

Southern League.

LUTON v. NEW BROMPTON.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Luton 3 goals.
New Brompton nil.

Teams:—

Luton:— Naisby, Wightman and Potts; F. Hawkes, Bushell, and R. H. Hawkes; Brown, Quinn, Smith, Moody, and Stansfield.

New Brompton:—Holmes; Mosley and Nobbs; Mahon, Strang, and Higgins; Reynolds, Taylor, Satterthwaite, Cannon, and Westwood.

Referee, Mr. C. C. Fallowfield (Streatham).

The weather was delightfully fine on Saturday, and five or six thousand people were present at this match, which Luton should have won much more easily than they actually did. New Brompton occupy a position perilously near the bottom of the table, and if only Luton had turned their superiority to account, the score might have been doubled.

Perhaps the task set the home team was too easy. There was certainly a noticeable lack of dash about their finishing efforts, and although they were the better team in open play, no goals had been scored at half-time. Smith opened the scoring about mid-way through the second half, and a good goal by Stansfield was followed by one from Quinn, the last being obtained only a few seconds before the finish.

In this connection it is interesting to recall the fact that New Brompton were the first team to defeat Luton this season. The game was played on the last Saturday in September, and New Brompton won by 2 goals to 1, the winning point being obtained in the last minute of the game. In the match at Luton a year ago the home team won by a goal to nil.

Bob Hawkes returned to the Luton team on Saturday, and Potts again partnered Wightman at back. New Brompton had to make some changes. Court, their centre-forward, having sustained an injury on the previous Saturday. It had been intended to play Cannon at centre-forward and introduce Arthurs, who had been playing well for the Reserves, as partner to Westwood, but Cannon was kept in his usual place, Satterthwaite occupying the centre-forward position.

Satterthwaite kicked off towards the town end, but New Brompton did not get far. Luton then went away on the right, and the visitors having a turn, Westwood was given offside. Play was again quickly transferred, and Bushell tried a long shot which was only just wide. Again the men from Kent got away, and Potts was applauded for a fine clearance. Wightman was also prominent a moment later.

The conditions were all in favour of Luton, and a goal looked decidedly probable when Brown put in a square centre, but Holmes managed to fist away. At the next attempt, Smith, Quinn, and Stansfield each tried to get in a shot, but were foiled. The pressure was maintained, and Bushell shot high over from a centre by Brown. Another centre from the outside-right led to Quinn giving Moody a chance, and the inside-left headed over with Holmes out of goal.

Two or three offside decisions prevented New Brompton from getting away, and at this stage it looked as though Luton had got a soft thing on. A lefty centre from Stansfield went out to Brown, who returned, and Quinn shot hard. One of the Brompton defenders turned the ball away, and as there was some doubt as to whether or not he had handled, Luton appealed for a penalty, but the referee had no hesitation in awarding merely a goal kick.

A really good centre from Westwood went across the middle of goal and out of play on the other side. Luton lost no time in returning to the attack and Moody was unfortunate in not being well placed to snap up an excellent pass from Smith. A corner for Luton was placed bound by Brown, and then New Brompton obtained one at the other end, Naisby saving very smartly. A good run by Stansfield resulted in a fine centre, and Smith shot from two yards' range, but Holmes was guarding that corner of the goal, and cleared, although he was forced to give a corner which the defenders had some trouble in clearing.

A breakaway on the part of New Brompton placed the Luton defenders in difficulty, but Naisby was able to pick the ball up and clear. When New Brompton came again, Reynolds shot hard and Satterthwaite flung himself at the ball, only to fall into the net. Naisby saved, but his nasal organ suffered in the collision. Luton going away again, Holmes got under a flying centre from Stansfield and could only punt up in the air. Quinn tried to get at the ball, but Holmes pushed it away, and Wightman returned with a lightning drive, from which Quinn shot over. From a corner for New Brompton, Taylor was given offside; he had a fine chance, and his shot struck the bar as it went over.

A smart run on the Brompton right ended in Reynolds putting in a hard shot, which Naisby successfully negotiated. Just before this, Fred Hawkes had made a good attempt with a hard shot which went wide. A little later a decision by the referee in giving Stansfield offside was open to question. Following a corner for Luton, New Brompton got away on the right, and there was a tussle between Reynolds and Potts. The outside-right centred, and Wightman had to give a corner. This enabled Taylor to get in a header, but Naisby saved. A nice centre from Stansfield caused Holmes to come out and push the ball away. Brown had a chance with Holmes out of goal, but he did not steady himself and shot wide. Another centre from Stansfield was met by Quinn near the post, and the inside-right headed over.

