

The Southern League.

LUTON v. SOUTHAMPTON.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Southampton	4 goals.
Luton	3 goals.

Teams:—

Luton—Jarvis; Chapman and Hedley; F. Hawkes, Jones, and R. Hawkes; Brown, Quinn, Smith, Moody, and Stansfield.

Southampton—Burrows; Eastham and Glover; Johnston, Jepp, and Trueman; Bainbridge, Jeffers, McGibbon, Carter, and Blake.

Referee, Mr. A. G. Neale (New Southgate).

This season Luton have felt the financial strain consequent upon an early exit from the English Cup Competition. Therefore there was all the more reason for well-wishers to hope that the Club would have a good gate, and that the home team would win on Saturday. The gate was not a good one, however, only about four thousand people being present, although the weather was fine.

The game, too, was disappointing from a Luton point of view. About twenty-five minutes after the start Southampton were leading by 4 goals to nil, and seemed likely to run up a big score. Their forwards adopted thrustful tactics which completely nonplussed the Luton defence. Fortunately, the home players were able to improve their position as the game wore on.

The early successes of the Southampton forwards, led by that well-known opportunist, McGibbon, were partly due to the weakness of the home backs, Chapman especially being to blame. Meanwhile the Luton forwards were playing their usual short-passing game, which was unsuitable on the heavy ground and against such backs as Eastham and Glover.

It was hardly to be wondered at that some of the spectators should feel on rather bad terms with themselves, but this did not justify them in hooting the referee during the greater part of the game. Mr Neale did blow his whistle frequently, and two or three of his decisions were wrong, but in the main he was right.

The chief feature of the first half had been the direct methods adopted by the Southampton forwards and their fine finish. In the second half they fell off, missing several good opportunities when it seemed that they must score. The Luton backs improved, and Chapman's spoiling tactics stood him in good stead. It is a great pity that he and Hedley have not the knack of recovering themselves quickly.

Both teams were at full strength. Luton defended the town end in the first half. Within about a minute Carter, the Southampton inside-left, had scored with a fairly long cross shot well out of the reach of Jarvis. This goal was but a foretaste of what was coming. Almost immediately Blake made a fine run and Bob Hawkes mis-kicking in front of goal, Bainbridge was presented with a fine chance, which he was not quick enough to turn to account.

Two or three times the Southampton forwards swept down the field in almost irresistible fashion. Somehow their attacks were cleared. A very pretty run was then made on the Luton right. Brown and Quinn passing and re-passing for more than half the length of the field. But their cleverness was of no use, for they took the ball too far.

Bainbridge, the Saints' outside-right, then made a run on his own. He finished up by sending the ball across the mouth of goal and out of play against the far post. This was a near thing, but the next attempt was nearer—right on the target, in fact. Carter burst through and centred. The ball went off Hedley to McGibbon, who took deliberate aim, giving Jarvis no chance.

The Luton forwards were next to take up the running. Moody centred, and Burrows went out as far as the penalty line, where he was fouled by Stansfield in a vain endeavour to get at the ball, which the goalkeeper had kept under his control while at the same time conforming with the rules. Brown next attracted attention with a shot which Burrows saved. Fred Hawkes passed to Quinn, who lifted the ball a trifle too high.

Southampton's third goal was not long in coming. It was scored in the play following a corner. McGibbon trapped the ball and scored with a low shot. But although three goals down and feeling rather bewildered, the Luton players kept on trying. A strong kick forward by Jones seemed to give Smith a chance, but one of the backs passed on to Burrows, who was able to clear.

The Luton forwards next went down the field in a line, but two or three of them got in each other's way. At the other end McGibbon put in a fine shot from twenty yards' range, and Jarvis had to be smart to save. Then Bainbridge scored Southampton's fourth goal. He ran down the wing, and Hedley was just able to tip the ball to Chapman. The latter missed it, however, and Bainbridge, being left with a clear course, took advantage of the opportunity.

Another fine shot from McGibbon, who was quite thirty yards out, was saved by Jarvis, who flung himself at the ball and fell on it. A couple of good attempts by Jones and one by Moody followed. Smith next got down, but was prevented from getting through, and Moody obtained possession. From him the ball went to Quinn, who made no mistake.

