

# Southern League.

## LUTON v. NORTHAMPTON.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result—

Northampton ..... 3 goals.  
Luton ..... 1 goal.

### Teams:—

Luton—Naisby; Chapman and Potts; F. Hawkes, Bushell, and R. M. Hawkes; Brown, Quinn, Smith, Moody, and Stansfield.

Northampton—Thorpe; Clipston and Davies; Manning, Lessons, and Hampson; Walden, Freeman, Whittaker, Lewis, and McDiarmid.

Referee, Mr. G. Landragin (London).

The match on Saturday was an unfortunate one for Luton. The referee tried an experiment which was nothing short of a disaster. Spectators were observed to be continually harping on what they termed the laziness of the linesmen. But these gentlemen were only fulfilling instructions. Mr. Landragin explained at the interval that he was following an experiment suggested by Mr. John Lewis, in that each linesman should be assigned to one end of the ground. Why the linesmen should be saved a little trot up the ground passes comprehension. Luton at least paid the penalty by having two offside goals scored against them, and consequently lost a valuable Southern League point.

To come to the match itself, Bob Hawkes lost the toss. Bob would never make a gambler, his luck is so profoundly bad. Luton kicked off but Lessons was on the qui vive and stopped the rush. Northampton retaliated, and Chapman then stepped in and repulsed the left wing. The right pressed the attack, but eventually the ball was got away to Stansfield. His centre was kicked away by Clipston. Smith passed nicely to Brown, but the ball went too far ahead, and the right winger was unable to stop it going over the goal line.

The visiting forwards were very keen on getting into close relations with Naisby, but Freeman was ruled offside. Clipston next gave a corner, which Brown placed too far across the field, and Moody headed wide. The Luton left were making a succession of attacks, but Clipston proved very safe. Whittaker caused the Luton defence a good deal of anxiety, and Bradshaw, had he been present, could not have done better. Chapman sent the ball across to Potts, but the left back saved a corner at the expense of a throw-in. Northampton were not having quite all the play, though certainly they had their fair share of it, and Stansfield next made tracks but sent behind.

Bushell was distinguishing himself by robbing the forwards cleverly, but he ran too far forward, leaving a great gap in the centre of the field, and giving Whittaker every opportunity of getting by the backs. Smith very cleverly made an opening for Brown, but again the ball went out. Quinn was next alleged to have touched the ball behind for a corner, which he did not, but happily the kick was cleared. This was an early instance of a bad decision because the referee had not the advantage of a linesman on that side of the field. A different result might have had to be recorded for McDiarmid placed the ball behind the goal line, and Lewis, who stood out of the field of play, headed the ball into the mouth of goal, and Whittaker bustled it through. At first the referee seemed inclined to award a goal, but eventually he decided that the ball had gone over the goal-line before Lewis touched it, and awarded Luton a goal kick. Freeman, in the ensuing play, hit the post supporting the net.

The next incident of note in a hotly contested game was a bad foul by Thorpe and Davies on Quinn. Smith sent the inside-right man away, and he was chasing the ball in the penalty area when the back and goalkeeper made a rush for him and brought him down a cropper. He was removed from the field, and had the satisfaction of seeing Smith avenge his injury by beating Thorpe very easily. Northampton were not dismayed, and set about retrieving their loss. Freeman sent a long shot right into Naisby's arms, but from the punt down the field Davies collided with Smith, and the Luton centre-forward got injured and hobbled painfully about the field.

Bob Hawkes handled the ball, but the referee regarded it as unintentional, allowing play to proceed. The visitors' right wing were left in undisputed possession, but were slow in making progress, and Potts cleared. The left back was very successful in beating off Whittaker, but the ball rather luckily spun round again to Whittaker, who shot hard, and the ball passed out of Naisby's reach into the net, thus equalising the scores.

This success put splendid courage into the Northampton side. Luton eventually got a look-in; Brown led the attack by some grand work on the right wing, but Davies kicked the ball over on to the railway line. Walden was proving a very tricky little customer on the right wing, and gave Bob Hawkes a trying time. Too often, however, Walden spoiled his work by sending behind. Northampton seemed to have a distinct system of bringing opponents down when outside the penalty area, and Stansfield was one of the sufferers, but the foul was too far down the field to be of service to Luton.

Chapman was unlucky to touch the ball behind, and though Bushell headed away, McDiarmid returned the ball very smartly, and Naisby cleverly saved. Stansfield again got in the way, and from the place kick the crowd was expecting to see Fred Hawkes score. He worked the ball through a crowded defence, but his final shot went out the

other side of the goal. Smith also put the ball by near to goal.

