

Football Notes and News.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. CRYSTAL PALACE.

ANOTHER FINE WIN FOR THE BLUES.

Luton completely surprised the five thousand spectators who witnessed Saturday's match on the Ivy-road enclosure by beating the Crystal Palace to the tune of 4-0. For the Straw-plaiters the London team have always been a hard nut to crack—we can recollect when they beat us several times in a season, and when they "put our light out" in the English Cup competition; but last season we held our own, and now the fortunes of Luton seem to have turned, and after having easily accounted for the Spurs, their win over the Palace comes as very cheering indeed. Saturday's victory enabled us to pass Portsmouth in the League table, while Brighton, who are just above us, are a point in front, but Brighton have a match in hand. Saturday's win also helped the goal average of the Blues, as we have now 10 goals for and 17 against.

It will be remembered that last season, at Luton, the Town won by the odd goal, the final score being 2-1 in favour of the Blues, while at the Palace the Glaziers lost 1-0. However, on Saturday, with a re-constructed forward line, Luton did remarkably well. Rankin, who, on the wing, had generally proved a failure, was, at his own request, given an opportunity at centre; and it was satisfactory to note that in that position he came off "trumps." The pivot of the front rank worked with excellent precision; with the exception of Pearson, Rankin has given us the best display at centre-forward this season. His passes were accurate and well-judged, and the wings, particularly the right one, took full advantage of the openings.

Fred Hawkes, as before, put spirit in the game, and Moody was in as fine form as he has ever shown. Rigate's centres were a feature. On the other wing Walders, though very fast, was a little weak, though he always gave Walker, the Palace right back, plenty to do. Jones played the game of his life, and White was in tip-top form, assisting McCurdy, when in straits, time after time. "Bob" did fairly well, but his display was much below his usual. Dimmock at back gave further promise of developing into a really first-class player, and despite the fact that he had one or two "flukes" on Saturday afternoon, his exhibition was praiseworthy. Platt again found himself back in the first team, and played a really good game. He stopped a few hot shots, but in the second half he had little to do.

Luton ought to have won by at least half-a-dozen goals. True Walker presented them with No. 3, but when Hall, the visiting custodian, was sprawling on the ground, Fred Hawkes ought easily to have found the net. It was the worst individual error of the match. The Palace were never really dangerous, and only once did they experience hard luck. That was when Swann, the inside right, headed the ball against the upright, from a corner kick. The Glaziers have a weak defence, and are by no means the team of a couple of seasons ago.

A few lines now as to Saturday's game. Winning the toss, and having the advantage of a strong wind, the Palace were the first to attack, but Luton soon drove the visitors back, and after Rigate had shot over the bar, Hall made a very good save from Moody, whilst from a shot by the same player he had to give a corner. Moody opened the score for Luton, meeting a centre from Rigate and putting the ball in the net with a very fast shot. The home side were doing all the offensive work, a further score being always likely. Eventually Moody again obliged, using his head this time, and Luton kept on pressing till half-time.

The Palace began the second half well, and from a hot attack Woodger had a good chance to open the scoring, but he sent behind tamely. Rigate was well served with a pass by R. Hawkes, and made no use of it, sending the ball behind after he had run well up; he made a similar poor attempt when the free kick had provided him with a chance of scoring. Meanwhile, F. Hawkes had sent in a good shot which Hall saved, and the Palace had a brief trip to the other end of the ground, where Davis shot by the posts. A trip by McCurdy on Davis gave the Palace a chance, but Dimmock retrieved the mistake of his partner.

Further misfortunes were in store for the Londoners, F. Hawkes gave a good pass to Rigate, and the latter added a third goal with a shot which hit Walker, the ball rebounding through the posts. Luton should have scored again a few minutes later, but an open goal was missed, and the Palace came away and gained a corner. This was well placed, and Swann hit the post with a clinking shot. Soon after Edwards fouled Rigate within the penalty area, and Jones did the needful, giving Hall no chance. Result:—

Luton, 4 goals; Crystal Palace, 0.