

The Southern League.

LUTON v. PORTSMOUTH.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Luton	5 goals.
Portsmouth	1 goal.

The teams were as follow:—

Luton—Platt; Folley and Gregory; F. Hawkes, Jones, and R. Hawkes; Brown, Haycock, Menzies, Moody, and Stansfield.

Portsmouth—A. C. Brown; Smith and Clipston; Digweed, Buick, and Beaumont; Birtles, Kirby, Reid, McCafferty, and E. Williams.

Referee, Mr. T. P. Campbell (Blackburn).

There was quite a November chilliness in the air on Saturday, when between five and six thousand spectators saw Luton beat Portsmouth by 5 goals to 1. On the run of the play the home team did not deserve to win by such a large margin, but the Luton forwards were again in fine form and gave full value for the success achieved.

Neither team was at full strength. Luton were without McCurdy, and Folley therefore made his first appearance in a Southern League match for Luton. Portsmouth were handicapped to a greater extent. A. C. Brown, a young Cowes amateur, appeared in goal, and the backs were not the regular pair, while L. A. Louch, the well-known forward, was unable to turn out. Kirby, who would otherwise have figured at outside-left, took his place at inside-right, and the vacancy was filled by E. Williams, who proved to be about the smartest of the forwards.

Moody was the success of the match, for he scored four out of the five goals. He performed the hat trick before the interval, and was the third player to accomplish this feat against Portsmouth in successive matches. Part of the credit for one of the goals went to Stansfield, and the remaining point was obtained by Menzies from a corner.

But, as already indicated, Luton were not masters of the game right through the piece. In the first twenty minutes they played indifferent football, and again early in the second half did not give a reassuring display. During the remainder of the game Luton maintained the upper hand, it is true, but if the Ports-

mouth forwards, and more especially Reid, had taken advantage of their opportunities, the margin at the finish would not have been so great.

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Portsmouth won the toss, and in the first minute both the Luton backs were found wanting. Gregory was very weak in dealing with a run down on the Portsmouth right wing, and Folley conceded a corner, kicking the ball up as though it were a rocket. Fortunately, Folley improved as the game proceeded, and Gregory, although he was much too slow at times, gave a fair account of himself.

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One of the most dangerous incidents during these early stages happened when Platt attempted to meet a centre by the Portsmouth left, but missed it. Gregory touched the ball backwards to Peter, and fortunately he picked it up and disposed of it before one of the Portsmouth forwards, who was in close attendance, could improve the shining moment.

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Luton's first attack took place eight minutes after the start, and then Haycock gave the custodian a tame shot to deal with. A foul on Stansfield led to a corner, and from this Menzies all but headed through. Later on another free kick fell to Luton, and from this Haycock seemed to have a chance, but he was hampered and shot wide. He appealed for a penalty, but it was not given.

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The first goal of the match was credited to Portsmouth, and it was obtained in an unusual fashion. Buick, the veteran centre-half, kicked the ball well up the centre of the field, and as the Luton backs seemed likely to be beaten, Platt rushed out. The Luton goalkeeper attempted to pick up the ball as it was rolling on the ground, but, to the surprise and consternation of the spectators, he only touched it, and, before he could recover, Reid had steadied himself and shot into an empty goal.

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The prospects of the home team were now not particularly bright, but this reverse caused them to play in more determined fashion. Happily they had not long to wait for fortune to smile upon them, the equaliser coming within three minutes. Stansfield forced a corner, which was well placed, and Brown, after trapping the ball, sent it forward to Moody, who steered it into the proper place.

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Reid, the Portsmouth centre-forward, had a splendid chance of giving his side the lead

shortly afterwards, but he shot over. At the other end Moody did get through again, but the point was disallowed, Brown, who had headed to the inside left, being given offside. The scene being transferred, a mix-up by Gregory and R. Hawkes looked dangerous, but it was allowed to pass without anything untoward happening.

Luton's second goal was scored about ten minutes after the first. A tremendous shot by Haycock was fisted by the Portsmouth custodian, who sent the ball up instead of turning it over the bar. Moody and Stansfield rushed in and the former headed through. Both players fell in the goal, and Moody, who happened to fall before his partner, was badly shaken.

Five minutes before the interval Moody scored again with a fine cross shot. F. Hawkes put the ball forward, and Buick partially cleared, but Moody fastened on to it and did the trick in first-class style. In the intervening play before the interval Menzies tested Brown with a shot which he only just managed to hold, and Birtles finished up a sustained attack by shooting high over.

As already stated, Portsmouth were again the better team in the early stages of the second moiety. A splendid chance fell to Reid, who got clear and took deliberate aim, but he had the mortification of seeing the ball rebound from the crossbar. McCafferty made a good attempt a few minutes later, but his shot was a few inches wide. On another occasion Platt fell with the ball in his hand, and one or two Portsmouth forwards being in attendance, the situation looked dangerous, but Platt threw the ball away and fortunately it was cleared.

At the end of a quarter of an hour, Luton improved somewhat, but Williams was prominent with good play. When Luton became dangerous Brown shot instead of centreing, but success was not long in coming once more to the homesters, although before this Gregory had given away a free kick and a corner. The fourth goal was the result of a splendid effort by Stansfield, who finished up a good run with a hard shot that struck the post and rebounded on the goal-line. Moody was well up, and had no difficulty in putting on the finishing touch. This happened 25 minutes after the interval.

Luton's goal next had a very narrow escape, Fred Hawkes kicking away after Folley was beaten. Platt saved well from Kirby, and Buick seemed to use his hands in getting in the way of a centre by Stansfield. Luton breaking away, Menzies tried a very good shot, but it missed the mark. Reid had a much better opening a few minutes later, but shot high over.

Luton returned to the attack, and following a centre by Stansfield, Brown essayed a lightning cross shot, which was only a few inches too high. The play afterwards was stopped for an injury to McCafferty. A few minutes before the end Menzies headed through from a corner taken by Brown, and this proved to be all the scoring, although Portsmouth forced a corner before the finish.

As already indicated, the victory was entirely due to the brilliant play of the Luton forwards, especially near goal. Chief honours go to Moody as a matter of course, and the dash which he showed in getting the three goals of the first half was something to be remembered. Brown and Stansfield were also in great form, Menzies added to his reputation as a centre-forward, and Haycock proved himself a better player than some people give him credit for.

The halves were all in good fettle, though Bob Hawkes appeared to give the Portsmouth right wing a little too much rope. The backs were decidedly rocky, and it was a wonder that the dashing forwards on the other side did not do more execution. Platt, apart from his one mistake, played a capital game in goal.

The Portsmouth forwards were smart enough in play, but their shooting was extremely wild. The halves were a bustling trio, and neither the backs nor the goalkeeper seemed to blame for Luton's high score.