

FOOTBALL.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

ANOTHER RUNAWAY VICTORY.

LUTON v. MILLWALL.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result :

LUTON 6 goals.

MILLWALL 1 goal.

Teams : LUTON :

Platt

Blackett McCurdy

F. Hawkes White R. Hawkes

Warner McDonald Brown Pickering Barnes

O

Hunter Twigg Heaton Milson Bradbury

Blythe McLean Marshall

Stevenson Comrie

Dwelley

MILLWALL.

Referee, Mr. C. C. Fallowfield.

Millwall were without Joyce, Campbell, Jones and Watkins who are all on the sick list, but Luton were at full strength. Fully 7,000 people were present when Bob Hawkes won the toss and set Heaton to kick off against the wind. In keeping with their custom this season the homesters commenced with a brilliant dash and a shot by Barnes was cleverly negotiated by Dwelley. But Luton's energy was unflagging and the ball was kept in the vicinity of the Millwall goal, until Brown put the finisher upon an exciting scrimmage by tapping the ball into the net, only a minute or two from the start.

The crowd were at once in an excellent humour, and indeed it was entirely justified, seeing the consummate ease with which the first point had been obtained, although perhaps the backs hampered the goalie, and this was one of the chief reasons for the initial downfall of his charge. A dash by Millwall was nipped in the bud by McCurdy with a brilliant clearance, and the homesters at once proceeded to give their opponents as fine an exhibition of dashing as they could wish. A pretty movement by the forwards gave Brown possession but he unselfishly transferred to Warner who dashed through at express speed, deceived the backs, and banged the ball right into the opposite corner of the goal. Dwelley made a leap for the possession of the leather, but he entirely misjudged the speed at which it was travelling.

Forcing their way towards the other end by sheer persistence rather than by real, scientific effort, Marshall adopted Luton's tactics of shooting as soon as within range, but unfortunately for his side the shot which he directed at Platt's charge was too hard, even considering the long distance it had to travel, and sailed a yard or two above the cross-bar. Bob Hawkes' perfect tackling broke up the Millwall defence in fine style, but it was regrettable that a collision with an opponent before the game was much older should have so shaken Bob up as to have a disastrous effect upon his play in the later stages of the game.

Blackett had the misfortune to mis-kick on to Heaton, but the Docker was a second too slow before goal, and before he had decided what direction his shot should take Blackett was on his tracks, and had retrieved his mistake. The safe, certain tactics of the Luton backs kept Millwall well out of the charmed area around the Luton goal, and a curious tendency on the part of the visiting halves in feeding the forwards to place the ball too far ahead always resulted in the ball being instantly transferred to a safer distance from the Luton goal.

Now, however, a fine centre by Bradbury gave Twigg the first real opportunity of the game for he was so placed that with a quick movement he would have easily landed the ball in the net but his aim was uncertain and the ball travelled wide. Another attempt to lessen the margin was brought to a conclusion by a very neat clearance by McCurdy, and Warner, who was finding Stephenson an opponent worthy, even of his fleetness of foot, forced a corner which he himself placed in the goal-mouth. McDonald hit the bar with a fast shot and Warner returned. Dwelley only partially saved and appeared to take the ball over the line, but the referee refused to allow the point.

Luton were, however, in the mood for rapid scoring, and they made another dash, and a well placed free-kick by Blackett was popped inside the goal area by Brown. Thus after only about a quarter of an hour's play the light blues were leading by 3—0, and the run of the game augured a much more substantial margin, though Luton were in such irresistible fettle as they had been against Bristol Rovers only a few weeks back. But the Millwall supporters present were beginning to realise that the homesters were out for a field day and resigned themselves to a big defeat, consoling themselves with the reflection that there may be a time of reckoning when Luton pay the return visit to the Dock district.

to the Dock district. Some quick passing changed the venue of play and Dwelley saved a hard one from White. Brown received and made a dash towards goal just as the custodian left his charge, but Stevenson quickly took his absent comrade's place and saved another downfall of the Millwall colours for the present. Fred Hawkes pulled up an excellent attempt by Heaton, but Hunter obtained possession and shot—missing badly. Millwall forwards were playing a plucky game, but all their efforts had failed to find a weak spot in the Luton defence and Platt had not had to save up to this point, when he punched out a hot one by Hunter. Another one from the foot of the same player struck the fence at the back of the goal with a thud, and a minute later Platt saved a hard attempt by Heaton by throwing himself full length on the ground.

From now until the interval Millwall had more of the game than in the first stages. Luton had relaxed their efforts, but always held the upper hand, and the game was already safe. Blackett and McCurdy's defence, together with the effective tackling of the halves kept the visitors' forwards in check while the home front string snatched short spells of rest. At half-time the score still stood at 3—0 in Luton's favour.

