

LUTON v. NEW BROMPTON.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result :—

Luton	3 goals.
New Brompton	nil.

Teams :—Luton—Platt; Chapman and McCurdy; F. Hawkes, Jones, and R. Hawkes; Brown, Hayrock, Bradley, Moody, and Stansfield. New Brompton — Bateup; Boyle and Nobbs; Hender, Mavin, and Arthurs; Powell, Eames, Whyman, Sheppard, and Pickett. Referee, Mr. W. Chadwick, Blackburn.

The very moderate performances of the Luton team in recent matches having caused a rather rapid descent on the table, on Saturday morning Luton were placed seventh from the bottom, with only five points more than Coventry and two more than Norwich City, who were in the penultimate position. The prospects were not bright, and supporters of the home club had begun to think seriously about the possibility that Luton might be in the last two at the end of the season.

This fact accounted for the important change in the home team on Saturday. Menzies had kept the forwards together, but goals were few and far between. So the Directors decided to give Bradley another chance. It cannot be said that the experiment was attended by great success, for although Luton won, the goals were not the outcome of any work on the part of the centre forward. He certainly forced the play at times, but throughout the game he gave evidence of a great deal less skill than Menzies would have shown under similar circumstances.

They are two totally different types of players. Menzies is nothing if not scientific, and he keeps the forwards together well. In some recent matches, it is true, there has been too much finesing on the part of the forwards, but even that is preferable to a mere kick and rush style of play. Bradley had very little control over the ball, and only a few times did he keep it long enough to dispose of it to the best advantage. He has played better than he did on Saturday, when his display was a disappointment to some four thousand people.

Bradley kicked off, and Luton at once went away, but Brown's centre was cleared. Luton had the better of the play for some minutes, and Nobbs was not over-scrupulous in his dealings with Brown. When Brompton first got dangerous, Platt coolly fisted away. Then Nobbs sustained a slight injury in a collision with Fred Hawkes, and left the field for a little while.

Another stoppage was caused through Stansfield being kicked on the head, but he was soon able to resume. Then a free kick for Luton was taken by Brown, and although it was cleared Luton continued to give the Brompton defence a warm time. The best shot so far was put in by Fred Hawkes, Bateup only just turning the ball over. The resultant corner was not improved upon. Brompton again made tracks, but Platt fisted out, and a free kick for a foul by Jones was not turned to account.

In another attack Eames had a good chance after Platt had come out to save. He shot sideways and Pickett met the ball near the post, driving the sphere wide. When Luton attacked again, Boyle rushed across and prevented Bradley from meeting Brown's centre. At the other end a short range shot from Pickett travelled over the corner of the goal. Stansfield was next prominent with three or four good centres. Bradley was well marked, and when he fell at full length in front of goal there were loud cries for a penalty. On the whole the play was not very interesting, but Luton were the better team.

A free kick taken by Bob Hawkes was well placed, and Bradley got in a kick, but someone happened to be in the way. Good play on the Luton left wing led to a hot assault on the Brompton goal. Bradley tried to head the ball, which was going out of play when Haycock returned it. A goal seemed imminent, but Moody shot high over. A little later Bradley got in a good single-handed run which resulted in a corner off one of the backs.

A shot from Haycock promised trouble, but Bateup brought off a good save, managing to elude Bradley and throw over the goal. The corner having been cleared, Brompton went away, and a piece of uncertain play by Jones, who had the ball between his feet, almost led to a goal. He only kicked the ball a few yards, but Platt was ready for the expected shot and quickly saved.

Nothing had been scored at the interval, but it was hoped that with the wind in their favour Luton would do better; in the first half Brompton had been quite as likely to score as the home team. The first incident in the second half was a miskick by Chapman, who let in Pickett. McCurdy met the centre, however, and Luton were soon at the other end, where a corner was forced.

After McCurdy had pleased the spectators with a couple of good clearances, Brown put in a centre which gave Moody a chance, but the inside-left stumbled over the ball. When he recovered he twisted round and shot over the corner of the goal.

R. Hawkes did the only possible thing in giving away a corner when the Luton defence was in difficulties. The Light Blues then took up the running, and Boyle kicked in the wrong direction. Bradley and Brown rushed forward, but Bateup ran out and cleared. He was beaten directly afterwards, however, Moody heading through a well-placed flag kick taken by Stansfield.

A considerable portion of the spectators thought there was an element of luck about this goal, as Stanfield seemed to be offside when he commenced the run which ended in one of the backs kicking behind. The longed-for success came a quarter of an hour after the interval, and that it afforded considerable encouragement to the Luton men was shown by an improvement in their play.

A rush by Bradley came to naught, for Moody had to turn round, and Haycock's attempt at the open goal went wide. A free kick for a foul on Brown led to another assault, and a promising shot by Fred Hawkes was headed over by one of the visiting defenders. Fred Hawkes almost ran through on his own a minute later, Bateup, with Bradley in close attendance, only just turning the ball round the post.

Luton's second goal was scored twenty-five minutes after the resumption. A centre by Stansfield was put through by Moody, and the point counted, although some of the Brompton players protested that the inside-left had helped the ball through with his arm. A high shot by Stansfield gave Bateup and his backs considerable trouble. Before the attack was cleared Stansfield obtained the ball in a good position, but Bateup prevented him from shooting; to many people it seemed that the goalkeeper held Stansfield's boot.

Then Luton were robbed of a goal through the too prompt action of the referee. A fine centre by Brown was well headed through by Moody—the point was better than the two which had preceded it—but as the ball entered the net Mr. Chadwick blew his whistle for a foul on Brown. A penalty was awarded, but Brown's shot went straight to Bateup, who saved almost under the bar. The referee must have felt sorry that he had been rather hasty with his decision, for of course it would have been within his discretion to award a goal if he had waited for a moment before blowing his whistle.

Rushes upon the Brompton goal were a feature of this part of the game, owing partly, no doubt, to the style adopted by Bradley. In one of these Haycock went into the net, but Bateup just managed to fist away. Fred Hawkes headed wide from a corner taken by Stansfield, and at the other end Platt brought off two saves. He had not been really tested during the afternoon, however. In the last half-minute Jones headed through from a corner taken by Stansfield.

Although Luton were the better team, there was not a very great deal to choose between the sides. It was only fair that the goals should come from the left wing and Jones, for they were prominent throughout, though Bob and Fred Hawkes both played fine football. Brown was hardly so effective as usual, and Haycock suffered in consequence. Chapman was good at back, and with more experience should develop into a sound player. McCurdy was in great form, his display, perhaps, being the best he has given this season.