

LUTON DRAW AT NORTHAMPTON.

Those who visited Northampton on Monday were satisfied with the exhibition between the Cobblers and the representatives of Strawopolis. Taken all through it was a fair

game, and Lutonians must surely have been pleased with a goalless draw.

Only once in recent years has Northampton got the better of Luton, and on that occasion the final score was 2-1 in favour of our opponents. Again this year, Northampton are well at the bottom of the League, and must now remain there for this season. The matches with Northampton at the two holiday seasons of the year mutually benefit both clubs, and therefore Lutonians can but hope to see Northampton kept in the League.

By Monday night Northampton had played 33 matches, or one less than Luton, of which they have only won four, and lost 20, the remaining 9 being drawn; and while they have scored 25 goals, they have had 74 scored against them.

Owing to the fact that Northampton were due to play at Luton in the Southern League the following day—the fixture on Boxing Day having been played as a friendly in consequence of a heavy fall of snow — it was thought that the Northampton excursion would not be so well patronised this year; but the crowds at the stations seemed every whit as large as on former occasions, and about 10,000 people must have witnessed the match.

Both teams were constituted the same as on the Saturday previous. Luton, fresh with laurels gained over Portsmouth, took the field with confidence. Though the game was interesting to watch, there were only two or three points calling for special mention. These were the occasions when it was a “near thing” for Billy Barnes, or when “Sandy” had hard luck, or when the Northampton centre had a decent chance but failed badly.

Measured by the standard of Saturday's game, one would naturally come to the conclusion that Luton were not “playing the game”; but all the same in the first half Luton had decidedly the best of matters, though it was the more even half of the two. The first 45 minutes was very keenly contested, and while the Luton defence was impregnable, Northampton's back division also nobly met the attack of their opponents' forwards. Platt had not a great deal to do, while the Northampton custodian never made a mistake, though he was a little lucky in keeping out shots from the Luton front line.

After resuming, Luton appeared to fall away for a time. While the two backs and the halves were always doing their best, the forwards were not making much headway against the Northampton trio. And seeing this weakness, the Cobblers were not slow to take advantage of it. All at once their quintette came forward, and supported by the second line, made desperate efforts to obtain the lead; indeed, they were “all over” Luton for a time; but during this ordeal the visiting backs, grandly seconded by Platt, who was in rare form, succeeded in keeping their goal intact. This effort took the “steam” out of Northampton, and for a time play ruled more even. There was also a spasmodic effort at the close, but the teams had to be content with sharing the points.

Result: Luton 0, Northampton 0.