

UNITED LEAGUE.

LUTON V. CRYSTAL PALACE

The Strawplaiters had met the Glaziers five times last season without succeeding in defeating them once, and in consequence considerable interest centred in Monday's fixture in the United League. It was also the match arranged for Fred White and Fred Hawkes' benefit. Therefore it was disappointing that there was not a larger gate, only about 2,000 turning up.

Luton tried Slater, of Middlesbrough, at centre-forward, in preference to "Sandy," and the youngster gave such a good account of himself, that one will be surprised if he does not figure in the team again shortly.

The teams were:—

Luton: Platt; Jackson and McCurdy; F. Hawkes, White, and R. Hawkes; Schofield, McDonald, Slater, Pickering, and Barnes.

Crystal Palace: Hewitson; Wills and Edwards; Astley, Ryan, and Innerd; Needham, Harker, Weston, Woodger and Roberts.

Referee, Mr. L. Bullmer, Northampton.

During the first minute of the game McDonald and Edwards came into collision, and both players temporarily left the field. The visitors, on restarting, endeavoured to get away, and Needham made a sprint on the wing, but McCurdy cleared easily. Jackson a moment later kept the visitors out. Then Hewitson had to fist out from Pickering. Edwards returned, but Luton continued to play with ten men until five minutes later McDonald returned. Harker threatened danger, but McCurdy once more came to the rescue.

Platt saved finely a header from Weston, and at the other end the visitors' goalkeeper was lucky in keeping Luton out. So far there was little in the game, Luton, if anything, having the advantage. The locals worked their way up, but Slater headed over a centre by Barnes. Needham made a dashing run down and centred to Roberts, who was in a good position, but Luton fortunately had their goal packed, and the visitors were kept out. A centre by Barnes at the other end was just saved by Hewitson in time. Once more Slater headed just over the bar, and a free enabled the Glaziers to take up the attack, but their effort was weak. Luton were now on the aggressive, and twice the visitors' citadel all but fell to Barnes and then to Pickering. Slater finished the attack by heading behind. Wills was forced to concede a corner to Pickering. At the other end Platt nearly made a "mess," being lucky in clearing after he had fumbled with the ball. But later he made two nice saves from Harker and from Needham. Then an unusual thing happened. Platt kicked off the goal line right to the other end of the field. The Palace were now attacking with spirit, but fortunately the homesters succeeded in keeping them out, and at half-time there was no score.

Resuming with ten men, Luton were soon after goals, and a foul taken by Jackson all but scored. Then the visitors had a look in. At the other end Luton experienced another piece of hard luck. Then Platt saved a fast drive from Weston. Harker had a pop, and Platt saved at the expense of a corner, which was beautifully placed, the custodian just fisting out as the ball came sailing under the bar. Changing the venue, Pickering put in a wretched shot. The visitors were not to be shaken off, however, and a moment later they scored through Roberts. McCurdy had made a faulty kick, but he saved the second time.

Towards the close there was only one team in it, and many were surprised that in the bad light the Palace did not increase their lead. Once more Luton missed several chances, and the Palace were easy winners. However, the absence of McDonald in the second moiety told a great deal against Luton, for had the full team been on the field, it is just possible a different complexion would have been given to the game.

Result: Crystal Palace, 1 goal; Luton nil.