

FOOTBALL.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON v. BRISTOL ROVERS.

HOMESTERS STILL IN LOSING MOOD.

Mudlarking on their own ground on Saturday afternoon, Luton Town were defeated by Bristol Rovers by 2—0, and thereby they reached absolutely the bottom place on the Southern League Table.

A gale of wind, occasionally drenching showers, and a pitch in a fearful condition, rendered the lot of players and spectators alike unpleasant. Under the circumstances it was no surprise to find play most uninteresting and the 2,500 of the public who left their comfortable firesides in the interests of sport might be forgiven for wishing themselves at home again before the match was over.

Scientific play was out of the question, but the Luton men failed to adapt themselves to the trying conditions that prevailed, and the net result was another defeat. Passing with any accuracy was impossible in the strong wind and the mud made the going frightfully heavy. Despite all these adverse circumstances, Bristol Rovers scored the first goal against the breeze just after the start, and it was not until close on time that the second point was added.

Luton were without Bob Hawkes, who was unwell, so Fred Hawkes was moved into the half-back line, letting in Hall at inside-right. Mr. G. H. Muir (of Southampton), who has been appointed referee of the Luton v. Fulham Cup-tie, held the whistle, but his display was chiefly noticeable from the fact that he failed to notice two or three infringements that merited a penalty.

The teams were:—

LUTON.

Platt

Hogg

McCurdy

F. Hawkes

White

Jones

Rigate

Hall

Pearson

Moody

Bankin

O

Buckle

Roberts

Smith

Turner

Clark

Smart

Strang

Appleby

Boyle

Hales

Cartlidge

BRISTOL ROVERS.

There was some enthusiasm when McCurdy won the toss and elected to kick with the wind, for the crowd hoped to see the home team score several goals during the first period with such assistance. The game permits of little detailed description, for it was, all through, lacking in incidents of an interesting character..

Luton at once ran down and forced a corner. This was cleared, but later Luton were awarded a free kick from which Pearson had a grand chance to score but missed. The wind was too strong for the wingers, whose centres were often blown behind. Luton were doing the pressing, but now the Rovers broke away on the right wing, and a shot was put in which struck the bar, and from the rebound the ball was sent smartly into the net by Roberts. After this unexpected reverse Luton returned and Cartlidge saved twice from Rankin and Pearson. A free kick to Luton gave Moody the chance to run through but Cartlidge picked the ball off his toe. A corner to Luton came to naught, and then play was kept in mid-field. Bristol could not get down against the wind and Luton were soon pressing again. Hall forced a corner which proved valueless and then Bristol swooped down upon Platt, but Turner shot wide.

Luton resumed the aggressive and Rigate broke through but Cartlidge managed to push the ball outside the goalpost. Again the Rovers broke away but Hogg cleared. They repeated the performance and Jones repelled the attack. Luton now pressed again, but the Rovers defended stoutly. A corner was forced, but the ball was well kept out.

After Platt had saved from Smith, Luton combined smartly, and Moody sent in a shot which skimmed the bar. Half-time was then called with the Rovers 1, Luton 0. On resuming, Luton were the first to attack, Boyle clearing when Fred Hawkes was getting dangerous. Rankin was fouled, but the free kick was easily cleared.

McCurdy was injured and had to retire for a few minutes. Bristol had the best of the play with the wind, but they did little better than Luton had in the first half. Rigate broke well away but his shot was cleared. Hogg, on the half-way line, nearly beat Cartlidge. From a corner Moody headed just by the post. Play travelled from end to end, Luton having more of the play. Buckle gave Platt a hard drive and Smith looked like scoring when near goal, but through the mud barely kicked the ball.

The Bristol centre missed an open goal through Platt and McCurdy misunderstanding each other. Just before time Turner scored from a miskick by McCurdy and the Rovers won by 2—0.