

FOOTBALL NOTES AND NEWS.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON WIN AT BRISTOL.

At a time like the present when they were practically at the bottom of the League, the news that Luton won at Bristol on Saturday was very cheering indeed. To have held their own on foreign soil and brought one point back with them would have been entirely satisfactory; to come home with both points shows what a splendid performance it must have been of theirs. Is this but the forerunner of future successes, or is it merely a "flash in the pan," as they say? Time alone will tell.

One cannot call to mind when the Blues have beaten the Rovers before on the latter's ground; though we have reason to remember the huge score we piled up against them on the Ivy-road enclosure last season, when they returned to Bristol beaten by seven goals to one. At home, last season, the Rovers just beat us 3-2. But the Western City team is not now, to all appearances, as strong as it was season or two ago, though the most optimistic of us had not expected to meet with a win on Saturday.

Have we at last got the team we require? That is naturally the question exercising the mind of the Town supporters at present. There were some alterations made in the team on Saturday. Hogg took Jackson's place at back. Those who did not see the game, of course, cannot judge, but those who were present at Bristol give great credit to the old Middlesbrough man. Fitzpatrick was again tried, and he is almost certain now to be played a few times more, if indeed he will not find a more permanent position in the team. Warner having been suspended, Schofield took the outside position, with MacDonald as his partner. Brown again played at centre, and Barnes was in his usual position. Owing to a serious abscess of the leg, Fred White was not able to turn out, and Jones filled the gap with credit. As one has said before the merits and qualities of White and Jones are not in common—where one excels in one direction the other excels in another; but if the new comer would play less to the "gallery," there is no doubt he would be of greater advantage to his side. Otherwise, White will have to hold the position.

Brown has really come on form, and it is a long time since he played so fine a game as he did on Saturday. 'Sandy' and both wings worked admirably together, and the reason why more goals were not registered against the home side was because the Strawplaiters were so exceedingly anxious to win at all costs that they became very excited when close in goal, with the result that the inevitable happened, and a few nice chances were missed.

It must not, however, be imagined that the Rovers did not try their best. They kept Platt pretty busy, but the Luton custodian managed to keep his goal intact. All the same, one is afraid that was due more to good luck than to sound judgment. On one occasion the homesters seriously threatened the Luton goal. Platt failed to clear at first, but as luck had it, McCurdy managed to kick away from the goal line. Still, Luton deserved to win, if indeed they should not have obtained another goal or two.

Luton were first to press, and a capital centre by Schofield was nicely cleared by Hales. The visitors came again, but offside against Barnes sent them back. The Rovers' spell of attacking was short-lived, a fine run by Macdonald taking the ball into the home lines. This player centred accurately, and Brown, meeting the ball, steered into the net.

The Rovers played up strongly, and after clever combination had been shown by the whole front line, Young sent in a hard shot. Platt was on the spot, however, and saved grandly. At the other end Fitzpatrick tested Cartlidge, and then Appleby stopped Brown when the latter looked dangerous. Play was fast, with the Rovers slightly superior, but luck was against them, as after Clark had failed with a nice low shot, Young lifted the ball over the bar when well placed. Jarvie then missed turning a splendid centre from Walker to account and Platt subsequently saved from Savage. Although the home team did most of the pressing, their forwards shot poorly, while, on the other hand, Luton lost no chance of taking a shot at goal, and Cartlidge was always anxious. R. Hawkes and Fitzpatrick made good attempts.

After some give-and-take play, the Rovers gained a corner. This was well placed, but a good header by Young just went over. Platt then saved from Savage and Walker, and a quick run to the other end nearly finished in Cartlidge being beaten by R. Hawkes.

On resuming, Luton again started strongly, and were unlucky in not scoring. The Rovers took some time to settle down. The visitors spoiled many good chances by persistently getting offside, but the home side failed to take advantage of several free-kicks. Long kicking made the game somewhat unscientific, and there was a lack of interesting incidents. A free kick to Luton close in placed the home goal in danger, but Jones shot wide.

The Rovers then secured a similar concession at the other end, but their attempt to profit by it was equally poor. After Schofield had tested Cartlidge, the goalkeeper saved well from Barnes, and a run to the other end produced a corner. Walker atoned for some of his previous mistakes with a grand shot, which Platt saved. Platt was equally successful in dealing with one from Savage a little later. The Rovers could do nothing right when it came to shooting.

Result: Luton 1 goal, Bristol Rovers 0.