

Southern League.

LUTON v. MILLWALL.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Luton 3 goals.

Millwall 1 goal.

Teams:—

Luton—Platt; Hogg and Dimmock; Jones, White, and R. Hawkes; Rigate, F. Hawkes, Pearson, Moody, and Walders.

Millwall—Joyce; Shreeve and Sutherland; Frost, Comrie, and Blythe; Hunter, Milson, Twigg, Jones, and Johnson.

Referee, Mr. G. H. Muir (Southampton).

It was not with any great degree of confidence that the supporters of the Luton Club looked forward to the match with Millwall, for the Light Blues were only one from the bottom position on the table, while the Dark Blues were four from the top. Moreover, the visitors had recently been victorious at Luton in a Western League match.

Both teams were practically at full strength, Pearson being included in the Luton team at centre-forward, and Twigg, the well-known goal-getter, occupying a similar position in the ranks of the visitors. McCurdy was an absentee from the Luton team again, and his place was taken by Dimmock. Although the weather was fine there were not more than five thousand spectators. The ground was very heavy, but the play throughout was fast, both sides going for all they were worth.

Pearson kicked off, and Luton were fortunate enough to score in the first minute. Following a throw-in, Jones kicked the ball across and Moody touched it with his head. The sphere seemed likely to go out of play, but Joyce attempted to gather it near the upright. He did not obtain control of the ball, and F. Hawkes, being well up, kicked it into the net.

After this Joyce saved from Walders, and Platt having negotiated an attempt by Twigg, F. Hawkes tested the Millwall custodian with a hard shot. Joyce was not able to hold the ball properly, and if any of the Luton forwards had been on the spot a second goal must have resulted, but only a corner accrued.

A long shot by Pearson was the next feature of note, and then White tried his luck. The sphere rebounded from the bar, and F. Hawkes promptly scored the second goal of the match within ten minutes of the start. The inside-right seemed to be offside, but Joyce certainly attempted to "play" the ball when it struck the bar, and probably touched it; otherwise offside must have nullified.

Two goals for Luton so early in the game looked very promising, especially as the home players had shown such good form in the opening exchanges. As the time went on, however, Millwall improved. They managed to get through once before the interval, and but for the smart work of Platt, would have been on level terms when the teams crossed over.

Twigg sent wide from a free kick, and then Hunter shot just by the far post; a few inches would have made all the difference, for Platt was at the other end of the goal. In the next few minutes Dimmock put in some good work in front of his own goal, but the most dangerous attempt at this period was made by Rigate, who sent in a splendid shot. Joyce happened to be in the way—fortunately for Millwall.

Twenty minutes from the start Twigg scored Millwall's only goal. It was a fine effort. He received near the middle of the field between the two backs, and raced away. When about twenty yards from Platt he let fly with a low shot. The Luton goalkeeper got to the ball, but let it go over the line. Onlookers thought that Platt was to blame for allowing the shot to score, but if that were so he made full atonement by giving a grand display during the remainder of the game; indeed, it is not too much to say that Luton owed their victory to him as much as, if not more than, to any other man in the team.

Entering into details, it may be mentioned that "Bob" lost the toss, and Pearson kicked off for the locals. The first attack was made by the home forwards, but they were easily checked by Sutherland. The "Dockers" failed to take advantage of this, and the Luton forwards were again busy. Joyce had to deal with a great header from Moody, but his save was not too good; before he could complete it Fred Hawkes scraped the ball into the net, thus putting Luton one up in two minutes. Millwall quite failed to get hold of the game, and for a time they were pressed. Walders shot, but "Tiny" was on the alert, and he repeated one good clearance by making another when Fred Hawkes shot from close range. The "Dockers" then got off for the first time. Smart work by Hunter and Milsom gave them a chance, but the Luton defence was too good, and play veered to the other end again.

Joyce made a grand save from Pearson, and White hit the bar with a great shot. The ball came straight to Fred Hawkes from the rebound, and he transferred it to the net in a quarter of an hour. With two goals against them, the visitors buckled to, and a grand shot by Hunter just missed reducing the deficit. A good clearance by Platt sent the "Dockers" towards midfield, where Twigg gained possession and tried a long shot. To everybody's surprise Platt was beaten softly. The custodian threw himself at the ball, but allowed the leather to go through his arms.

Strenuous play followed, the "Dockers" making great efforts to equalise. For a time they held the upper hand, but Luton gradually recovered, and the exchanges became very fast and even. Both goals were visited frequently, and neither set of defenders could breathe freely. Just on half-time Millwall looked certain to get on level terms, but Platt made a sensational save from Hunter. Accordingly the teams crossed over with Luton leading 2-1.

Both sides attacked in turn on the resumption, and both Platt and Joyce were called upon to save easy shots. This they did successfully, and after the former had dealt with a fine shot from Hunter, Luton went down the field in great style, but the only outcome was a barren corner. Luton still continued to press, however, and Joyce kicked away a fast shot from Rigate in splendid style.

The Lutonian next got clean away, and, running close to goal, sent in a fine shot, which Sutherland was exceedingly lucky to intercept on its journey into goal. Hunter was a continual source of danger to the Luton defence, and sprinted finely on several occasions, invariably sending across good centres, which were not utilised by his colleagues, who were chiefly prominent for their long-range shots, which gave Platt any amount of trouble.

Both sides forced fruitless corners, and then Johnson fired in a great shot, which Platt saved brilliantly. Millwall were having rather the better of the exchanges at this period, and had hard luck in not scoring on several occasions. Frost was playing a great game for them, and besides keeping his opposing wing in check, found plenty of time to feed his own forwards. Millwall still continued to press in the closing minutes, but could not score, and Moody added another goal for Luton from a breakaway just on time. Result:—

Luton, 3 goals; Millwall, 1 goal.