

Southern League.

LUTON v. SWINDON.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Luton	6 goals.
Swindon	2 goals.

Teams:—

Luton—Platt; Hogg and McCurdy; F. Hawkes, White, and Jones; Murphy, Gittins, Brown, Fitzpatrick, and Barnes.

Swindon—Hemmings; Gill and Lean; Tout, Bannister, and Beaumont; Birtles, Kidd, Smith, Wardrope, and Murphy.

Referee, Mr. C. C. Fallowfield.

Swindon are not a great drawing team, but the poor gate on Saturday—the poorest of this or last season—was chiefly accounted for by the state of the weather. There had been a steady rain all the morning, and although it held off in the afternoon, there was plenty of mud about.

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Before the game had been long in progress some of the players had such plentiful smears of mud on their football attire that they would not have made satisfactory subjects for a photographer. But, allowing for the conditions, the game was a good one, and the 2,500 spectators who watched the play were well satisfied with what they saw.

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Some of the Luton players had been so roughly treated at Sunderland in the week that it was said Luton would not be fully represented. As a matter of fact they were not, but Bob Hawkes was the only player to stand out, his place being taken by Jones. So Luton were not greatly handicapped when they went on the field to avenge the four goals to nil defeat sustained earlier in the season.

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Swindon won the toss, but Luton went away, and from a swinging pass by Brown, Murphy got in a dangerous-looking centre. The ball eventually went behind, and Swindon replied, but without effect. At their next attempt, however, they were successful. Birtles put in a couple of good centres, and Platt slipping in saving a shot, Smith easily netted.

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This early reverse came as a surprise to the home crowd, but the Luton players were far from being in the slough of despondency and worked hard to get on level terms again. Still, Swindon were dangerous now and then, and after Fitzpatrick had made a splendid run but placed behind, Murphy, the visiting outside-left, put across. Birtles tried to meet the ball, but missed, and so a fine chance went by.

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Luton returned to the attack, and Barnes was fouled by Tout close in. The penalty kick was taken by Jones, but the goalkeeper shot out his right foot and made a good clearance. At the other end the Swindon left wing became dangerous, the Luton defence getting rather mixed up, but eventually McCurdy cleared.

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The home team were having much more of the play than Swindon, but the forwards did not seem to be at all fortunate in their efforts. Once Sandy went over in the penalty area and it seemed that he was fouled, but the referee did not give a penalty. Still, the spectators could hardly grumble at this decision, for the Luton centre was offside when he started with the ball.

Following a corner kick, Fitzpatrick, Barnes, and Jones essayed shots, but there was an opponent in the way each time. A few minutes later a centre by Murphy touched one of the backs and, continuing its course, hit the post. Barnes reached the ball from the rebound and shot. The attempt was frustrated, and the outside-left was making a second effort when it appeared that he was fouled.

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Only a throw-in was granted, however. But this was turned to good account, Jones lifting the ball over to Gittins, who placed the teams on level terms. In the subsequent play Smith just failed to reach a centre by Murphy, and a miskick by McCurdy almost resulted in disaster, Platt having to run out some distance and then he had to give a corner.

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Just before the interval White was prominent with some forcing play, and five minutes after the resumption F. Hawkes showed up with a grand effort, taking the ball clean through the defence on his own, and enabling Fitzpatrick to score with ease. This lead was fully deserved on the play; indeed, no one could have grumbled if Luton had been two or three goals to the good when the teams changed ends.

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Once it seemed that Luton must score. A hard shot by White was cleared, Barnes shot, but someone was in the way, and Fitzpatrick ended the assault by sending wide. After this play was stopped on account of an injury to Wardrope, who resumed, and twenty minutes after the interval Smith scored Swindon's second goal from a breakaway, Platt having dropped the ball in saving from Murphy.

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Swindon had a fair share of the play after this, and Platt brought off a good save from Murphy, while a minute later Jones was prominent in defensive work. Gittins finished a fine run by calling upon Hemmings to save, and after Brown had tried a shot, Jones scored from about ten yards' range, the ball going in near the post.

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No one was more pleased than Jones, and it seemed that this would prove to be the winning goal, as only ten minutes remained for play. But the Luton players created a surprise, for after this they played with so much dash as to leave the Swindon defence almost standing still.

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The first of the trio of goals which were obtained before the finish was notched by Gittins as the result of a fine individual piece of work. While he was on the run it seemed that Brown might take the ball, but the centre-forward, as unselfish as ever, back-heeled to Gittins, with the result already stated.

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No. 5 was credited to Murphy, who dashed in with the ball from the wing and scored with a swift shot. Barnes had a chance to bring off a similar performance, but he kicked the ball rather too far before drawing nearer to the centre and it went behind. At the next attempt he did the right thing in transferring to Fitzpatrick, whose centre was taken full advantage of by Brown.

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Luton practically monopolised the play dur-

ing the last ten minutes, and the shots which scored gave Hemmings no chance. Once Birtles was cleverly robbed by McCurdy, but it was a much nearer thing when Fitzpatrick tested Hemmings with the last shot of the match. The goalkeeper conceded a corner, but there was not time for it to be taken before the referee blew his whistle for the last time.

Taking the game all through the win was deserved, although for some time after they had equalised, Swindon seemed quite as likely as Luton to get the points. Chief credit for the win went to Gittins, for in addition to scoring two of the goals, he was the chief factor in the aggressive movements which led to two or three of the others being obtained. He did some capital work in conjunction with Brown, and was really the best forward on the field.

Murphy showed improved form, but the heavy going prevented the left-wingers from being quite so effective as usual. The halves were in fine form, F. Hawkes again being the pick, although White and Jones put in any amount of useful work. Hogg was always on hand when wanted, and he had a good partner in McCurdy.

The visitors are a well-balanced team, and their extreme wing men were in good form on Saturday. Like most teams they missed some promising chances, but it is safe to say that had the ground been hard and the ball dry, Platt would have prevented both of the goals which were allowed to count.