

# FOOTBALL.

## SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

### LUTON TOWN v. CRYSTAL PALACE.

#### BLUES IN SPARKLING FORM.

#### GLAZIERS CATCH IT HOT.

At last! After so many failures this season, it is a keen pleasure to be able to record a wide margined, well-deserved victory last Saturday. Luton Town were in tip-top form, and Crystal Palace the sufferers. They were out-played and out-pointed, and the following result does not flatter the superiority of the winners:—

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| LUTON.         | 4 |
| CRYSTAL PALACE | 0 |

Success came almost entirely as the result of a risky experiment on the part of the town directors in choosing Rankin for the most difficult of all positions, centre forward, but the experiment was as productive of good as its daring entitled it to be. The forwards played very effectively, and it was difficult at times to realise that four out of the five were the same men as have given lethargic displays in the past. The crowd was delighted, and the home elevens followed the match out, instead of following the practice to which they have become accustomed, of leaving the ground 15 minutes before the finish. When they did file through the gates their countenances wore pleasant looks, unlike the grim sourness displayed on previous occasions.

Although the Palace did not score, it must not be imagined that they played at all like a beaten team. The pluck of the Glaziers has won them laurels in the past, and their bustling tactics were relinquished when they found the score was going against them. Indeed, they were good value for a goal, but the star performer, "Lady" Woodger, had no chance to shine. "Bob" Hawkes stuck to him, and a great distance never separated the pair. The game had been in progress only a short time before the the Luton captain had his measure, and after that Woodger took very little part in the play.

Platt would doubtless have been more pleased to have more work to do, to show his appreciation of returning to the first eleven, but he had a fair amount to occupy his attention, and performed it to everyone's satisfaction. McCurdy was safe, but not so sure as he sometimes is. For "Punch" Dimmock one can have nothing but praise. He possesses the coolness and much of the skill of a professional of long experience. It speaks volumes for his worth when we say that even Hogg has seldom been missed during his unfortunate indisposition. Dimmock is a lad with a future, and the promoters of the Luton Tradesmen's League and Cup Competition have every reason to be proud of having been the cause of his discovery—if that term is permissible.

The half-back trio were especially effective, and the untiring Jones played one of the games of his life. White would do well to watch a fault, that of inaccurate passing to his comrades in the line in front of him. "Bob" Hawkes was the same Bob as usual. His dainty footwork and keen wits stood his side in good stead, as he was always where he was wanted. Among the attacking five, the palm must be awarded to Rankin, who showed the crowd his abilities as he has never shown them before. The place he filled so well is one in which only a few footballers of real merit can shine, and that he did so in his first attempt proves him to be a skilful player. He fed his inside men smart, and kept the wings on the move in a style that gave the crowd every satisfaction.

With Pearson fit—in the opinion of the well-known bone-setter, Mr. H. A. Barker—the directors may have some difficulty in choosing the man to be the pivot of the front rank, but the healthy rivalry set up should result in nothing but good to the club. Rigate showed his merits conclusively but he is too anxious to score himself, and thereby spoils good chances that might be turned to account from a good centre. Fred Hawkes is developing into a very useful inside, and Moody has quite justified his engagement by the club. His clever heading is of the greatest assistance to his side, while Walders and he makes a very useful wing. A factor in the success of the home side was the very noticeable weakness of the right back, Walker, who mis-kicked several times, and was very uncertain when flurried.

Mr. A. Shallcross, of Leek, held the whistle, and at the start Mr. G. Wistow Walker was on the line, pending the arrival of one of the appointed officials, who was delayed by the fatal collision at West Hampstead.

The teams lined up as under:—

## LUTON.

Platt

McCurdy

Dimmock

R. Hawkes

White

Jones

Rigate

F. Hawkes

Rankin

Moody

Walders



Davies

Woodger

Owens

Swann

Roberts

Brearley

Ryan

Innerd

Edwards

Walker

Hall

## CRYSTAL PALACE.

Rankin set the ball on the move, and on Luton's first attack the centre forward had the misfortune to lose control of the sphere when an opening presented itself. Walker at once began to show weakness, and profiting by a miss of his Moody was unfortunate to have a smart middle headed behind by Edwards. Moody distinguished himself again by getting past his opponents alone, but the goalie was speedier than he and averted the danger. After this the Palace caught the home halves momentarily napping, and Davies was allowed to get into his stride, the only result, however, being a shot from the wing that Platt was quite prepared for.

Corners against the Glaziers were very frequent, and flag kicks in this half numbered seven. After the Luton goalie had saved a hard shot from Swann a good centre by Rigate beat Rankin because of its pace, and another opening went astray. Nearly 15 minutes from the start the Town were rewarded by a smartly-obtained goal by Moody, registered from a neat middle of Rigate's. The game had only just been re-started when the Palace had a fortunate escape. A flag kick from the foot of Rigate struck the head of Jones, who was in the goal mouth, but the ball bounced backward instead of forward. Hall was also lucky to get away a centre by Walders with Rankin on top of him.

The homesters pressed almost continuously, and the Crystal Palace defence was kept in a state of perpetual anxiety that resulted in many corners. From one of these, ten minutes from the interval, Moody's head put on the finishing touch to Walders' kick, and he found the net for a second time. Just before the whistle sounded for the usual few minutes' rest, Hall found himself in difficulties. He had possession of the ball, and received the robust attentions of Rankin. It was remarkable that no point was scored, but the unhappy custodian received relief by the referee awarding a free kick for a foul. The teams changed over with Luton leading by 2—0.

Very few minutes elapsed after the resumption before Crystal Palace were engaged upon a stiff struggle to get on a more equal footing, and Platt tipped over the bar a very good attempt to score from the foot of Woodger. From the corner kick the ball struck Owens on the side of the head with a force that rendered him incapable of playing for a couple of minutes. The Glaziers adopted rushing tactics, but could not find a weak spot in the home defence. When they had worn their energies down, the tide turned, and the Town returned the compliment by attacking, but with more success.

Hall was almost defeated by a shot from Fred Hawkes, which he dropped. Rankin rushed, but the custodian was just able to clear. A minute later, however, he had to acknowledge himself beaten. A stiff shot by Rankin struck Walker, and then travelled straight into the net, leaving Hall without the slightest chance of saving. Moody should have converted a centre by Rigate, but sent behind, and the Palace then woke up to the fact that a desperate remedy was necessary to stand any prospect of success. Therefore, for a while they adopted the one-back principle and aroused the anger of the crowd. The Glaziers suffered hard luck when Swann hit the post from a corner, but at the other end Rankin was equally unfortunate in shaving the cross-bar with a shot that deserved a better fate. An almost similar experience awaited Rigate, whose attempt the custodian touched over the top of the goal. The last point of the match was notched five minutes from the finish, as the result of a deliberate foul within a few yards committed by Edwards upon Rigate. The resultant penalty was safe in the hands of Jones, who easily placed the leather in the net. Another narrow escape of Hall brought the game to a conclusion. The goalkeeper stopped a shot by Walders while lying full length upon the ground. Fred Hawkes dashed for the ball, and with an open goal kicked behind. Luton thus won on their merits by 4—0.

GOALIE.