

LUTON v. NORTHAMPTON.

Played at Luton on Easter Monday. Result:

Northampton	1 goal.
Luton	nil

Teams:—

Luton—Jarvis; Dimmock and Nicholson; F. Hawkes, Jones, and Albone; Rigate, Rankin, A. E. Jones, Walders, and Latheron.

Northampton—Cooch; Britton and Davies; Lessons, McCartney, and Dunkley; Didymus, Platt, Kilsby, Freeman, and McDiarmid. Referee, Mr. C. C. Fallowfield.

Despite the mixture of May and December in the weather, there was a large holiday crowd on the Bury Park ground on Monday, when Luton played their last home match of the season. A snowstorm half-an-hour before the kick-off probably kept many away, but the attendance must have been over 7,000, including about a thousand from Northampton.

Platt, McCurdy, and Moody were absent from the Luton team, but it was soon apparent that all the "Blues" were out to do their level best. Fred Hawkes again won the toss, but there was not so much advantage in this as was the case on Saturday. Following a run by Rigate, the ball went across to Latheron, who centred. A. E. Jones, the amateur centre-forward, twisted round and sent in a fine shot, which Cooch did well to save.

The exchanges resembled those of a cup-tie for the game was sternly contested at every stage, and the spectators were not slow in showing their appreciation of good play. Northampton's attack was in fine form, and the Luton defenders had an anxious time now and again. On one occasion, a miskick by Nicholson let in McDiarmid, whose shot went just over.

At the other end, Abe Jones almost headed through from a corner taken by Latheron, but Cooch saved, falling down with the ball under him. Several Luton players got round him, and there was a regular scrimmage, which was

stopped by Mr. Fallowfield for foul play. After this, Rankin and A. E. Jones tried long shots, but they were too far out to beat such a custodian as Cooch.

The ding-dong struggle continued up to the interval, play being very fast. Once Albone appeared to handle the ball in the penalty area, but the referee did not stop play. In the last quarter of an hour of the first half Northampton were without Kilsby, their centre-forward, but continued to have quite as much of the play as Luton.

Early in the second half, Dimmock mis-kicked, but Nicholson relieved a dangerous situation. The visitors, with their full team, had the better of the play, the left wing especially being very dangerous; Didymus, on the right, let the ball go out of play much too often. Luton, however, continued to play up well, and Davies was fortunate in kicking away a fine attempt by Walders.

McCartney then got in a long drive, which was so fast that it might have beaten Jarvis had it been a shade lower. A minute later, the mistake was made which cost Luton at least one point. A centre from the Northampton outside-left dropped in front of goal, and although Jarvis was ready to deal with it, Nicholson put out his foot, evidently intending to stop it, but let it roll over the line.

Nicholson scratched his head and looked very sorrowful, but the damage was done. It was now about half-way through the second moiety, and although Luton were game to the end, their chances were none too rosy. Latheron was incapacitated, and during the closing stages the Blues were represented by four forwards.

Although, taking the game all through, Northampton were the better team, it was distinctly unfortunate for Luton that the only goal should be scored by one of their own players. It was hard lines on Jarvis, for it will be remembered that on Saturday the first goal for Leyton was put through by the Luton left back. Then on Good Friday, the goal that made all the difference was the result of a penalty.

Jones did not get in many shots during the game, but he smartened up the attack, and made one think that the results of some of the games in which Luton have engaged might have been different if he had played. Moody was missed at inside-left. The backs were in good form, but Nicholson indulged in too much fancy kicking.

"An Old Lover of Football" writes me on the subject of the Luton Town team, but unfortunately he appears to have sent only part of his letter. Like a great many others, he was evidently far from satisfied with the exhibition given on Saturday, but I do not agree with him that it went to prove that the directors would have been well-advised to have had a wholesale clear-out for another season. The mischief this season has been chiefly traceable to the wholesale clearance of last season's forwards.

More wisdom has been displayed this year, and in my opinion little fault can be found with the signing-on that has already been done. We could hardly hope to improve upon McCurdy and Dimmock at back, or upon Fred Hawkes or Jones at half-back. The defence, I think, is as good as any in the League, and if better players for the respective positions than those named can be suggested, it would be interesting to know who they are. Dimmock, of course, is not yet at his best, but he is already fully up to the average Southern League player.

By general consent, it has been with the forwards that the failure has rested, but who will say that the fault has been Moody's? On the contrary, if it had not been for Moody's head, I am afraid we should still be in the "bottom two" on the League table, and if next season the directors are able to provide us with men as clever with their feet as Moody is with his head, there should be little cause for complaint.

Rigate, the outside-right, who has been signed on, has not been altogether successful, but he has the speed and he has the will, and if he would only use more judgment in putting his centres across, it would require a fairly good man to displace him. Taking the forwards as a whole, what we have suffered from this season has not been so much lack of skill as lack of energy, and it behoves the directors to be exceedingly careful in filling up the vacancies. As far as they have gone, I think their action can be easily justified.