

FOOTBALL NOTES AND NEWS.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. MILLWALL.

The "Dockers," who at the present moment are seventh from the bottom of the Southern League, succeeded in making a draw at Luton on Saturday. The Millwall Lion has an aggravating habit of rousing up now and then, and there were a few who thought Saturday might be one of those occasions; but it was found that all these fears were groundless. Saturday's match was not much of a game, and the visitors unfortunately, were inclined to shady tactics, some of the Luton players getting more kicks than ha'pence.

Though the visitors succeeded in effecting a draw, Luton had a splendid opportunity of obtaining the maximum points. But a team which throws its opportunities away like Luton did on Saturday—when Barnes missed a couple of the easiest chances imaginable, coupled with the fact that a penalty was also missed—cannot expect much sympathy. However, the home supporters, taking all things into consideration, were probably satisfied with dividing the honours.

There was a fairly good gate—about 5,000—and though the weather was boisterous, it did not interfere much with the game. When Millwall were the first to score through Hunter, about half-an-hour from the start, there was no fear of the "Lions" being beaten by the huge score of 6-1, as was the result of their visit to Strawopolis last season. It was rather a soft goal, but was sufficient to give Millwall the lead.

Seeing that "Bob" won the spin, one could not understand Millwall doing most of the pressing in the first moiety; but as a matter of fact the Luton skipper had committed an error of judgment, as the home players had to contend with the vagaries of a strong wind. It was not long, however, before Luton equalised, and they did so by a rare fluke. During one of their momentary rushes, the home forwards gave Stevenson and his partner some trouble. Brown was pressing hotly on the former, when he called Joyce to come out. The custodian did so, and gave the ball one of those terrible kicks of his; but the leather cannoned off "Sandy," and rolled into the net. It was extremely hard luck for Joyce, whose skill in goal is always watched with sympathetic pleasure by a Luton crowd. Though it was all right for his side, it was also rough on the home centre-forward—that poor ear of his must have "sung" for many an hour afterwards.

In the second half, Luton had most of the play, and once had a chance of winning. It was when a penalty was given against Stevenson for handling in the fatal area. Brown was again on the heels of the Millwall back, when the latter was penalised for knocking the ball down with his hands. To a good many it appeared as if the back punched the ball down with his head, and not with his hands, but notwithstanding Millwall's appeals, Luton were given a penalty. But "Bob" struck the upright, and Millwall breathed again.

A greater weakness than usual was noticeable amongst the home forwards. With the exception of Brown, the other men seemed to be passengers. Barnes was terribly off colour; Fitzpatrick will hang on to the ball too long; Gittins, whose continued presence in the team is unaccountable to some, was "as weak as water"; and once more Warner lacked dash. The halves scarcely ever require a comment, and the backs—Hogg again took the field—were always sure; while Platt had practically nothing to do during three quarters of the game.

Coming to details, it may be said that only Dean gave much trouble to Luton's backs. The Millwall right man raced away, and Bob Hawkes conceded a corner, which was cleared away. The visitors came again, however, but wild shooting prevented them scoring. Some nice combination by Luton's front string made things look lively, and Fitzpatrick got the ball past Joyce, but the whistle had already gone for offside.

Millwall were having the best of the game still, and from one of their excursions, Twigg was nicely placed. Hogg hustled into him, and both fell. Before either could get up, Hunter had flashed the ball into the net, thus putting on a point for Millwall. This put Luton on their mettle, and they carried on a series of rushes which disconcerted the visiting defence not a little. Joyce was out of luck when the equaliser came. He punted the ball on to Brown's head, from whence it rebounded into goal, and presented Luton with rather a cheap point.

Play now became faster, and the halves on each side were almost run off their legs. Dean once more beat his half and the back, but the middle-kick went a-begging, and Hogg cleared. Half-time came with the scores 1 all.

Within a minute after resuming, Bob Hawkes received a nasty knock in the eye, and retired temporarily. Luton pressed, and Gittins had two splendid shots at goal, both being smartly saved by Joyce. Millwall retaliated, and forced a fruitless corner, and then followed with a smart attack, in which Milsom got close in with a fine ground shot. A clever run by Gittins was wasted by Barnes shooting high over the bar from the centre. Barnes was again at fault after he worked through cleverly, his final shot being very badly judged.

End to end play was the rule for a time. Dean was always prominent in the Millwall attacks, and in defence Frost was wonderfully clever. Some long kicking was then indulged in, and both sides played moderately for a time. Brown came near the mark after getting into a nice position, but he was fouled while in the act of shooting, and a loud appeal for a penalty was ignored. Luton attacked strongly towards the close, and after Barnes had just missed, a penalty kick was given against the visitors. Bob Hawkes took the kick, but missed the mark.

Result: Luton, one goal; Millwall, one.