

FOOTBALL NOTES AND NEWS.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. SOUTHAMPTON.

THE "BLUES" HAVE HARD LUCK AT THE DELL.

Luton did not do so badly at Southampton on Saturday, when they met the Saints in the Southern League tourney; though it is a fact that they should have done a little better, especially when a penalty was very serviceable. As it was, Southampton just got home, winning the match by the only goal scored. Last season honours were equally divided—at Southampton Luton lost 2-1, but at home they completely routed the Saints, winning by the sensational score of five goals to love. However, Southampton do not possess quite so good a team this season as they did last; and from second position in the League—where they finished last April—they are at present ninth from the top, being exactly four "rungs" above ourselves.

Little interest was, however, taken in Saturday's match, the all-absorbing topic in local football circles at present being the cup-tie with Sunderland. Nevertheless, Luton were endeavouring to do their best at the Dell, despite a certain amount of weakness. In the first place they were without the almost invaluable services of R. Hawkes, whose place was taken by Jones; while Warrner was also absent, being unfit to play, and the vacancy on the wing was filled by Latheron. Fortunately Hogg was able to turn out.

The Saints were practically at their full strength, as will be seen from the following list:—Clawley; Eastham and Glover; Hogg, Robertson, and Gray; Jefferies, Hoskins, Harrison, Glen and Mouncher.

Both sides stubbornly fought for supremacy in the first half, in which Platt was particularly conspicuous, as showing the excellent defence on either side, and it was not until close on the finish of the first moiety that the Saints obtained the lead. But long before that Luton ought to have been a goal up, as Brown failed badly with a penalty kick, sending right into the goalkeeper's arms. Play in the second 45 minutes, it must be confessed, was mostly in favour of the home side, and nothing but the magnificent work of Platt in goal saved his side from a heavier defeat.

The Saints won the spin of the coin, and immediately took up the running, but although the forwards had numerous chances to shoot in the first few minutes, they were very ineffective. A shot from Glover at back gave Platt his first opportunity to save, and this he did with a bit to spare. Luton could not get away, however, until offside against Mouncher sent the Saints back. The change did not last long, Glen carrying play into the Luton lines again in his characteristic style. He tested Platt unsuccessfully, and a moment later the custodian had to clear from Gray.

Barnes transferred play, and, profiting by a miskick by Glover, Luton attacked strongly. A splendid shot by Brown almost took effect, Clawley saving after the ball had slipped through his hands. Glen was once more instrumental in transferring play to the other end, and from his pass Hoskins tested Platt, who saved cleverly. A rush on the home goal looked dangerous, and a point appeared certain, when Robertson brought Gittins down inside the penalty area. Brown took the resultant kick, but Clawley stopped the ball in magnificent style.

At the other end Glen sent in a raking shot, which Platt stopped at the expense of a corner. The shooting was much better at this stage of the game, but the saving of the goalkeepers was of the very highest standard. A corner to Luton was cleared, and Moucher went off in fine style, and sent across a centre, which led to a prolonged attack on the visitors' goal. Platt was tested from all quarters, but was unbeatable.

Some time elapsed before Luton raised the siege, and when Latheron had ended a nice run by centring squarely, Brown headed straight to Clawley, who cleared easily. The remainder of the first half was in favour of the Saints, and Glen scored just on half-time. This was the only score at the interval.

On re-starting the Saints pressed, and Moucher nearly added to his side's lead with a splendid shot that grazed the wrong side of the post. A foul on Harrison inside the penalty area was not observed by the referee, or was considered to be not severe enough for punishment. Barnes changed the run of the game, and, getting well away, beat the half-backs and bore in towards the goal. Hogg stopped him, but was forced to kick out for safety.

Luton were playing better now, and by nice passing got near the home goal frequently. A fairly good chance was spoilt through Barnes getting offside, and a similar infringement by Moucher wasted some good work of Eastham's. A fine run and shot by Jefferis deserved some reward, but Platt refused to be beaten. After Brown had shot wide when he had only Clawley to beat, Luton were seldom dangerous, and only got over the centre-line occasionally.

The last 13 minutes of the game were fought out in front of the Luton goal, and, although all the home forwards, assisted by the half-backs, shot at every opportunity, they failed to beat the strong defence set up by Platt, McCurdy, and Hogg. These three men undoubtedly saved the situation for Luton.

Result: Southampton, 1 goal; Luton, nil.