

FOOTBALL.

Millwall Wins.

LUTON LOSE BY A GOAL.

A Vigorous Struggle.

WEAKENED HOME SIDE.

A vigorous game was witnessed between Luton and Millwall on Wednesday afternoon on the Luton ground, and ended in a win for the visitors by a goal to nil. Last year Luton won by three goals to one, and Millwall therefore turned the tables and annexed the two points at stake.

Brown is suffering from strained thigh muscles, Menzies has a strained back, McCurdy and Bradley twisted knees, and none of them was able to turn out. Dimmock came in at back, Rigate took the outside right position, and Haycock came inside, the centre-forward position being occupied by Stansfield. With such a side a great deal could not be expected, but taken altogether the men did as well as could have been anticipated.

Until Saturday Millwall had had a poor record in the Southern League, but they met Coventry, dropped six of the old men, introduced new ones in their places, and were lucky enough to put the same team intact in the field against Luton. The sides were under the charge of Mr J. Rigden, of Chatham, and this was his first Southern League game. Teams:—

Luton:—Platt; Dimmock and Gregory; F. Hawkes, Jones, and R. M. Hawkes; Rigate, Haycock, Stansfield, Moody and Johnson.

Millwall:—Joyce; Stevenson and Sutherland; Riley, Comrie and Jeffrey; Shand, Cunliffe, Vincent, Jones and Hunter.

The visitors were a big team, and seemed very bulky with Luton's side. They kicked off towards the Luton end goal, but were brought back by Jones, who passed to Johnson, but the ball eventually went behind.

Subsequently, he forced a corner against his old club, but Jones headed wide, the ball being placed none too well.

F. Hawkes nipped in and brought the Millwall left up, but they advanced along the line by a series of throws in.

Dimmock headed away very smartly, and was again to the fore in clearing the ball as it was rolling over the line for a corner. Vincent sent the ball behind from the throw-in.

Bob Hawkes sent the ball into Joyce's hands, but the big Millwall goalie cleared very easily. Several times Joyce had to prove his worth, but he did all that was required of him. Johnson twice sent in shots, but they were wide.

Moody had a golden chance of scoring, as he had only Joyce to beat, but he placed high over the bar, and hit the advertisement hoarding at the back of the ground.

Luton had the better of the play, but Millwall suddenly darted away, and Cunliffe found himself with Platt and the ball alone under the bar. Platt pushed the ball out to Dimmock, who cleared, but Platt by some means got hurt, and the Millwall inside forward was enjoined to play the game.

Shand was ruled offside in a pass along the right, many not agreeing with the decision of the referee.

Platt missed a shot to which he had dashed out, and F. Hawkes conceded a corner to save the situation.

Another corner followed from the foot of Jones, but F. Hawkes headed away.

What looked like a calamity for Luton occurred shortly afterwards. Cunliffe was offside, and Gregory went for him and charged him over in the penalty area. The referee, without hesitation, gave a penalty against Luton, and Cunliffe took the kick.

He shot hard at Platt, who fisted out, and Bob Hawkes took the ball and cleared very coolly.

Johnson caused Joyce some trouble, but the Millwall man missed the ball and nearly punched Stansfield's head. A little later Johnson was brought down and crippled in the penalty area by Stevenson, and the crowd appealed for a penalty, but it was not awarded, but the referee gave a corner.

Bob Hawkes took this, but placed very poorly, and the danger was cleared. After a rest Johnson resumed, and was loudly applauded for his pluck.

Shand shot over the bar, but Luton then took the play to the Millwall end, where Rigate put behind.

A good chance was wasted by the same man, but Shand did quite as badly at the other end.

Rigate sent once again behind from an excellent position, amid the execrations of the crowd. Hunter struck the post, and the goal had a very lucky escape from capture. Some difficulty was experienced before the Millwall men were ranged up for a free kick, but this came to nought, owing to the bad tactics displayed.

Rigate displayed shocking judgment in putting the ball behind, and it happened with such frequency that it was suggested it was intentional. A better display discounted this suggestion, but once again the attack came to nothing.

Half-time was fast approaching, and a pointless result at this period was predicted. Millwall were occasionally dangerous, but the heading in front of goal was not very great. Jones and Cunliffe both headed over from close in. Half-time:—

Luton Nil—Millwall Nil.