The absence of a linesman on one side of the field allowed Northampton to get an offside goal. The left wing, on which there was no linesman, received the ball yards offside, but the referee allowed the game to proceed. McDiarmid drew in about a dozen yards from goal, and with a splendid left-foot drive sent the ball past Naisby and into the net. The Luton players, rosted, but all to no purpose, and Luton were in the minority.

But worse was to follow. Lewis, the inside-left, was further offside than McDiarmid when he received the ball and scored. In fact, so obviously was he offside that the players seemed to stop playing, so confident were they that the referee would stop Northampton. The point was allowed to count, much to the disgust of every Luton supporter and the mild surprise of the Northampton people, who brought a large number of supporters by a special excursion train. Just before the interval the referee gave another exhibition of indiscretion by awarding Northampton a corner, and then altering it to a free kick for Luton. At the interval Northampton led by 3 goals to 1.

The second half opened in promising style, and the first attack came from Luton, but Smith sent the ball over the goal. One of the visitors handled deliberately in the penalty area, but the offence was allowed to pass. A number of players then fisted the ball, but this was all regarded as unintentional handling and allowed to pass. Moody, when well placed, sent in a weak shot, the ball going straight to Thorpe.

Naisby was saving the ball from Whittaker when he was charged by Freeman. The ball shot up in the air and looked as if it would go through, but Chapman headed out at the expense of a corner. Play was inclined to be poor and a trifle ragged. Fred Hawkes shot wide, whilst Moody and Stansfield had shots saved by Thorpe and Davies. Northampton had an opportunity of getting a fourth goal, but Freeman sent the ball over the bar. Later he was a little bit truer in his aim, but Naisby saved. The inside right had a third opportunity, but missed an easy opening. No goals were scored in the second half.

Whilst Northampton were the better side, it was unfortunate that the two last goals should have been offside. The unsatisfactory character of the linesmen arrangements accounted for this, as both of these goals came from the Northampton left wing. If Mr. Landragin desires to make experiments like that, he should try them on in friendly matches. On Saturday, his experience was dearly paid for by Luton. The Luton half-backs did not appear so strong in defence as was desirable. Times out of number Bushell left Whittaker to take care of himself, and when the two Hawkes dropped into the centre their wings were left unguarded. The backs and halves do not seem yet to have arrived at a thorough plan of defence. The backs on Saturday played a good game, but were not so strong in tackling as the players in the same positions on the other side.

The Luton forwards suffered severely by reason of the rough tactics of the Northampton defence. The injury to Quinn quite put him off his game, and he never recovered properly. This also put Brown at a disadvantage. Stansfield was twice brought down badly by Clipston, whilst Moody received a crack on the head from an opponent's cranium, and Smith was badly damaged by Davies. Bob Hawkes also limped considerably in the second half. In fact, the Luton team towards the end seemed a eleven of cripples. The Northampton backs were strong and rough, the half-backs were rare workers, particularly Lessons, and the forwards combined nicely together. They should make a first-class cup-tie team.

The gate receipts on Saturday amounted to £182, the largest sum taken this season.

### COMMENTS ON THE GAME.

The game, in truth, needs very little comment. How far the referee was responsible for the fiasco I cannot say, but certainly it proved to be little better than a fiasco from the Luton point of view. If it had not been for those two offside goals and for the damage received by several of the players, Luton might have given a good account of themselves, but apart from these considerations, I think Northampton always shaped like the better team. Their forwards were speedier and more direct in their methods, and their defenders were more certain and resolute in their efforts.

The Northampton backs were a stronger pair than the Luton men, but I cannot help thinking that Chapman and Potts have too much work to do to be able to get through it without mistakes. When the backs are all the time on the go, it would seem that there is some little weakness elsewhere. Our defence is certainly not as safe as it should be, but I cannot honestly say that all the blame attaches to the backs.

On Saturday, there was not a single player on the Luton side who did himself justice, and practically at all points the Northampton team over-shadowed the homesters. Had Luton been able to get together in the second half, they might have improved their position, for the Cobblers gave evidence of having had enough of it, but play during the greater part of this period was little better than a scramble.

Both the clubs at the head of the Southern League met with defeat on Saturday, Swindon being beaten at Millwall by 2 goals to nil, and Brighton at West Ham by 3 goals to 1. Southampton secured their second victory at the expense of Leyton, who were beaten by 2 goals to 1. At Coventry Crystal Palace were successful by 2 goals to nil, and Brentford achieved a similar victory at Southend, whilst Watford accomplished a similar performance at Plymouth. The other