

Football Notes and News.

LUTON LOSE THEIR HOME RECORD.

NORTHAMPTON'S CLEVER VICTORY.

By "THE GOALIE."

Another move down the League table was made by Luton on Saturday, when Northampton won a hard match by 3-1. This is the first defeat Luton have experienced at home this season, and their present position of ninth in the table is due to three successive defeats. It is probable, too, there are more to come, for before Brentford—by no means an easy team to defeat—come to Luton, Brighton, Swindon and the Crystal Palace have to be visited, and these teams are respectively first, second and third on the table.

Smith's successful penalty kick made Luton's total of goals 25, and as Swindon failed to score on Saturday, thanks to Millwall, Luton now tie with Swindon for the honour of being the best goal scorers in the South. Luton also are running well for another "record," for they have 19 goals scored against them, and with Naisby in his best form, too. Only one other team, Southend, has a worse record against them, their defence having been pierced 23 times.

Saturday's match seems to demonstrate again that Luton are a fine-weather team. On the hard grounds of the opening six weeks of the season it was impossible for the best defence to hold Luton's light forwards; but the ground on Saturday was soft and slippery. The backs frequently misjudged the flight of the ball, and for once in a way the halves, with the exception of Bushell, were quite out of it. "Freddy" was very good at times, however.

Bushell played one of the best games he has played this season, and was frequently being applauded for good work. Even some of his passes, however, went astray. Naisby in goal was a tower of strength, and none of the shots that beat him could have been saved. One clearance in particular was noteworthy and was a replica of a sensational save he made against Bristol Rovers. The visiting forwards had worked their way past the backs to the vicinity of the goal, and one of them was about to shoot from two yards range, when Naisby pluckily fell on the ball, and threw it out of danger.

Though Northampton were the better team, and deserved their victory, they must admit they had a good friend in the referee, whose decisions at times caused much derisive laughter. He several times altered his decisions, and seemed particularly unable to judge whether a man was offside or not. Two of the visitors' goals were most certainly off-side, but the referee allowed them. A peculiar incident occurred in the first half. Northampton had gained a corner, which McDiarmid placed very accurately. Lewis was standing just out of play and as the ball passed him he cleverly turned it to the front of the goal-mouth for the centre-forward to scramble it into the net. The point was disallowed, as Lewis was standing over the goal line when he headed the ball.

All the scoring took place in the first half. For the first fifteen minutes Northampton had slightly the better of the game, though occasional bursts by the Luton forwards threatened danger. Once, in particular, a fine centre from Brown was only turned out of the goal just in time to prevent Moody—who, by the way, still holds the record among the Southern League goal-scorers—from getting in a shot. The resultant corner was cleared. Shortly afterwards, Quinn was given an ideal pass by Smith, the inside-right made a bold dash for goal, and within a few yards of it was brought down and badly winded. A penalty was rightly awarded, and Smith neatly placed the ball in the net.

Northampton's first goal was the result of an individual effort by Whittaker. His first shot rebounded off Chapman, but his second was "a scorer all the way." Fred Hawkes almost regained the lead with a good shot. The two goals which caused so much dissatisfaction were scored in the last five minutes of the first half. McDiarmid scored the first from a pass received while he was standing offside. Lewis scored the second after beating both backs. He should also have been given offside, however, when he was twenty yards from goal.

For the first fifteen minutes of the second moiety Luton pressed hotly, and both Smith and Moody put in good attempts. Afterwards they fell away, and many times the Cobblers, with a little more steadiness, and an ordinary goal-keeper against them, might have added to their score. Time came eventually with the visitors still leading by 3-1, greatly to the delight of a large contingent of supporters who had accompanied the team.