

QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS v. LUTON.

Played at Park Royal on Monday. Result:—

Queen's Park Rangers 4 goals.

Luton nil.

Luton substituted Dimmock for McCurdy, the latter being indisposed; otherwise they were represented as on Saturday. The following did duty for

Queen's Park Rangers—Shaw; McDonald and Fidler; Duff, Morris, and Downing; McNaught, Rogers, Snellgrove, P. G. Skilton, and Barnes.

Referee, Mr. D. Hammond (Heywood, near Manchester).

Luton have had several disastrous financial seasons, but never such a one as the Rangers are experiencing this. Although they have no one but themselves to thank for the unfortunate position in which they find themselves regarding Saturday matches, it is none the less a weary time for their directors. It was stated in the official programme that the match receipts to date were £2,671, whilst players' wages alone had amounted to £3,531, and with other expenses the loss on the season would be at least £2,000—rather a heavy fine for their offence certainly. On Monday, 2,000 would be a liberal estimate of the attendance, and these were mostly huddled together on the stand, for soon after the start the sixpenny crowd made a rush across the ends and were finally allowed shelter.

It would have caused little surprise if the referee had pronounced the conditions unfit, for a regular blizzard was blowing almost direct into one goal, and the team called upon to defend that end would be almost blinded by the snow driving in their faces. With heavy programmes to face, neither club was anxious for a postponement, and Mr. Hammond, after a visit to the centre of the field, said, "We will get it over somehow."

Unfortunately for Luton's chances of notching their long-looked-for away victory, F. Hawkes lost the toss, and it was really a question of keeping

down the score up to the interval, with a view of putting matters right on changing over. Still, the fact of battling against such odds invariably tells, and when the teams change over the unlucky side are not in a condition to equal the performance of their opponents if they manage to secure any thing like a lead. Quite early the Rangers were a goal up, this coming from a penalty kick given against Jones for handling. It was only after consulting both linesmen that this decision was come to; indeed, it was really given by the flag-holder on the stand side, for the referee was proceeding with the game until his attention was called to the offence by that official. Jones protested strongly against the ruling, and many were inclined to agree that it was quite accidental.

However, a penalty it was, and Downing succeeded in forcing the ball through. Platt got his hand down to it, but could not prevent it finding the corner of the net. While the Rangers naturally monopolised the game, Stansfield and Brown were always on the look-out for a pass out, and the former especially got through in fine style on several occasions. Indeed, there was far more justification for a penalty kick than the one given to the Rangers when McDonald fouled Stansfield inside the area, for a goal was practically certain, but nothing was awarded. The writer, who was sitting beside Bowman, the ex-Ranger and Norwich City manager, was informed by that individual that he should have given one without hesitation.

The Rangers' second goal came from a long shot by Morris, who, meeting a return from the goal-mouth, drove it back before Platt could realise the situation. It was a good goal, but none the less had an element of luck about it, for on a fine day it would scarcely have reached its destination and Platt would have been able to watch its flight. As it was, he appeared completely taken by surprise. McNaught, who has improved wonderfully since the start of the season, when he was pitchforked, as it were, into Pentland's position in the charity match and was such a rank failure, was in fine form, and was constantly coming through and planting the ball well across the goal-mouth. It was really surprising more advantage was not taken of the openings, but a little before the interval, from one such manoeuvre, Barnes managed to get the ball through. At least two of the Rangers' inside forwards had completely missed the pass, and Skilton in particular appeared to be much better placed than our old friend "Billy."

Luton quite expected to reap the advantage of the snow and wind on changing over, but when they came back after the interval the blizzard had ceased altogether, and the game was fought out to the finish under more pleasant conditions than during the first half. Although the players naturally preferred this from the point of view of their own comfort, the Lutonians had a grievance, inasmuch as the Rangers had the better of both halves, for unquestionably they were fresher than Luton during the second portion. Of course the game became more even, and the home side never appeared likely to lose their winning advantage. Still, most spectators expected the lead would be reduced, and one grand drive from Stansfield fully deserved to score, but it was not to be, and just as the crowd were preparing to leave the field to get their seats on the only train which leaves this outlandish spot within an hour and a half after the match, another goal went to swell the Rangers' score.

A free kick was given against Gregory, and this being well placed was never got away, Barnes screwing the ball through between Platt and the upright; indeed, Platt really turned it into the net, the ball being somewhat diverted by touching Dimmock as it travelled towards the goal. Thus Barnes netted a couple against his old comrades, and was naturally pleased, for it always appears to give more pleasure to score against a club a player has once served.

The Rangers deserved the points on the play, but Luton were certainly unlucky in having all the worst of the conditions prevailing on Monday, and, as already explained, the game was won and lost in tossing for choice of ends. Platt was not to blame for the defeat, although he touched three of the shots that scored. Gregory was the better back, and used his weight with advantage. All the halves worked well, especially when called upon to defend against the blizzard. Forward Stansfield once more proved the most dangerous member of the line, and it is apparent that Brown has not fully shaken off the effects of his recent illness. Haycock now appears to have little confidence in his own ability to get through, and parts with the ball far too quickly when he has a good chance to go through himself. The left wing was much the better pair.