

Football Notes and News.

By "Grasshopper."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON'S WIN AT BRISTOL.

The victory of Luton at Bristol on Saturday was a most agreeable surprise, and the Blues are indeed doing well lately. It may be of interest to note that since the end of December they have not had a single goal scored against them at home, while they have won several times on foreign soil. Now they are fifth from the bottom, and the fact that they are no higher after doing so exceptionally well the last three months, only goes to show the great amount of leeway they had to make up. True, on many occasions the victory has been by the narrowest margin possible—one goal to love, sometimes—but, after all, it is goals that count.

Various comments are being made upon the form the Town are showing just now; but the most common verdict is that the men are playing better lately in view of next season's engagements. One does not want to be too severe, but it is a fact, nevertheless, that with the exception of Moody our front string, including the "four-pounders," have been, if not a failure, at any rate a financial loss. They have given anything but satisfaction until just recently, when they seem to be doing remarkably well. We can, however, afford to be a little generous, and put down the change to some other cause—such as an improvement in their combination.

In winning at Bristol on Saturday by one goal to love the Blues gave a fine performance. Last season Luton obtained the four maximum points out of Bristol, winning at home 1—0, and strange to say, also away by the same score. However, when the Rovers visited the Ivy-road enclosure this season they won 2—0. So Saturday's win at Bristol divides the honours.

It was evident that the locals intended going for all they were worth for second position in the League, and they accordingly put their strongest side on the field. Bristol meant to take no risks, but they also found that the visitors had brought their best men with them. The teams lined up as follows:—

Bristol Rovers: Cartlidge; Ovens, Boyle; Smart, Strong, Handley; Clarke, Gerrish, Smith, Roberts, Savage.

Luton Town: Platt; McCurdy, Dimmock; F. Hawkes, Jones, F. Albone; Rigate, Rankin, Pearson, Moody, Latheron.

Play proceeded in showery weather. There was a good gate. The locals opened the attack, but Platt was safe, and eventually Savage brought the effort to a close with a wide shot. Luton now took up the running, but the Bristol right back was not to be beaten. Then Luton came again, and Cartlidge was nearly beaten by Pearson. Moody forced a corner, and then smart work by Clark and Gerrish took play to the other end, where the latter sent over. A corner to the Rovers led to some exciting work in front of the Luton goal, and Roberts attempted to score with a neat header, which was finely saved by Platt. Luton got away, and Boyle conceded when pressed by Rigate. This placed the home goal in great danger, but Ovens eventually broke up the Luton attack.

From another run Moody got close to goal but failed to shoot, and then Clarke gave Roberts a nice opening at the other end. Roberts lost the ball but a capital centre by Savage was loosely dealt with by Platt, and a corner followed. Nothing came of this, and a similar concession at the other end was also fruitless. From a free kick against Luton close in, Platt saved well, and then Roberts headed just wide. The Rovers were pressing hard at this stage, and Gerrish came near with a good shot. A nice pass by Pearson let Rankin away, but he drove the ball past. In stopping Smith, Dimmock gave away a corner and two others followed. The Rovers made great efforts to score, and were seldom away from the Luton goal, but Platt was brilliant and held his own to the interval.

Resuming, with a blank score sheet, Bristol attacked strenuously. Platt conceded a corner in saving from Strong, then he saved in daring style from Smith. At the other end, Rankin concluded a dashing run by skimming the bar with a great shot, and then the same player scored after his side had been awarded a free kick. A long kick forward by Ovens gave Smith a chance, but he lifted the ball high over the bar. Luton showed increased dash, Pearson and Moody shooting well, but the Rovers responded pluckily. They were slack near goal, however, a good centre by Savage being badly used, and a corner well taken was not improved on.

Play continued fast, and, though Luton were occasionally dangerous, the best chances fell to the Rovers, who were slow in turning them to account. The defence, too, was less reliable than it usually is. A grand shot by Clark was just turned round the post by Platt. Smith also made a great effort to break through, but it was not attended with success.

Result: Luton one goal, Bristol nil.