

Football Notes and News.]

[By "GOALPOST."]

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON LOSE AT NEW BROMPTON.

When are Luton really going to win a match away? That is the question a good many have been asking themselves lately. Personally, seeing that the Town are doing so well at home, bagging a brace of points practically every time, one does not mind when the Blues lose on foreign soil. It always takes a good team to win away. Of course we, too, have a good team—if we had a good defence. A team is all right if it can win its home matches, as Luton has done so regularly. But if it were only to break the spell, one would like to see the Town win just one match on foreign soil.

On Saturday Luton were at New Brompton, and lost by the very narrowest margin, the final result being 1-0 in favour of the home side. Last season the teams divided the honours, and it is somewhat peculiar that on their own ground New Brompton lost 0-1, so that on Saturday afternoon they succeeded in reversing that result. But at Luton New Brompton won 2-1. So that it will be seen that the teams have been pretty evenly matched.

Both sides were at full strength. For Luton, Platt was in goal, with McCurdy and Gregory at back. "Bob" was included in the half-line. Supporters were surprised to find Bradley in Moody's place; the rest of the forward line was as usual.

Luton were set to play against a stiff breeze. The locals were the first to find their feet, and their first advantage was a corner. The flag kick was well placed, but Platt jumped out and cleared. New Brompton continued to press, the visitors' forwards failing to take advantage of several good forward passes, and Platt was frequently tested. He saved finely, but had many anxious moments. Luton got through occasionally, but their shooting was of the tamest description. After Sheppard had shot over from close range, Luton roused themselves and attacked very strongly. A great shot from Haycock was just reached by Bateup, who turned the ball round the post for a corner, which was cleared easily, and for a considerable time play was most uninteresting.

Luton made one or two efforts at combination, but something always happened to upset them, and after a long bout of midfield play the home forwards improved. Clever passing took them near Platt, but the Luton backs were very safe. A run by the visiting forwards ended in Brown just failing to score, a neat header hitting the post and going wide. New Brompton replied, and had much the better of the play up to the interval. Luton seldom crossed the half-way line, but although the home forwards had many chances, it was not until close on half-time that Powell headed neatly past Platt, and New Brompton crossed over with a goal lead.

Luton set about the task of wiping off the deficit on the resumption, and two corners were forced in quick succession. These proved abortive, and then Platt was tested by Sheppard, but saved splendidly. From a corner Powell narrowly missed adding to the home score, and both Pickett and Whyman came near with good efforts. As the game advanced, the home side continued to do the major portion of the aggressive work, and but for the erratic shooting of their insides would have increased their lead considerably.

Luton, however, once came very near equalising from a scrimmage in the home goal-mouth, Menzies striking the cross-bar with Bateup beaten to the world. After Platt had saved finely from Whyman and Pickett at the other end, the former forced a corner, from which Powell headed over; and then Luton put in a spell of pressure, which they managed to sustain almost to the end. New Brompton were only once dangerous, and then Whyman struck the cross-bar.

Result: New Brompton 1 goal, Luton nil.

It was, as the final score indicates, a closely contested game. There was not so much in the play, if one leaves out of consideration the first half, when Luton were handicapped with a stiff wind, which had considerably moderated on resuming. The Blues lost because they failed to follow up their openings and take advantage of their opportunities. The forwards had many chances, but their shooting was either tame or they were too slow to follow up the ball. The New Brompton quintette were certainly smarter than their vis-à-vis, and in that fact literally lay the secret of their win.