

# FROM THE FOOTBALL FIELD.

## Southern League.

### LUTON'S HOLIDAY PROGRAMME.

#### Heavy Scoring in the Mud at Coventry.

#### Blues Weakened Through Injury.

Luton's matches with Coventry City appeared fated to result in heavy scoring. Last season seven goals were scored in each match, and the home side won by a big margin. On Christmas Eve, at Coventry, the total went one higher, and again the home side came out on top. As Bob Hawkes and Brown were unable through business reasons to make the journey, Johnson and Trueman were brought into the team, Johnson taking the outside right position so as not to upset the combination. The teams were:—

Coventry:—Newbigging; Saul and Hanson; Hickleton, Bradley and Chaplin; Tickle, Arnold, Smith, Hendren and Buckle.

Luton Town:—Jarvis; Hedley and McCurdy; F Hawkes, Jones and Trueman; Johnson, Quinn, Smith, Moody and Stansfield.

Referee, Mr. L. E. Swain, Northampton.

Luton were a goal up within two minutes. Stansfield made a brilliant run down and put the ball splendidly across to Quinn, who took a shot from close range and Saul, who was facing his own goal, turned the ball through. Following this Coventry attacked strongly, but Jarvis brought off several fine saves, and for quite twenty minutes the Luton defence could not be pierced. A serious misfortune came along, however, when F Hawkes was kicked on the head. A shot from the Coventry player's boot made a deep cut in the acting captain's cranium, and he was led off the field covered with blood, and was away about ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. During his absence two goals were netted by Coventry, and this proved the turning point of the game. McCurdy clean missed his kick in midfield when the first was scored, and Arnold had a clear run into goal and easily beat Jarvis. Smith netted the second with a smart long drive on the ground, and for the moment Luton appeared to fall away.

Fred Hawkes' return soon altered matters, and Moody set Stansfield going once more. Harold put the ball right in and as Newbigging only partially saved Johnson, dashing up, drove the ball well home, thus bringing the scores level once more. The game promised to be a real struggle for mastery at this stage, but again misfortune befel the Luton defence, for McCurdy was badly knocked out, and after attention was led off the field. He did not return until the second half. After "Mac" had left Buckle sent in a lightning drive from the goal line which brought Jarvis down. Dick could not stop the goal, the ball going just inside. Luton strongly protested against this goal, as Buckle appeared well offside when he secured the ball, but after consulting one of the linesmen the referee gave it. During a dash towards goal Smith was brought down by Hedley inside the penalty area. The charge appeared to be from the shoulder, and there was consternation among the Luton players when a penalty was awarded. It was an even worse blunder than the award of the third goal. Bradley, after a considerable amount of consultation, was selected to take the penalty, and he sent in a regular pile-driver. Jarvis managed to punch the ball, but he could not turn it sufficiently out of its course, and it rebounded off the net just inside the upright, making the score at half-time—Coventry City 4, Luton 2.

Luton came out with eleven men after the interval, but McCurdy was badly "crooked," and could not get about much, although he kicked with good judgment. Within a minute the home side were able to notch a fifth goal. Buckle made a run through and centred the ball across the mouth of the goal. Smith allowed it to travel to Arnold,

and the latter promptly banged it through. The sixth and final goal came as the result of another run through by Buckle, who this time touched the ball inside to Hendren, and the last mentioned player shot in hard. Jarvis punched the shot well out, but Tickle met the ball and drove it back with tremendous force before Jarvis could recover.

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Of course, Luton's chance now appeared quite hopeless, but, curious to relate, they afterwards played up in such a style that if they had turned their chances to advantage they might even have saved the game. During the last quarter of an hour they took at least ten corners, but none were improved upon. Newbigging, who had shaped none too well at the start, now played brilliantly, and although he was tried with all kinds of shots he kept them out, and Luton most undeservedly suffered one of their heaviest defeats. Result:—Coventry City 6, Luton 2.

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While it is true the Coventry forwards played finely the score greatly flattered them. They were helped considerably by the injuries sustained by the Luton defenders, for in addition to F. Hawkes and McCurdy, who were compelled to leave the field, Hedley went lame early in the game, and with Trueman in place of Bob Hawkes this department suffered considerably.

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Eli Bradley, who appears to have settled down at centre-half, is a hero in Coventry, and shared the favours of the crowd with Buckle, whose wing work was very fine. Bradley, who was playing against several old colleagues, seemed to revel in the mud which, by the way, was a great handicap to the players at one end of the field, and mistakes were made on both sides in consequence of the ball literally sticking in the mud while the players floundered badly.

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Jarvis and Stansfield were Luton's most successful players, although Johnson did by no means badly in his new position on the right, and could have been given more work with advantage to his side.

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Although practically a mid-week match, there were nearly six thousand spectators present, which speaks well for the support obtained at Coventry. The lowest Saturday gate of the club to date is £140, and they have more than once topped £200. Luton must buck up!