

Western League.

LUTON FAIL AT THE PALACE

A TALE OF EIGHT GOALS.

At the Crystal Palace, on Monday, Luton played the Palace in the Western League. The teams were as below:—

Crystal Palace: Johnson; Collyer and Needham; Lewis, Ryan and Thorp; Barker, Swan, Banchope, W Lawrence and Woodger.

Luton: Jarvis; Dimmock and Gregory; F Hawkes, Bradley and Jones; Stansfield, Haycock, Menzies, Moody and Johnson.

Referee, Lieut. W C Clover, Leicester.

This match had been postponed on two occasions through cup-tie replays, and appeared likely to be put off again on account of the wretched weather experienced last week end. But an improvement overhead rendered the game possible, although naturally the pitch was in a terribly soft state. Both clubs were fairly well represented, and it will be noticed Bradley was playing at centre half, a position, it is understood, he prefers to any other.

In the early stages Luton quite held their own, the first real opening being made by Haycock, who neatly tricked Thorp and passed the ball well across to Johnson, but the latter centred a bit too far forward, and Needham cleared in fine style before Menzies could get to the ball. Luton kept the ball in the Palace half for some time, but after ten minutes' play Woodger got clear away and tried a long shot from the touch-line, but the elevation was a trifle high, and the ball sailed harmlessly over the bar.

A pass well up the field from Menzies was secured by Stansfield, who started to run just inside his own half or he would have been offside. Stansfield worked towards goal in good style, but Needham just managed to get back in time to give a corner, and this Jones put right over. A bit later Haycock, snapping up a pass from Menzies took a clean shot, which almost shaved the upright, this being by far the best effort up to this stage. It was now Jarvis's turn to be a bit busy, and he twice brought off fine saves by coming out and fisting away centres from the wing, while a minute later he got down to a swift ground attempt from Lewis following a free kick just outside the penalty area.

Stansfield, who was doing well against Needham, made another run from a pass from the centre of the field, and holding the ball until in a good position, he tried Johnson with a fine drive which almost forced its way between the uprights, but Johnson falling down just managed to turn the ball round the post. Neither side could be said to possess any advantage on the actual play, but when the game was thirty-five minutes old Woodger succeeded in getting the ball across and Lawrence turned the ball through, Jarvis having no chance. Before the interval the Glaziers were another goal up, and again Jarvis was a bit unlucky, for he cleverly fisted away a hot shot from Barker, getting the ball well out of goal, but it fell at the feet of Ryan, who promptly returned the ball, and to the surprise of everybody it passed into the net after it appeared to be travelling wide, Jarvis being quite as surprised as anybody, and the crowd did not even cheer. Luton were thus two goals down after an even first half.

The start of the second half was rather tame, but in saving a header from Bauchope Jarvis was rather seriously hurt, and after some attention on the ground was led away for medical advice from the club doctor, it being feared a bone was broken. Fortunately, however, it was not so bad as that, and he came back again after being off a quarter of an hour. In the meantime Johnson fell back into goal, and during the time he acted as deputy custodian he made at least one good save by neatly tipping a dropping shot from Bauchope over the bar. But he could not keep out Bauchope a few minutes later, when he got clean through and put in a cross grounders, and thereby started his shooting practice which was to have serious consequences before the finish.

In tackling Woodger as he was coming through Dimmock rather badly fouled the Palace favourite. The referee, after consultation with a linesman, awarded a penalty, although the offence took place just outside the fatal area. Indeed, Woodger himself placed the ball from an ordinary free kick. Jarvis was coming on the field as this took place, and he defended the goal when Collyer advanced to take the penalty, but no goalkeeper could have prevented the ball entering the net. With a four goal lead the game was practically settled, and Luton players were apparently quite disheartened at the state of the score and fell away badly. Still a quarter of an hour from time nothing further had been done in the way of scoring, and one of the Glazier's officials expressed the information Luton were extremely unlucky to be four goals down. But before the final whistle, behold the score was actually doubled, Bauchope adding three, making his record for the match into four, and just on time Woodger managed to improve upon a corner kick greatly to the delight of the crowd, who were very anxious their favourite "Lady" would get a goal. Result:—Crystal Palace 8 goals, Luton nil.

It was a laughing matter for them, but the Luton players appeared quite downhearted as they made their way to the pavilion.

It could not altogether be put down to Jarvis's injury, although doubtless that was one factor, but the chief cause was the manner Bauchope was allowed to run riot in the second half. Each time he netted he was clean through with only Jarvis to beat. Once Jarvis made a dash out—by the way the only thing to do under the circumstances—and threw himself at Bauchope and brought him to the ground, but he recovered first and placed the ball into an empty goal before Jarvis could get back again.

Dimmock and Gregory did not appear to have a proper understanding with each other, while Bradley quite failed to prove himself a more capable centre half than either Jones or White. Still he put in good work at times, giving one the impression he was more effective in attack than defence. Stansfield was the most effective forward, but the line as a whole were weak at finishing. In midfield they were usually well able to hold their own, but were either hustled off the ball at close quarters or failed to trust themselves to have a pop at goal.

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Notes on the Game

It was a remarkable wind-up to the Western League programme, and the score far from represents the game. The heavy scoring quite pleased the local crowd, who extracted some kind of consolation for that terrible whacking at Burnley, and appealed strongly for their pets to make the tally of goals into nine to balance the total up somewhat.