The game resumed again, the homesters recommenced their dashing tactics, and their spirited play quickly obtained a corner for them, which was so well placed by Warner that it struck the opposite goal post and deceived many of the crowd into crying "goal." Finding their feet, Millwall attacked in promising fashion, and a stinging shot by Bradbury was capital saved by Platt. Play having been transferred to the other end, Luton were placed four goals to the good from a free-kick for foul taken by Bob Hawkes, and popped past Dwelley by Warner. Immediately afterwards Brown attempted to repeat the performance, but the custodian proved safe.

Twigg had to leave the field with a cut-knee, and on returning with leg bandaged, the referee carefully examined Fred Hawkes's boots for illegal studs, but found only mud. The game was restarted once more, and Luton found their feet. A free-kick for hands taken by Blackett was received by Barnes, who made the score up to 5—0. Clever work by Bradbury forced a resultless corner, and the homesters returned to the other half of the field where Pickering broke this spell of bad luck. Manœuvring his way through the Millwall defence he scored with a capital shot.

These successes improved Luton's play again for a time they pressed as at the start, but tiring they allowed their opponents more of the game and this lackadaisical spirit resulted in the notching of Millwall's only point. Platt conceded a corner to Twigg which was well-placed and after a half-minute of uncertainty the ball was landed in the net by a good shot of Hunter's. From now until the end neither side could claim much superiority and the game closed in semi-darkness with Luton leading by the substantial margin of 6—1.

It was a pleasure to everyone to see the hard-working Pickering score. He is a player who has experienced bad luck this season, and though his aim is not always as certain as it ought to be, yet he deserves to be high up on the list of scorers because of his persistence.

The gate on Saturday realised £159 12s.

The Southern League table now stands :—

—Goals—

	Pld.	Won	Lost	Drn.	For	Agst.	Pts.
LUTON	10	6	1	3	27	11	15
Tottenham Hotspur	9	6	1	2	16	5	14
Southampton	9	6	1	2	14	7	14
Fulham	10	4	1	5	11	5	13
Plymouth Argyle	10	5	3	2	13	8	12
Portsmouth	10	3	2	5	17	10	11
Bristol Rovers	10	5	4	1	17	15	11
Brentford	10	5	4	1	10	10	11
Millwall	10	4	4	2	15	12	10
Norwich City	10	4	4	2	15	12	10
Reading	10	4	5	1	12	13	9
Northampton	10	4	5	1	8	21	9
Watford	9	3	4	2	10	11	8
Queen's P'k Rangers	10	3	6	1	14	16	7
West Ham	10	3	7	0	9	14	6
New Brompton	10	2	6	2	6	28	6
Brighton	9	2	6	1	7	15	5
Swindon	10	1	6	3	7	16	5

12 matches were :—

A lot of attention has been focussed on the doings of Luton, and the crushing defeat which the Bedfordshire team administered to Millwall will add to the interest in the team. The club is one of the five original members of the S.L. still playing in the competition, and the success of the team is popular with the general public, who do not readily forget old favourites.

Last season the Luton executive passed through a very trying time, and at the end of the season had to apply for re-election to the League. Fortunately, they are not easily discouraged at Luton, and last season's failure only made the executive the more determined to get a good team together this year. In this they have succeeded, for, I imagine, the present team is the best that ever sported the Luton colours.

Freedom from accidents has helped to secure the splendid run of victories, and for six consecutive matches no change has been made in the team. As a matter of fact, only twelve players have been called on for the ten S.L. matches already played. In addition to figuring at the top of the table, the Lutonians have proved themselves the most dangerous scoring side in the League. Their total of 27 goals is 10 goals better than the next best aggregate.

Next Saturday Luton pay their annual visit to Tottenham, where they will no doubt attract a fine gate. The Tottenham people will be pleased to see McCurdy, Warner, and "Sandy" Brown once more, particularly as the three old 'Spurs have greatly distinguished themselves this season.

McW in the "Star" had some verse—and worse—regarding the Luton v. Millwall match. Said the Saturday night jester:—

The Luton lamb of a year ago, so timid and retiring, has this year arrogated unto itself the qualifications and prerogatives of the pushful Enid. It is butting, and ramming, and battering, and playing Old Harry with Southern pretenders. The last to feel dear Enid's tender touches is poor old George, the Millwall Lion, and, when I saw him scuttling back to his Thames-side home, there was terror in his eyes and patches of court-plaster on his attenuated form. Poor old George! And to think that a little earlier in the season we had hailed him the lion of old, roaring, raging, and tail-lashing, and going out on a Chamberlainesque tearing and bursting propaganda! Naughty Enid to tease the lion so! Bad Ballad? Certainly, but I give you fair warning that it's wicked. Who will be so bold as to physic the Millwall Lion with it? Well, let us get over our trouble.