

The Southern League.

Queen's Park Rangers v. Luton.

LUTON FACE A BLIZZARD.

Three Goals Down at Interval.

SNOW CEASES IN SECOND HALF.

Luton made one change from Saturday, McCurdy being replaced by Dimmock, while the Rangers were without the services of Green, who was representing Ireland v Scotland. Teams:—

Queens Park Rangers—Shaw; McDonald and Fidler; Duff, Morris and Downing; McNaught, Rogers, Snellgrove, P. Skilton and Barnes.

Luton—Platt; Dimmock and Gregory; F Hawkes (White, and Jones; Brown, Haycock, Menzies, Moody and Stansfield.

Referee, Mr. D. Hammond (Heywood).

When the players left Luton, little fault could be found with the weather conditions, but on arrival at Park Royal a regular blizzard was in progress, and the referee, who journeyed down by the same train, quickly took a look round on the pitch to judge if it was possible to start. He, however, decided to go on with the match, although it was certain whoever won the toss would have the better chance of getting the points. As luck turned out the Rangers were the fortunate side, and Luton were called upon to face the force of a blinding snow storm. The falling flakes were not of the large feathery type, but with a strong wind blowing, the smaller, hard cutting pieces of what was really ice were most difficult to contend with, and no one present envied the players.

However, the first real run down resulted from a pass from Haycock to Moody, but the latter's shot was placed wide, and the ball was quickly down at the Luton end. In tackling Skilton, Gregory slipped up, but he managed to relieve the pressure for the moment. Still, naturally the game was contested at this end of the field, although the Luton defence was steady, and Platt was not particularly busy. About four minutes from the start Jones got in the way of a centre from McNaught, and the ball struck his arm while he was about two yards from the extreme corner of the penalty area. The referee himself took no notice, and the game was still going on when the crowd called his attention to the fact the linesman was waving his flag. The game was stopped, and both linesmen were consulted, and eventually a penalty kick was awarded, Jones and Co. protesting strongly. Downing came up to take the kick, and with a hard drive forced the ball into the corner of the net. Platt got his hands to the ball, but could not stop its course. This was a lucky point, for the danger was not apparent, and if Jones handled there was no cause whatever to have done so, but it appeared quite accidental to the majority of spectators on the stand.

Although the Rangers continued to have the most of the game, Luton were not altogether giving anything away, and Brown put in one particularly fine run from a long pass put out by Menzies. The Luton outside right got clear away and working towards goal at the same time, he let drive with a cross attempt which almost shaved the cross bar as it flew over. A minute later Menzies tried a shot from long range, and getting plenty of powder behind the ball, it appeared a likely scorer, but the direction was about a yard wide, and only a goal kick resulted. There were hopes at this stage that an equaliser would come along, and a fight be made for the points, but following a corner kick a second goal fell to the Rangers. The ball was splendidly placed, but Platt got it away well down the field, and for the moment danger seemed averted, but the ball coming out to Morris, he banged it back before anyone realised a shot was coming. Indeed, Platt looked quite surprised when he found the ball in the net. It was a fine shot and deserved a goal, but the wind was greatly responsible for it scoring, as it undoubtedly increased the pace and thereby gave Platt no chance to prepare for what was quite a surprise return.

The Rangers were now all out for goals, and Platt had the busiest time of the afternoon. He stopped a grand cross drive from Barnes, who was being fed from the opposite wing pretty freely. It was only occasionally Luton could force the ball from their end, but Stansfield managed to get down from an individual run from inside his own half and got within shooting distance when he was badly fouled by McDonald, and it was a surprise to the Rangers' supporters a penalty was not given, but the referee did not consider it his duty to consult his linesmen, and Luton were not given the chance of reducing the lead by this method. From a free kick some forty yards out, White put in a hard drive, but it went straight to Shaw, and was easily cleared. A run down by Haycock and Brown looked dangerous, Stansfield meeting the cross pass within ten yards of Shaw, but McDonald managed to get in the way and relieved the situation by kicking into touch.

After Platt had saved a good attempt from Rogers by giving a corner the Rangers came through again by the agency of McNaught, who squared the ball finely, but Snellgrove and Skilton both missed it, the latter's mistake appearing to be a bad one, but it did not matter for the ball went over to Barnes, and he netted goal No. 3 from a difficult angle. Another such movement was splendidly stopped by Platt, the old Lutonian getting in a fine cross attempt. Just before the interval a determined attempt was made by Luton to reduce the lead, and Moody did his utmost to force matters by tackling Shaw who held the ball, but the Rangers' goalie managed to retain the sphere until he could shake off the attentions of Moody and finally he threw it out of danger. Interval:—

Queen's Park Rangers 3 goals, Luton nil.

When the players retired the gale was still blowing, and the snow falling fast, but, curiously, it dropped considerably while they were away, and on resumption the conditions were greatly improved. While this made matters more pleasant it did not improve Luton's chances, for the Rangers were never called upon to face the blizzard as Luton were, and consequently suffered no handicap. Naturally they were not penned in to the extent they were expected to be, and the game was more open than in the first half. Indeed, during the opening stages of the second half the Rangers came nearer to scoring than Luton. Barnes and Skilton were a troublesome pair, and the latter wriggled through in fine style, and sending in a beauty, completely beat Platt, but the ball struck the cross-bar, and rebounded to McNaught, whose shot travelled almost the length of goal about two feet above the bar.

Rogers was getting perilously near goal when Gregory, who was playing a strong game, shouldered him off in perfectly fair but vigorous manner, and the crowd appealed for a penalty without any result this time. The best attempt Luton made came from Stansfield, who running through all opposition, wound up with a trimming shot, which Shaw lost altogether, but it just failed to find the corner, and neither Moody or Haycock were able to force it through, although both arrived on the scene as the ball came off the upright. It was apparent by this time Luton would be unable to recover from the effects of the handicap of the first half, but they seemed quite likely to maintain a clean sheet for the second half, when less than two minutes from the finish Gregory fouled Rogers about ten yards outside the penalty area. The free kick was put well up, and the ball was headed over to Barnes, who was standing wide and he sent it forward, and in its flight it touched Dimmock just sufficiently to deceive Platt, who got down to it, only to himself turn it into the net. Result:—

Queen's Park Rangers 4 goals, Luton nil.