

Football Notes and News.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON ON THE UPWARD GRADE.

Swindon, who are still in the English Cup, visited Luton on Saturday, but returned home defeated by the only goal of the match. Therefore, in dividing the points with the Shunters this season, the Blues have exactly repeated their performance of last season. Then we won at Luton 6-2, but lost away 4-0. At Swindon this season we were again beaten 4-0, so that Saturday's success puts both teams on an equality. And it cannot be gainsaid, that though the margin dividing the teams on Saturday was the narrowest possible, the Blues deserved to win.

Luton had not had a home match for exactly a month, and after their splendid victory over the 'Spurs' at White Hart Lane, a good gate was anticipated. However, not long before the hour of starting, the rain came on, and there were not four thousand present when the teams took the field. The ground at the start was very greasy; but it was not long before it was churned into a veritable quagmire. Swindon had the advantage of the wind in the first half, but the locals kept them out, thanks to the fine performance of Jones and F. Hawkes, while Platt, too, was quite safe. The game had only been resumed when rain came down in torrents, and hostilities were suspended for a few minutes. Anything like accurate play was out of the question, and it was but a scramble in the mud. Fifteen minutes to time Rankin took a pot shot; the ball skidded along the mud, and having some power behind, went into the corner of the net, giving Ling, the Swindon custodian, no chance. Though it was what is called a "pot shot," it was nevertheless an excellent one, and won Luton the game.

The teams were: Luton Town: Platt; Hogg, McCurdy; F. Hawkes, Jones, R. Hawkes; Rigate, Rankin, Moody, Latheron, and Walders. Swindon Town: Ling; Gill, Walker; Tout, Bannister, Jones; Johnston, Fleming, Rushton, Lyons, and Warburton.

Swindon settled down immediately Moody had kicked off. A fine bit of play by Fleming should have brought a goal, but after beating the defence the Swindon forward shot tamely behind. Warburton followed with a better effort, the ball landing on the bar from a long shot; and then Luton got up and forced a corner. From the flag kick Latheron had a chance, but hung on the ball and was robbed.

Play was fairly even after this, both sides attacking, but the slippery ground spoilt many good efforts. Keeping up the pressure, the Luton forwards aimed several shots at the Swindon goal, but one, from Walders, was the nearest approach to success. A run to the other end saw Rushton in a favourable position, and he shot well, but Platt saved. The ball continued to travel from end to end, but play was not brilliant. Luton forced a corner, but this was easily cleared, and at the other end a miskick by Hogg nearly lost a goal, Platt coming to the rescue in the nick of time, and clearing cleverly. A strong attack by Luton followed, and Ling was tested and found safe three times in quick succession. The Luton forwards were playing well now, but their shooting was miserable, and many fine chances were thrown away. Just before the interval, Swindon forced a corner, but nothing came of it and half-time arrived with the score-sheet blank.

The second moiety opened sensationally, Luton being awarded a penalty kick within a minute. To the consternation of the crowd, Walders, who was entrusted with the kick, shot straight at Ling, who had not the slightest difficulty in clearing. Swindon attacked after this let-off, and forced a corner. This was fruitless, as was a similar concession to Luton just after. A hot attack by the visitors threatened danger, but Johnson shot past. Rain was now falling heavily, and play suffered.

The Swindon forwards went in for long shooting, and Platt received two shots of this kind to save; but the others were very much off the mark. During the storm the players retired. On resuming, Luton had decidedly the best of the play, and Ling was often tested; he saved smartly twice from Rigate and Latheron. Moody had hard luck with a grand effort. Luton forced several corners, but without avail. With the locals pressing strongly, played became exciting towards the finish, but Swindon defended manfully. A quarter of an hour to time Rankin scored for Luton. After this the visitors made desperate efforts to equalise, but failed, and the whistle went with Luton leading by one goal to love.