

Football Notes and News.

Southern League.

LUTON v. MILLWALL.

THE BLUES EFFECT A LUCKY WIN.

Probably the general verdict in respect of Saturday's match between Luton and Millwall was that the Blues were distinctly lucky in leaving the field with the maximum two points. Some might be of opinion that Luton did not even deserve to draw; but taking the performance on the whole Millwall certainly deserved to share the points. Millwall and Luton were amongst the first teams to constitute the Southern League, and one can quickly bring to mind many occasions when there has been a big tussle between them. They have always been keen rivals, and there is always much interest displayed in the matches between Luton and Millwall. So in one sense it was disappointing not to see a larger attendance on the Ivy-road enclosure on Saturday afternoon, when not more than about five thousand were present.

It was a keenly fought game—one of the old style, where there was quite as much dash as combination, and where science did not always count; and despite the heavy nature of the ground, the pace was fast throughout. The teams were:—Luton: Platt; Hogg, Dimmock; Jones, White, R. Hawkes; Rigate, F. Hawkes, Pearson, Moody and Walders. Millwall: Joyce; Shreeve, Sutherland; Frost, Comrie, Blythe; Hunter, Milsom, Twigg, Jones, and Johnson.

It will be seen that while Luton were without McCurdy, Millwall were minus Stevenson, but, on paper, the latter had a strong front line, and were expected to easily account for the home defence. One recalled to mind that last season Millwall obtained three points out of Luton. On Saturday afternoon Luton set the pace, and the game was quite young when Fred Hawkes opened the score for them. It was rather a lucky goal, however. "Tiny" Joyce had stopped the shot, but failed to clear. Hawkes's second goal, obtained a quarter of an hour later, though a magnificent shot, was also a bit lucky. The ball struck the upright, and bounded out to Hawkes, who, of course, had no difficulty in finding the net.

Luton had decidedly the best of the first half, though Pearson was weak at centre, and Walders was also very ineffective. The heavy ground, too, soon laid "Bob" up. Frost and White were the two most strenuous players on the field. "Tiny" was a veritable marvel in goal, and saved some miraculous shots. So did Platt, his saves from Hunter being brilliant. Indeed the Millwall outside right had hard luck in not beating the home custodian. However, Twigg, Millwall's tricky centre-forward, got away, and succeeded in reducing the lead. Platt ought certainly to have saved the shot, as it was a soft affair. The visitors, nevertheless, deserved the point.

With the exception of a chance break-away in the second half, Millwall had practically all the play; and an illustration was afforded of how one team can hem in another, send in countless shots, and yet not score. Some of the "Dockers'" attempts, however, were weak and ill-judged, but for all that their luck was dead out. How Platt saved from Hunter once was a marvel. Dimmock, too, was a bit lucky in getting out of one or two nasty "corners," but taken all through, his performance on Saturday was very creditable. Hogg, finding that Johnson was a bit too good for him, started fouling early, and the referee cautioned the home back. The game was finished in semi-darkness, during which Luton broke away, and Moody beat Joyce. The score—3-1—did not represent the play, but it makes up for the "hard lines" Luton have had once or twice this season.

Walders and F. Hawkes narrowly missed finding the target, forcing a couple of corners between them, and then the Millwall outside forwards became prominent, but their efforts were frustrated by Dimmock and Platt, who brough off a really grand save from Hunter.

The last incident of note before the interval was an attempt by Twigg, who got away on his own. Hogg headed out, and one of the half-backs cleared. There were many similar situations in the second half, and time after time it seemed that Millwall must score. They were certainly the better team in the latter moiety.

On one occasion when Platt was saving from the Millwall outside-left, the ball curled up out of his hands, but he caught it again. Luton then got away, Walders preventing the right back from getting in his kick, and passing to Rigate, who forced a corner.

A minute later the Luton outside-right put across a centre, which Joyce met with his right foot. It was well for his side that he did, for if he had attempted to gather the ball in all probability F. Hawkes would have got in a kick and thus performed the hat trick.

Frost almost scored with a free kick, a fast low shot travelling by the post. Then Rigate accepted a pass by Pearson, and tried to get at close quarters so as to make a goal practically certain, but before he got in what was to be his final kick, Shreeve rushed across and cleared in brilliant fashion, albeit the ball went out of play.

As the time wore on, chief interest centred in the forward play of the visitors. Once after Luton had taken a corner, Johnson got away nicely, but Hogg prevented him from troubling Platt by kicking behind. After this Platt did well to save from Johnson, and one of the best saves of the match was brought off a minute later, when the Luton custodian saved a hard shot from the inside-right, who seemed certain to score.

Half-an-hour from the finish a mist came over the ground and gradually developed into a fog. It became increasingly difficult to follow the flight of the ball, which might at almost any moment have found a resting-place in the net behind Platt.

Slowly the minutes went by, and yet Millwall did not score. The hope that Luton would gain the two points caused the spectators to long for the end to come quickly. The end did come eventually but before then Luton had added to their score. A centre by Walders was met by F. Hawkes, and Pearson having shot, Moody assisted the ball over the line with his foot.