

FOOTBALL.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

REVENGE AT LAST.

Leyton beat Luton.

PENALTY DISPUTE AGAIN.

Judging by the preliminary notices in the Press Leyton were literally thirsting for revenge on Saturday. It appears that the fact Luton had won the three previous games this season had fired the Leytonian's ambition to do or die at this final encounter of the season. Luton were two short of the cup team, McCurdy not having recovered from his injury, while R. Hawkes could not get away from business. The teams were as under:—

Luton: Platt; Dimmock and Gregory; R. Hawkes, White, and Jones; Brown, Haycock, Menzies, Moody, and Stansfield.

Leyton: Whitbourne; Meredith and Longworth; Buchanan, Cresser, and Gray; Nicholls, Seeburg, Remneville, Ryder, and Mayo.

Referee, Mr. P. Dommett, Portsmouth.

Bred Hawkes was captain for the day, but he maintained his namesake's penchant for losing the toss, and Menzies kicked off.

Luton went off in good style, and right away threatened danger, Moody and Stansfield getting through, but Meredith blocked the way, and just cleared the initial rush. This was only a forerunner of many similar incidents. Indeed, for the opening 20 minutes Luton appeared likely to score time after time, but the defensive tactics of the Leytonians prevailed, and as events turned out, the opportunity of winning the first Southern League match away was frittered away. At this stage the forward work of Luton was very pretty to watch, but it did not spell goals. Somehow the attentions of Meredith and Longworth could not be shaken off, and the inside men could not manage a clear opening, and Whitbourne was always equal to a chance shot from a distance. Matters did look promising when Menzies very cleverly threaded his way through the centre, and passed the ball right on to Haycock's toe in a splendid position, but the referee judged Haycock off-side, although it must have been a question of inches only, for he appeared, from the stand, to be practically in a line with the backs when Menzies pushed the ball through.

When the game was nearly half-an-hour old a breakthrough by Nicholls almost led up to a goal, but Gregory succeeded in getting in the way of the Leyton player's shot, the ball striking him hard on the shoulder. Immediately the referee pointed to the penalty spot, much to the surprise of Platt and Co., and it was not long before Mr. Dommett discovered the Luton players were very much upset by his ruling. Eventually he was persuaded to consult the linesman on that side of the field, but still he persisted in giving the penalty, evidently mistaking what the linesman said, for the latter official at once rushed on to the field to prevent this miscarriage of justice taking place, and the upshot was the ball was thrown up several yards outside the penalty area. Naturally, the spectators made a demonstration, but matters soon quieted down, and the game slackened considerably.

Just after Moody was observed to walk off the field, he having broken down in the thigh, and this proved the turning point of the game, for his absence appeared to quite upset the forward machinery, and Luton never afterwards were the attacking party for any sustained period. Before Moody reached the dressing room Leyton also had a man off, Rensville running on after Platt had cleared the ball, meeting Peter's boot, and was laid off by the trainer, both sides finishing the first half with ten men. No score came up to the interval, although, undoubtedly, Luton had the better of the game.

In the second half both sides had the full number of players out again, but Moody changed places with Stansfield, and was little better than a passenger. Consequently, Leyton took the game in hand, and quite overwhelmed their opponents, and it was only a question of how long the Luton defence would hold out. After a quarter of an hour's play Rensville succeeded in forcing an opening, and running clean he had nothing but Platt to beat, and he made no mistake, giving the Luton goalkeeper no chance with a cross shot, which went in off the extreme post. The match was now won without a doubt, and Moody soon afterwards tired for good, finding he could be of no service whatever. Indeed he could not run at all, and, therefore, was quite wasted on the wing.

Ten minutes from time Ryder scored a second goal for Leyton, following a succession of corner kicks, with a grand drive from about 15 yards' range, after the ball had been cleared twice from the flag kick. Luton certainly on one or two occasions managed to get down, mainly by individual efforts, it is true, and once Brown almost brought off a goal, but Whitbourne dashing out, got to the ball first, and prevented the Lutonian getting a clear shot at goal. Result:—

Leyton,	Two goals
Luton,	Nil

What the result would have been if Moody had not broken down it is impossible to say, but the fact remains, in the second half the Luton attack was never seriously pushed home, and each member of the front rank appeared to play quite on his own. Brown was quite as often in the centre of the field as in his proper position near the touch line, and it was almost laughable to see a pass from the centre, intended doubtless for either Brown or Stansfield, coolly picked up by a Leyton half-back.

Platt was not to blame for the defeat, and on the whole Gregory played well, but Dimmock was not always equal to holding in check the lively Mayo when the Leytonians found their feet in the second half. The middle line did their part, but even they were hard pressed during the second half, and Harours undoubtedly went to the better side on the day.