

Western League.

LUTON v. CROYDON COMMON.

No doubt the severe defeat of Luton on Saturday had something to do with the rather small attendance at Monday's match in the Western League, when the Blues met Croydon Common. The "gate" numbered less than a thousand, and certainly it was hardly worth sixpence to see such a display as was given. One has seen some very good Western League games at Luton; but with a further re-arrangement of the team and the players off form, one did not expect to see anything like a good game.

Platt was again in goal, while Gregory and Dimmock were at back. "Bob" did not take the field, and Bradley came in at centre half, Jones being transferred to the left. Stansfield deputised Haycock, and Menzies came in at centre-forward.

As already observed, play was of rather poor order, especially in the first half. There was little to choose between the sides, but the goal-keepers had very little to do. Only once or twice did the shots of the forwards get anywhere near the goal. Both sides lacked accuracy in shooting, and their tame and spasmodic efforts never looked like being rewarded with success. Menzies was evidently indisposed, and if so it would have been better had he not taken the field, because not only was the centre man the weak spot, but he muddled, and was occasionally "in the way." Neither side found the net up to half-time.

Luton resumed with ten men, Menzies deciding not to turn out. This necessitated Luton playing the one-back game, which, of course, spoilt the match. If anything there was for a time a little improvement in the second moiety, but the ball was so frequently out of the field that those on the terraces naturally grumbled about getting value for their money.

Ten minutes from the re-start, Macdonald, the old Luton player, beat Platt with a capital shot. As the old football scribe would put it, this put Luton on their mettle, and with one man short they pressed vigorously. For a quarter of an hour one imagined that the Blues were getting back into their own stride. Then Stansfield, with a nicely worked effort, put Luton on equal terms.

After this play deteriorated. Croydon, who were apparently being gradually worn down, adopted defensive tactics, and the ball was frequently put over one stand or the other. Macdonald once came within an ace of again giving the visitors the lead, Platt being indeed fortunate in having the assistance of Gregory at the critical moment to get the leather away. Towards the close, Luton returned to the attack. Johnson from the wing sent in a rasping shot, which struck the bar, and bounded into the net, before the Croydon goalkeeper could say "Jack Robinson."

Thus the game ended in a victory for Luton by two goals to one. On the play, Luton might well have been satisfied with a draw. Moody was Luton's most conspicuous forward, and Bradley was a real hustler. S. Garratt, the Croydon right-winger, frequently ran Jones off his feet. Garratt not only showed pace, but his centres were very judiciously placed, and had the centre position been anything like strong, the visitors might very well have bagged a brace of points. Gregory showed some improvement. Macdonald played a very fair game for Croydon, but the ex-Luton player retains his old complaint—his shots lack "powder."