The interval was now fast approaching, and still there was no score. Luton had had two thirds of the play, and should have been leading by a couple of goals. Moody came near to scoring from a centre by Stansfield. Holmes saved the header, but Quinn prevented him from clearing, and Moody tried hard to head through from the corner which resulted. A shot from Smith caused Holmes to fling himself down and save at full length. Stansfield obtained possession, but could only touch the ball on to the outside of the net. The interval arrived with no score.

Immediately after the re-start Luton came near to scoring. Smith put out to Brown, and as he centred, Moody rushed forward, the ball falling just behind him from Holmes' punch. Stansfield forced a corner, which was cleared. At the other end the Luton goal had a narrow escape from a centre by Reynolds, the ball going right across the goal-mouth, where one of the left-wingers shot behind. In an attack by Luton the ball went back to Bob Hawkes, who shot over with a mighty kick. At the other end Reynolds had a chance, but his shot went the wrong side of the post.

For some time afterwards play was not very interesting, being chiefly in mid-field. At length Stansfield put across a good centre, and the ball went forward off Quinn, Holmes saving. If Quinn had been able to get his foot to the ball, he must have scored. A minute later he led to a goal being obtained. Smith secured some twenty yards from goal and seemed about to pass out to the wings, but went on and transferred to Quinn. The latter tried a fast cross shot which Holmes only pushed sideways, and Smith easily put through. Luton immediately went away again and obtained a corner, which was cleared.

Both sides attacked after this, but at the time there was little prospect of any more scoring. A

dangerous centre from Stansfield was allowed to go to the other side of the head, and Quinn returned, but the attack was cleared. The next time Stansfield obtained possession, he ran in from the wing, eluding the backs, and when within a few feet of goal, scored with a shot which gave Holmes no chance. This happened about ten minutes from the finish, and was the outstanding incident of the match.

The outside-left tried to repeat the performance a little later, but was charged off the ball. Shortly afterwards the referee signalled for a goal kick, but the linesman was in favour of a corner, and the man with the whistle bowed to his decision. Stansfield dropped the ball into the mouth of goal, and Holmes fell with the sphere in his charge. There was an exciting struggle, in which it seemed that someone pulled Moody off the goalkeeper, but only a goal kick was given. Holmes saved finely from Brown, and a centre from the outside-right went to Stansfield, who was well placed, but his header went over. In the last minute Quinn met a centre from Stansfield, and, trapping the ball, scored with a rising shot which went into the corner of the net.

The score was satisfactory so far as it went, but the Luton forwards ought to have given a better account of themselves. With the ground recently rolled and not at all heavy, they could, if they had played with dash, have run up a respectable score before the interval. They should remember that passing is merely a means to an end, and that all the cleverness in the world is of no use unless it leads to goals.

It was very curious that the best football was shown in the first half, when no goals were scored. Luton were unquestionably the better team, and only needed a little more dash in front of goal to make their superiority pronounced. The visitors, on the other hand, played with any amount of go during this period, and thus held their own very well.

In the second half play fell off a lot, and the spectators were getting very impatient when Luton at last got through. Smith scored the goal, but chief credit, perhaps, belonged to Quinn. The point was the outcome of really good play, and with the ice once broken, Luton easily showed themselves the masters of the situation.

It was quite a treat to see Stansfield work his way right through from the touch-line, beating all opposition, and finishing up with a shot which gave the custodian no chance. A better effort has not been seen on the ground this season. At the same time, it might be a long time before a similar effort met with similar success, and when Stansfield repeated the experiment a minute later he found his progress barred.

Possibly Quinn was one of the most effective of the Luton forwards, and he showed something like his best form. The halves put in some good work, the skipper being particularly tricky at times, and Wightman and Potts both gave a good account of themselves at back.

For the visitors, Westwood and Reynolds showed up well, but Satterthwaite at centre completely neutralised his good intentions by persistently lying offside. The backs were in better form than might have been expected, judging from the number of goals given away this season, but the most conspicuous man on the side was Holmes, who did all that a man could do in goal to save the game. Perhaps he had a little luck, but all the same he gave a wonderfully good exhibition.

Strangely enough, Naisby also had a fair number of difficult shots to deal with, and he likewise got through his work in the smartest and most business-like manner.

The gate realised £103.