

UNITED LEAGUE.

CRYSTAL PALACE v. LUTON TOWN.

GLAZIERS FOURTH WIN.

Played on the famous English Cup final ground on Saturday afternoon. Result:—

Crystal Palace		2goals.
Luton Town		1 goal.

Teams:—

PALACE.

Hewitson

Walker

Edwards

Cubberley

Birnie

Wilson

Wallace Harker Watkins Needham Roberts.

O

Barnes Pickering E. Dobson Macdonald Warner

H. Lane

Gallacher

F. Hawkes

McCurdy

Blackett

Platt

LUTON.

Referee, Mr. Neale.

The match was a very interesting one for several reasons. The Clubs had met three times previously this season, the Glaziers winning each time by the odd goal, one of these victories being a somewhat surprising one in the English Cup Competition. Keen rivalry, of course, exists between them, and it was anticipated that Luton would be all out for a win. The game was likely to be the deciding factor for the second position on the United League table. It was admitted everywhere that the Glaziers' record is so good that Strawplaiters would have to be on the top of their form to secure even one point. In Luton football enthusiasts expected nothing better than a defeat a week before the playing day, but when the constitution of the team became known no doubt whatever was expected by most as to the result.

The few visiting supporters found things very little to their liking at the start. Their favourites were certainly getting the worst of it in the first five minutes and when all reasonable time had been given for the whole team to settle down the defence was still called upon to do most of the work. The halves were chiefly at fault. Lane was far more weak than might have been expected, judging from his work in less important fixtures and Fred Hawkes seems not to be quite himself. He has not, apparently, recovered from his recent indisposition. Gallacher was the pick, though his game was certainly not his best. One of the chief faults was the complaint from which the team suffered at Millwall; they did not follow closely enough the progress of the ball.

in Luton's favour, and several fine openings to the Glaziers in the initial exchanges were wasted by purposeless shooting. In a momentary spell of pressure, Warner sent wide without getting into proper distance and Dobson received when ideally-placed but was unable to withstand the pressing attentions of Birnie. A splendid centre by Barnes, Luton's most prominent forward, was touched over by McDonald and just shaved the top of the bar in its flight, as the whistle sounded for off-side. A lucky escape for the Luton goal by Watkins missing his header was followed by a fine drive from the wings by Wallace which was saved in excellent style with a punch out by Platt. A centre by Warner found McDonald, on whom most of the work fell, ready and waiting, but Walker finished the movement with a sturdy clearance. McDonald found another opening and this time was able to let drive. He missed the target by a couple of inches.

The Palace worked their way down again and for a spell kept Luton caged in their own half. A centre by Wallace was touched forward by Watkins, but Platt found no difficulty with it. Just afterwards the goalie had to leave his charge to defeat the aim of Roberts to rush the ball through. Dobson, profiting by several penalties for off-side, obtained possession when in a perfectly legitimate position and transferred to Warner who was, however, powerless to prevent Edwards from robbing him. A minute later Luton enjoyed the unusual luxury of a melee in front of their opponents' goal, but the Glaziers defence were on their merits and gave them very little rope until their could safely relieve the pressure. Another attempt by the visiting forwards resulted in Pickering obtaining in front of goal but sending several yards in the wrong direction, when his best plan would have been to centre.

Almost immediately afterwards Pickering seemed to have matters in his own hands when Edwards was clever enough to clear with a clean kick over his head. The Luton defence had a deal of difficulty in getting away a centre by Wallace, but a rather weak attempt from the foot of Harker gave Platt but little trouble.

By a free-kick against Gallacher for handling the sphere was lifted up to the mouth of goal by Birnie. Watkins headed it towards the net and attempted to save it. He missed but by good luck the ball struck his body. A centre by Warner was turned towards the goal but Hewitson saved a difficult shot from close quarters in clever style. First blood was drawn by the Palace. Wallace eluded Lane and Blackett and placed in the middle where Needham was able to catch just right and place inside the post. A minute later a corner-kick at the other end by Barnes which had been landed in close quarters by Gallacher, resulted in Pickering placing between the posts. At half-time, the scores were level, one all.

In the second half Luton had more of the play. The first period had been decidedly in favour of the home team, but in the second matters began to settle themselves down more evenly. Though the Glaziers were still the better team it was only by a slight superiority. The Luton attack found their feet and gave the home team much more troubles, though it was quite equal to the strain as was shown by the fact that no shot managed to beat Hewitson, who had little enough to do all through the game. In the first few minutes the Palace gave the crowd an idea what to expect during this half. Roberts dashed away and put in a rasping shot which Platt was clever enough to save. Another centre by the same winger the custodian also deemed it advisable to transfer to a safer distance.

Roberts would not be denied and this time missed the post by a few inches. Mistakes spoilt Luton's first dribble and the next promising piece of work was nullified by Walker. This burst did not last and the Palace aggression made their presence felt at the other end of the field, but their play now lacked its former sting.

As it deteriorated the Luton forwards put more fire into their movements and the scales rose a little in their favour. Harker found Platt quite able to deal with a shot with a peculiar twist and Needham had even less good fortune, Blackett inducing him to sky the ball over the bar. Roberts let fly with a hot shot but the Luton custodian saved brilliantly and Harker placed beyond the posts on the rebound.

A clever dribble by Barnes looked like altering the position of affairs but the centre was rather a weak finish and Walker made short work of it. A pass outwards by Dobson again looked like giving Luton the lead but McDonald was too unselfish and his wingmate had no chance but to give up the ball to Edwards. McDonald shot a few inches too high and from a corner taken by the same player was punched out by Hewitson, and on being returned struck the body of one of the many players wedged between the posts. At the other end in the next minute, Harker found himself in a delightfully easy position, as the result of work by Roberts, and scored somewhat unexpectedly.

There were many who felt that this would simply wake up the Luton team who would repeat their performance of the first half, but these conjectures unhappily proved untrue. The Glaziers improved again and from now to the end they always more than held their own, though they were never very dangerous. Play on both sides was dull and uninteresting, more suitable for tennis than football, having its effect upon the players. The result was regarded as satisfactory by the enthusiastic home crowd.