Upon the resumption, play veered towards the Millwall goal, and Stansfield had the misfortune to be kicked in the face, which bled pretty freely. The Millwall trainer kindly went to his assistance, and was heartily cheered by the crowd for his action.

Rigate continued to make bad blunders, and it seemed as if he could do nothing right. When he should have centred he shot, and when a good pot at goal was required he generally placed yards wide.

"Peter" had to clear from Cunliffe, who was always giving trouble, but Luton retaliated, and Millwall cleared. Joyce came out to meet a shot from F. Hawkes, and fisted the ball away in his usual characteristically strong fashion.

A corner to Millwall was of no use, but a little later Platt unaccountably missed the ball, which went to Hunter. F. Hawkes got in the way of the shot and cleared.

The goal which Millwall scored was of an extraordinary type. A long shot was put in from the

right, and "Peter" in jumping up to fist out landed on Gregory's broad back. He scrambled back again, but Hunter returned the ball which touched Dimmock, and Jeffrey being handy promptly netted.

The restart was chiefly noticeable for the best shot of the afternoon from Rigate, which caused Joyce to handle. Bob Hawkes made another grand opening for Rigate, but he made an awful mess of it.

About twenty minutes from time Johnson, who had received a kick, left the field, and Luton played with only ten men. The depleted Luton side pressed hotly in the last minutes and Joyce brought off two remarkably fine saves. Result—

Millwall 1 goal—Luton nil.

Notes on the Game.

POOR FORWARD LINE.

Our Invincible Half-Back.

That Millwall were the better side could not be doubted, but who could have expected the Luton men to do better than lose. With such a quartette of players away as Brown, Menzies, Bradley and McCurdy, it was small wonder that the visitors won.

Millwall have been doing badly, but happening to hit upon a lucky side on Saturday the Directors, unlike our own, stuck to that combination, and their wisdom was justified. If only our local gentlemen would do the same.

First and foremost in the ranks of the visitors was Joyce, the goalkeeper. He has been christened "Tiny," and with that characteristic topsy turvydom of this world, he is about as big as they make them.

His gentle "love pats" at the ball would equal an ordinary player's kick, and his huge punts from the six yards line are things to marvel at. The ball leaves terra firma like a cannon ball.

Stevenson was the same old back as of yore. Slightly erratic at times, but here, there and everywhere, and kicking like a mule.

Sutherland has quieter methods, but is still good.

The half-backs are a sound trio, and Jeffrey achieved distinction by registering the only goal. He was almost under the bar when he got it, rather a strange place for a half-back, but the goal's the thing, after all.

The forwards are not a great lot from a football point of view. Their heading in front of goal was shocking. Cunliffe should have scored from a centre by Shand, but he headed over the bar, whilst Jones was well placed for a coup, but failed.

The best player on the field was again the Luton captain. For pretty touches, systematic passes, and accurate feeding of the forwards, Bob excelled himself. One beautiful opening he made for Rigate was the chief tit-bit of the afternoon. He ought to have had "Jammy" Durrant there for that moment.

James did any amount of useful work, and F. Hawkes stepped in time after time and rendered the attacks of Millwall futile. The halves never faltered all the afternoon, and seldom made a blunder, which is saying a very great deal.

Dinnmock was the better of the Luton backs, though Gregory, apart from a certain slowness, was pretty safe. Time and again the Luton youth went for the Millwall men, and he came out the conqueror. For dash he was as good a player as there was on the field.

Plett made one or two really unaccountable errors. Once or twice he absolutely misjudged the flight of the ball, and he has to thank F. Hawkes for one occasion when his charge narrowly escaped blowfall. Come, come, Peter!

When dealing with the forwards I am constrained to pass them all over with the exception of Moody, and perhaps Johnson. I include the latter because he got hurt so soon after the start that he had not time to do himself justice.

Haycock made faulty passes. Stansfield was not strong enough for a centre, and Rigate played the worst game of his life. At least, I hope it is the worst.

It was a surprise to us all that he even was signed on this season, but one would have thought he would have done his very best when he had a real good chance in the first team. His re-appearance in the senior forward line will be a surprise to me.

I feel constrained to write about the referee, and some of his judgments, but as this was his first appearance in the Southern League he may be forgiven, but not forgotten.