

FOOTBALL.

'Saints' v. 'Sinners.'

LUTON'S LUCK HOLDS GOOD.

Menzies Off Colour.

GREGORY'S GREAT GAME.

Southampton's unlucky streak did not terminate at Luton. At one time "the Saints" looked good for a win, but they could never put the top stone of success on their achievement. Though Luton won, I don't think it can be said that their display was of such a character as to send one home in ecstasies. There were defects in their play which rippled the smiling surface of their success. Truth to tell they were just a shade lucky to win at all.

The "Saints" were very vehement in their claim for a goal in the first half; alleging that McCurdy had cleared after the ball had passed the goal line. Referee Armitt is supposed to be up to his business, and the fact that he did not decide in the "Saints'" favour was a verdict for which he no doubt had good evidence. Southampton were not satisfied, and their players by pantomimic gestures and sagacious wagging of their heads demonstrated to the spectators what they thought of the decision. Personally, I should think the ball was through. The spectators behind the goal made such a demonstration of delight when the referee negatived the claim that there was probably something in it.

It was a great defensive match, with Gregory the best back on the field. He never made a palpable blunder, but played a dour determined game under severe pressure. Eastham, who has thickened out a lot since I last saw him playing by the side of Bob Crompton, the English International in the North, was also in rare fettle. In the first half he carried too many guns for Stansfield, but the ex-Tottenham player had the pull before the finish, and more than once showed him a clean pair of heels.

Stansfield got the one and only legitimate goal. It followed on a plucky dash by Brown. The Brentford bantam drew the defence by a rare dribble in the centre, and when tackled swept the ball to Stansfield. Eastham made a rare effort to get up in time, but the Luton forward did not hesitate. He let drive with his left foot and the ball, after he had looked like passing out, just curved inside the far post. Lock made his effort too late.

With Menzies clean "off" his game, the Luton wingmen had to go a-foraging for their own opportunities. The home centre was weary, weak and woebegone in his efforts to impart vitality into the line. He seldom if ever did the right thing, and his play was nerveless and vacillating throughout. He can and does play better football as a rule, but after this exhibition it would be courting disaster to play him in the cup tie on Saturday. He was a passenger for the whole 90 minutes, and while I am not admirer of Bradley, I should give Menzies a rest for a bit at any rate. He seemed stale and tired out before the game had been in progress twenty minutes. Probably he was not feeling up to the mark.

Lock, the Southampton custodian, has a curious habit of clinging to the ball when once he gets possession. I am surprised at this, for a custodian who hugs the leather like he does at once becomes a mark for the opposing attack, and Referee Armitt on one occasion stood idly by while the Luton forwards played a kettledrum with their feet on the keeper's ribs in their efforts to dislodge the ball from his greedy grasp. I should say Mr. Lock will find the key to the situation of preventing further ill-treatment of this description by getting rid of the leather as quickly as possible when it comes his way. There is nothing gained by this manoeuvre of his that I can imagine, and if he refuses to play the ball any player is entitled to try and kick it out of his hands.

The "Saints'" forwards are a brisk, bustling lot, and much of their work in midfield was above reproach. The Luton halves, however, stuck to them like limpets, and Platt was so well covered that he had not a very busy afternoon. Bainbridge, the outside right, scuds over the grass at a rapid rate, but he found that he had nothing in hand with Gregory when it came to a trial of speed. McCurdy was also well up to his work, and the way in which he and Gregory came out with flying colours from the gruelling pace set up by the "Saints" in the first half was a feather in their individual caps.

Luton's front line, as I have said, was robbed of its sparkle and vim by Menzies' lethargic methods, and the "Saints'" halves and full backs were also accessories to the fact. The best of the bunch was Stansfield. Haycock hung on to the ball too much, and Brown did not scintillate as usual, while Moody's shooting boots had evidently gone to be repaired. Still, it was due to Brown's plucky dash that Stansfield was enabled to get the only goal, and that goal covered a multitude of minor occurrences on the part of the home attack. In a general way the football that beats Southampton should suffice for Millwall, but I hope it will not be left at that, and that we shall see something more like the real article.

WELL DONE LUTON!

RISE OUT OF SOUTHAMPTON.