There was still a quarter of an hour to the interval, but no more goals were scored in the first half. During an attack by Luton there were loud cries for a penalty, and Jones pointed to one of the linesmen, who had signalled, but the referee took no notice. A little later Smith was twice fouled when near goal, and while the spectators were shouting, Burrows fisted out a long high shot from Brown.

Both the Luton backs were beaten by Bainbridge, but Jarvis rushed out and cleared. Smith was given offside when in a good position near the penalty line, and there were loud cries of disapproval of this decision, which seemed to be wrong. Another centre by Bainbridge found McGibbon with an open goal but Jarvis rushed out and prevented him from shooting. A little before the interval Moody made a good attempt, shooting just over.

Following an attack by Luton directly after the resumption, McGibbon broke away and presented Blake with an open goal. His shot hit the far post, and Chapman almost put through his own goal, the ball fortunately going out of play. Soon afterwards Jones and one of the Southampton players fell in the penalty area. It looked as though a penalty should have been given against Luton, but Mr. Neale took no notice of the incident.

Both sides attacked after this, and Chapman was prominent with a piece of good work, robbing both McGibbon and Blake. Luton's second goal was obtained by Moody. A centre from Stansfield was touched by one of the backs, and Burrows tried to prevent the ball from going behind for a corner. Moody, who was on the ground, got his foot to the sphere, and managed to put it through.

A good clearance in front of goal was made by Chapman, and Luton making the running, Smith shot hard over the corner of the woodwork. A run and centre by Bainbridge threatened danger. McGibbon was on the spot and headed over—a very near thing. Hedley was successful in an attempt to stop McGibbon, and Luton acting on the aggressive, Fred Hawkes shot on to the top of the net.

The same player had a fine chance a minute later following a corner, but shot wide. A long shot from Bob Hawkes hit the crossbar and fell behind Quinn, who was not in a position to turn the opportunity to account. Smith got very dangerous after this, and there was some suspicion about the way in which Glover cleared, but once again the referee paid no heed to the onlookers.

Another decision which did not please the spectators was the ruling offside of Smith, who scored with a fine cross shot. A little later Chapman prevented Jefferis from shooting, by falling and then giving a corner. This was followed by one for Luton, and F. Hawkes shot hard amongst a crowd of players. One of the Southampton backs happened to be on the goal-line and cleared.

When the Southampton forwards got away in a line they seemed certain to score, but Carter, who had a fine chance, shot over. At the other end Stansfield scored Luton's third goal. Smith (rigi-

nated the movement, and following Brown's centre, the outside-left had an easy task, simply having to touch the ball through. This happened about a minute before the end, and was the extent of the scoring.

No doubt many of the spectators were fully convinced that the result would have been different if the referee had not made any mistakes, but it is an undeniable fact that Southampton were the better team. In view of the way they scored early in the game it is almost unbelievable that on the previous Saturday Manchester City beat them at the Dell by 5 goals to nil in the English Cup Competition.

With better conditions, there is little reason to doubt that the game would have been well contested. The Luton forwards played well enough, albeit they adopted the stereotyped style of play which is so familiar. Brown was the best man in the line, and Smith played well, but he was not so quick as the wily McGibbon in getting on the run. The halves were in good form. Enough has been said about the backs. With regard to Jarvis, it may be said that he could hardly be blamed for the goal scored against him. In one instance he might, perhaps, have done better, but on the other hand he saved some very fine shots.

The behaviour of the crowd was anything but sportsmanlike. The spectators, or some of them, jeered the local players in the early part of the game, when things were going badly, and they booed the referee quite unnecessarily. No doubt the official did make mistakes, but he might have made a good deal worse in Luton's favour without evoking a groan.

Two other visiting clubs obtained victories on Saturday, Leyton being successful at the Crystal Palace by 2 goals to 1, and Coventry City at Bristol by 1 goal to nil. Reading drew at West Ham (1-1), Croydon Common with Queen's Park Rangers (4-4), and Southend at Brighton (1-1). The other results were:—Northampton, 2, Millwall 1; Norwich City 5, Brentford 1; Exeter City 3, New Brompton 2; Portsmouth 5, Watford 0; Swindon, 4, Plymouth 1.