay had nothing difficult to do in goal, leaving out of account the two shots that took effect, and they gave him little or no chance.

The passing of the Millwall forwards was very smart, and the men went into it with all their hearts, while at back Stevenson played a great game. McLean also gave a good account of himself until he met with the accident. Joyce performed splendidly in goal and had not a little to do with the success of his side.

As luck would have it, while Luton were losing valuable points on their own ground, the other clubs who are struggling to escape the bottom positions were doing extremely well. Brentford, in fact, achieved a really remarkable victory at New Brompton, this being the home team's first defeat on their own pitch this season. Swindon and Queen's Park Rangers made a draw, and Watford beat Reading by 3 goals to 2.

The following is the League table up to date:

	Plyd.	Wn.	Dr.	Lt.	For.	Agst.	P.
Bristol Rovers	26	16	6	4	55	26	38
Reading	25	15	4	6	48	28	34
Southampton	25	14	6	5	43	29	34
Tottenham Hotspur.....	26	11	8	7	43	25	30
Portsmouth	25	13	3	9	49	41	29
Brighton and Hove.....	27	11	6	10	36	29	28
New Brompton.....	28	9	10	9	36	31	28
Northampton.....	25	11	5	9	38	37	27
Plymouth Arroye.....	25	11	4	10	40	32	26
Fulham	24	8	8	8	31	27	24
West Ham United	27	9	6	12	33	33	24
Millwall	28	9	6	13	27	40	24
Queen's Park Rangers...	26	8	7	11	35	40	23
Brentford	26	7	8	11	24	30	22
Swindon	28	9	4	15	34	62	22
Watford	28	9	8	11	24	28	21
Luton	27	9	3	15	35	46	21
Wellingborough	25	5	1	19	23	80	11