A VALUABLE GOAL:

For the purpose of maintaining a good place in the Southern League the victory over Southampton on Saturday was a most valuable one. Nor was this all the satisfaction out of the game. Early in the season Southampton chalked up half-a-dozen goals against Luton on the coast, and the turn of the tide, which, though slight, proved amply sufficient, was all the more welcome.

"It's Peter Platt who won the game for you," said one of the visiting players to the boys outside the dressing-room after the match. "That's what we've got him for," said the boy.

Stansfield got the goal, but there was just a trifle of luck about it, but there were other occasions when Luton should have scored. Still, the visitors are a very fine team, and had a considerable amount of hard luck.

The following were the teams:—

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

Southampton.—Lock; Eastham and Glover; Jepp, Trueman and Bamford; Bainbridge, Jefferies, Hughes, Jordan and Hodgkinson.

Referee, Mr. T. Armitt (Leek).

A free kick from a foul pulled up Southampton, but nothing came of the kick. Brown and F. Hawkes then made a muddle of it, and Southampton brought the ball up, but Hodgkinson made

a very poor ending to his run by kicking weakly behind.

Haycock was too anxious to get his foot to the ball, and as a result he did not put the sphere into the goal as he intended. Stansfield, however, tried a shot which was just the wrong side of the post.

Stansfield forced a corner, which he placed, but Bob shot wide of the goal. The visitors were showing good passing form, but F. Hawkes once trapped the ball cleverly and stayed the rush.

Eastham was playing a good game, and twice pulled the Luton left wing up, whilst Glover robbed the left wing in clever style.

Jones and Gregory got in each other's way at the Luton end, and a series of throws in took place in the corner until Bainbridge kicked behind. Southampton forced a corner, but Peter caught the ball and then kicked away. Jordan headed over the bar when in a splendid position, though he appeared offside.

McCurdy gave away a corner, but this he cleared, and Luton went to the other end, where Moody put in a long shot which landed on the top of the goal bar. Luton had rare luck just afterwards, and twice very luckily cleared.

Bert Moody put in a grand shot which Lock saved well, although at the expense of a corner. This was fisted away by Lock again. Southampton then forced a corner. The ball was missed by Platt, but McCurdy, who stood behind him, kicked away on the very level. The visitors made an appeal for a goal, but the referee decided against them.

Moody missed a good chance by shooting wide, Bainbridge put through the goal, but was again offside, much to the disappointment of the visitors' directors in the Press box.

All disappointment was forgotten in the joy which followed, for Southampton had taken several corners. Brown initiated an attack, and placed the ball right across the field to Stansfield, who swung the ball in, and Lock, judging it was going wide, made no attempt to clear. The ball struck the goalpost and entered the net. Half-time was immediately called with the score standing

Luton	1 goal
Southampton	nil

Menzies was shockingly slow in front of goal, and should have had an easy goal in the first minute. The crowd was very exasperated, but that made no difference. Southampton missed an easy chance in front of the Luton posts.

The play veered from one end to the other without anything very exciting occurring. Luton were having the better of the play at this point.

Gradually Luton forced the play to the Southampton end, but a free kick fell to the lot of the defenders. A determined dash was made on the right, but Gregory guarded the ball over the line.

Platt made a grand save from Bainbridge, and then Hodgkinson sent weakly by the post. At the other end a sensational incident occurred, for Lock caught the ball and stood holding it against Moody and Stansfield. One of them kicked the ball out of his hands, and then Haycock sent just wide.

Platt saved from Jefferies against the post, and then gave a corner. A bully failed in front of the goal, but the ball was worked away, and Haycock got a kick in the chest in the play which ensued, but quickly recovered.

Gregory was playing a grand game in defence, and was giving his most improved display of the season. Stansfield proved a continual source of worry to Jepp, and, getting in a nice centre, Haycock headed to the goalkeeper.

Menzies fouled an opponent, but nothing came of the free kick. The two extreme wingers of Southampton were repeatedly pulled up for offside, and were always found on the danger line in this respect.

Brown forced a corner, which he placed well, and a struggle took place in front of goal, but the siege was eventually raised, and the ball, once more taken off by the never-despairing Southampton forwards, travelled to the Luton end, only to be carried behind. Hardly had the ball been kicked off again when the whistle went for time, leaving the score standing:

Luton	1 goal
Southampton	nil