

Football Notes and News.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

SOUTHAMPTON v. LUTON.

Luton opened their season with a match against Southampton on Monday, and were beaten by the odd goal, the final result being 2-1 in favour of the Saints. That result is nothing to be discouraged about; in playing on foreign soil the "Blues" had the disadvantage, and while their team is also largely a new team, especially in regard to the attacking line, to expect Luton to win down in Hampshire just at present was scarcely reasonable.

Although the goal which the visitors obtained was from a penalty—and there are a good many who don't think a great deal of penalty goals—their performance was not a bad one. The left forward wing made a good impression, and the Saints did not have all the play, by any means. Indeed, if anything, the men from Strawopolis had as much of the game as their opponents, but Southampton managed to have just a little luck on their side, and so with that advantage, and smart play as well, they secured victory.

A word or two about the game. Bob Hawkes was unable to travel South, and Jones was selected to fill the vacancy, a position which many consider he is better able to take than that of centre-half. "Sandy" played centre-forward; Walders and Hall constituted the right wing, and Rankin and Pearson, the left; White and F. Hawkes assisted Jones, while Hogg and McCurdy were at back, with Platt in goal.

Hot weather being anticipated, the match did not commence until 5.15, when the crowd numbered a little over 2,000. McCurdy won the toss for Luton, and Harrison kicked off in a drizzling rain. After a foul had been given against White, the locals got away, and Mouncher struck the upright with a long shot; before Platt could clear his lines, Lewis, who stood in a good position, easily placed in the net, and Southampton were one up during the early stages of the game.

This unexpected success cheered the Saints, but it did not discourage Luton. The ball soon became slippery. Burrows, the home custodian, was very fortunate in saving his charge on one occasion. Brown shot from close range, and the leather slipped out of the goalkeeper's hands, but he quickly recovered, and the ball was rather easily got away. Harrison had perhaps a little ill-luck in not being successful with a "header" from Bainbridge. A spell of give-and-take play followed, Luton having perhaps the best of the game; but the Saints' defence took good care not to allow their opponents to come into too close proximity. Eventually the home team went away, and made a determined attack on Luton's citadel, during which Platt distinguished himself. Rankin at the other end spoiled a good effort by Brown and Pearson, the outside man shooting very wide. Whenever they got away, Southampton were dangerous, while on the other hand Luton were half-way through the first moiety before their forwards settled down. Hogg played a fine game at back, and this, coupled with Platt's brilliant saves, helped materially to keep down the Southampton score. Bainbridge was particularly aggressive, and gave McCurdy a very anxious time.

Nothing of a tangible nature, however, further resulted, and the teams crossed over with the locals leading by the one goal of the match.

Resuming, both sides went at it with some dash. Luton were now doing much better, and were trying their utmost to draw level. A long shot from Rankin grazed the bar; but a halt was put to Luton's attack by a foul against Jones, who was cautioned by the referee. Harrison again came near to heading by Platt, but the Luton custodian was impreg-

nable. Later Rankin had hard luck, his shot just hitting the upright—on the wrong side.

The visitors were now threatening in real earnest. Walders failed to get through, and later Brown passed to Pearson. Eastham, the home right back, seeing the danger, foolishly handled in the fatal area. The usual penalty was awarded, and Jones had no difficulty in beating Burrows, 20 minutes from the re-start.

Play proceeded in a ding-dong fashion, there being little to choose between the sides. Luton's heavy team, however, did not show to advantage on the slippery ground, while the Southampton men, on the other hand, being mostly all of lighter build, were quicker on the ball. Ten minutes from the finish Southampton came "sailing" along, and Jefferies the inside left, lowered Platt's colours. The match was decided. During the remaining stages of the game Luton did not have a chance, and they left the field having tasted the firstfruits of defeat. But Southampton are playing on the Ivy-road ground on Saturday week, the 14th, and the odds are that the Blues will get their own back.