

FOOTBALL NOTES and NEWS

By "GOALPOST."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

LUTON'S DRAW WITH SOUTHEND UNITED.

While a few may have thought Luton unlucky in only making a draw with Southend United on Saturday afternoon, the greater part of the six thousand spectators no doubt felt satisfied with the result. Taken on the whole, a draw was a very fair indication of the game. It was not to be expected that Luton with an inferior team to that of last season—while Southend are a much improved lot—were going to repeat last year's performance, when the Blues won 3-0 on the Ivy-road enclosure.

On Saturday Luton were compelled to have a re-arranged team. Moody, who was injured at Reading, was unable to turn out, and Moore was placed in the front line. Jones, too, is suffering from an abscess on the neck, and his place was taken by Slennett, of the Reserves. Otherwise Luton had their usual men in the field. The visitors were at full strength, and as they turned out they looked a well balanced side. The state of the weather and the condition of the ground were ideal, and a fast game was anticipated.

The visitors won the toss, and decided to play against the sun. Luton settled down immediately after Smith had set the ball in motion. During the first quarter of an hour, Cotton's charge had several of the usual narrow escapes, Smith in particular having very "hard lines" in not finding the net. It was some time before Southend found their feet, but eventually they came down the field. Their first essay, however, was but a fruitless corner. A second attempt was more successful. Frost dashed away, and passed to King, with the result that the centre-forward had no difficulty in finding the net.

This put a very different construction on the game. Smarting under this reverse, the Blues went away. Stansfield shot for goal; Cotton fumbled the leather, and Quinn getting up, equalised. For some time play ruled more even. Eventually, however, Quinn took a pot shot, and had the surprised satisfaction of seeing the ball find the net.

However, the pendulum was to swing once more. Southend were inclined to force matters, and a few minutes to the interval, King equalised with a brilliant shot; but it was felt, all the same, that Jarvis ought easily to have cleared. Be that as it may, half-time arrived with the scores level.

Resuming, Luton showed much promise, but during the early stages of the second half an injury to his ankle robbed the side of the services of their captain. "Bob" had to leave the field, and did not return. Of course, this made a great difference to the game, and naturally Southend were not slow in taking advantage of the weak point in the home side.

Up to now there had been some features of interest. And here came perhaps the most remarkable of them all. Southend raced away. Crews, on the left wing, beat Chapman, and centred to King who netted from a terrific drive. There was an appeal for offside. The linesman vigorously waved his flag, but the referee (Mr. E. W. Childs, of West Ham) pointed to the centre of the field. The linesman, however, ran across to the "ref.," and a heated argument took place between those two officials and the players. Mr. Childs, however, stuck to his decision, at which there was intense dissatisfaction, there being angry shouts from the crowd.

Then followed another peculiar incident. Five minutes later, Molyneux was penalised for handling but there was certainly considerable doubt as to whether the Southend back handled the ball at all. Anyway, the impression of the crowd was that the "ref." gave the point to Luton just to "square" matters. In an ordinary case, so paltry was the infringement—if there really was one—that no penalty would have been given. Hedley took the kick; Cotton stopped the ball with his feet, but it curled round and rolled into the net. Thus the scores once more stood level, and as nothing further occurred, the game ended in a draw of three goals each.