

Football Notes and News.

[By "GOALPOST."]

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON'S BIG DEFEAT AT SOUTHAMPTON.

Though the most sanguine did not for a moment imagine that Luton would win at Southampton on Saturday, yet such a crushing defeat as six goals to one was, to say the least, a most disconcerting result, and shakes one's faith to a great degree in the prowess of this season's team. Of course, it is a well known fact that practically the most improved team in the south this year is Southampton, and seeing that the "Saints" took the four points out of us last season—they beat us away 2-1 and at Luton 2-0—we could not expect to do more than make a decent show against them on Saturday.

But who was prepared for such a decisive defeat? Without doubt there was something wrong with our re-arranged team. Platt was back in goal, Dimmock replaced Gregory at right back, "Bob" took his place at left half, Menzies came in at centre-forward, and Stansfield replaced Haycock. Therefore, on paper, we had the strongest team out that we can put in the field this season.

What was the cause of such a disaster? To be candid, it can be put down to nothing but the defence. The palpable weakness of the two backs let in the Southampton forwards again and again; and though Platt saved some very good shots, he was not so brilliant as he generally is. And to be successful a goal-keeper has indeed to be brilliant to defeat such good shooters as the "Saints" forwards. But Luton's own front line was also weak at times; only now and then did they put "vim" into their play. Consequently the defence had a great deal more work to do.

A few lines must suffice to describe the play of so one-sided a game. Luton won the toss, but Southampton quickly opened the attack. Smart play on the home right enabled Bainbridge to centre to Hughes, but Dimmock robbed him. Jefferis made a fine individual effort, but Platt saved. The "Saints" were now having much the best of it, and a goal was imminent. From the centre Hughes opened the score. Hardly had the ball been restarted than Southampton raced down, and Jefferis notched the second point. After Luton had had a brief spell, the home right wing made a fine run down. Hughes received the centre, and headed just wide. Stansfield, by a piece of individual work, carried play to the "Saints" goal, but sent his shot wide. Once again the deadly home right wing got on the run, and this time Hughes headed the ball through, scoring the third goal. The "Saints" did all the pressing, while Luton's spurts were spasmodic, and quickly repulsed. At length, by hard work, the visitors' right wing bore down upon goal, and Lock had to save a fine shot from Moody. Half-time was called with the "Saints" once more on the attack, the score being: Southampton 3, Luton 0.

On restarting Luton went off as if determined to reduce the score, and Brown missed narrowly. Several good efforts followed from the Luton forwards, and the home defence were somewhat lucky to get off scot free. Lock brought off a grand save at full length from Stansfield, whilst Platt, at the other end, cleverly fisted away an accurate centre from Bainbridge. Lock executed a similar feat when Johnson centred across. Luton now pressed vigorously; and forced two corners. Robertson finally relieved with an overhead kick from the goal-mouth. This proved the last great effort of the visitors, who suffered a reaction, and Blake beat Jones, and then McCurdy, and scored the fourth goal. This was soon followed by another, when, at the second attempt, Hughes put the ball past Platt. The next incident was a penalty for a foul by Jones on Jefferis, and from this Thorpe scored the sixth goal.

Result: Southampton, 6 goals; Luton, nil