

WESTERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. BRISTOL ROVERS.

Only about a thousand spectators turned out to witness Monday's Western League match, when Luton had Bristol Rovers for opponents. At times the match was of a "scraggy" character, but for all that there were many points of interest about it; indeed at times play was quite exciting, and the game was certainly worth following. There were two alterations in the local team. Jones stood down, Connie Watkins being tried in the half-line. Pearson also played again, in the inside position to Rankin, who was again at centre forward. Latheron figured, too, in the team, and had Moody for partner.

The game opened tolerably fast, but the Blues appeared to have slightly the better of it. The weakness lay in the half line, Watkins being naturally very much out of his element in that respect. But White especially, and Fred Hawkes, too, helped the forwards all they could, and when danger threatened the home citadel, White was generally there. McCurdy was in his usual safe form, but Dimmock was hard pressed at times. However, it is really surprising how well the local back has come off for Luton, and though he may get off through an occasional fluke, he has the making of a fine footballer.

Play was really ding-dong for the first half-hour; but the Blues were the more dangerous in front of goal. The Rovers' forwards showed fairly good combination, but the defence against them was too strong. Pearson was really not in fit condition to play; had he been "sound," Luton must have been a couple of goals up. Bristol opened the score after

40 minutes, play, and it was rather galling to the home supporters to see Platt give them the point. Gerrish put in a rather tame shot, which Platt had no difficulty in holding. None of the forwards rushed up, seeing the goalkeeper held the ball in his hands. It seemed as if Platt held the ball for nearly a minute, and then dropped it, with the result that the leather rolled into the net, and the Rovers were consequently one goal up. It was a bad bit of business. That seems to be Platt's real weakness; he is absolutely brilliant when he is being "peppered," but often fails to clear the "softest" shots.

The teams crossed over with the Rovers leading by the odd goal. Though they now had the breeze at their backs, the Blues did not show such form as they did in the first 45 minutes, and there were frequent calls to "Play up, Luton." It was evident, too, that the Westerners, having had the game so far given them, contented themselves by playing on the defensive. They kicked the ball—no matter where—and once or twice got out of a tight corner with the aid of sheer luck. When everybody was prepared to see Luton finish second best, Fred Hawkes sent in a hot cross shot; the ball passed several players, and found the net, five minutes to time. Bristol then took up the attack, but it was too late.

Result: Luton, 1 goal; Bristol Rovers, 1.