

Southern League.

LUTON v. QUEEN'S PARK RANGERS.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Queen's Park Rangers		1 goal.
Luton		nil.

The teams were as follow:—

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

Queen's Park Rangers—Shaw; Macdonald and Fidler; Butterworth, Mitchell, and Wake; Whyman, W. H. O. Steer, M'Kie, Browning, and Brindley.

Referee, Mr. A. T. Randall (Coventry).

It will be seen that Luton were without Bob Hawkes, Johnson appearing at left-half. The ground gave evidence of careful treatment, and afforded very fair foothold for the players. Fred Hawkes won the toss, and during the first half Luton kicked towards the town end. The Rangers at once made a dash down the field, but the ball was returned to midfield, where Smith placed it out to Brown, who was too far up the field to take advantage. A pass to the outside-left also carried too far for Stansfield to reach it, and it seemed that the wind was stronger than the spectators thought.

A marvellous escape was experienced by the Luton goal in the first couple of minutes. The Rangers took the ball down, and when it was centred the inside forwards were clear, making it imperative for Naisby to run out as the only chance. This he did, but without getting the ball far away, and a shot from Browning hit the post before Naisby had got back. Wightman, in his anxiety to clear, fell in the mouth of goal, and sat facing the back of the net when Browning shot again, and the ball cannoned off Wightman's back into play again.

It was a most fortunate affair from Luton's point of view, as a goal seemed absolutely certain. Luton then made tracks for the Rangers' citadel, but the ball did not reach Shaw, as Macdonald's head bobbed up and sent it away. The home side engineered another attack, and Bushell gave Smith a fine pass in front of goal, but the local player kicked just wide of the upright.

The first corner of the match fell to Luton, and was splendidly placed by Stansfield. Shaw punched the ball over his head to the other side of the goal line, and Brown therefore kicked in from the corner flag. Quinn jumped up and headed the ball in, but Shaw was all alertness and punched out to Johnson. The half-back tried a hard ground shot, hoping that luck would guide it through the crowd of players gathered in the goal-mouth. It would have been a marvel, though not a solitary incident of the kind, had the ball found its way through such a maze of legs, but unfortunately someone near the goal-line was standing in the way, and the ball rebounded down the field.

The Rangers were quite aroused and dashed away to the Luton end, where Steer sent in a rare hard drive which Naisby could not reach to hold, but diverted the course of the ball just along the goal line. Browning left the ball to Brindley, but before it reached him the referee adjudged it to have gone over the line and gave a goal kick. A corner seemed to be the correct decision unless Browning touched the ball, which was quite possible, as the Rangers were not seen to make an appeal.

Play then ruled in midfield. Johnson, evidently forgetting he was not playing forward, endeavoured to dribble past Butterworth, who unceremoniously charged him off the ball. Then suddenly Browning received the ball from amongst a crowd of players and shot at goal, but once more Naisby got to it and kicked away. Butterworth at the other end endeavoured to guard the ball over the goal-line, but the impetuous rush of Stansfield caused the Rangers' half-back to kick behind, and accordingly Stansfield placed from the corner flag. Quinn headed in, but Shaw saved, and punched out to Fred Hawkes, who had a fine chance, but placed high over the bar in the hurry of the moment.

Some exciting exchanges next occurred just in front of Naisby, who was at the right spot to save Steer's shot. Quinn received the ball and initiated a run between himself and Brown, but the latter misjudged the distance and kicked the ball on to the top of the net. Coming down again, Brown centred very opportunely along the carpet. Smith seemed to have a good opening, but when he kicked at the ball the latter went off at a tangent high over the bar, obviously much to Shaw's relief. Shaw afterwards made a sensational dive for the ball when Smith appeared bound to score, and the Rangers' custodian skilfully saved what looked like a certain goal.

About this time Luton were showing superiority. The forwards brought the ball down at times very prettily, but Shaw proved invincible, stopping shots by Smith and Quinn in particular. The ball was then taken to the Luton end, and a corner was forced rather undeservedly. Naisby punched away from Whyman, and knocked a player on the head, and when the crowd had dispersed, Johnson was found prostrate. "Billy" Lawson's services were required, and after a little massage the Luton man was able to resume.

Shaw found himself the object of close attentions from the Luton men, and after he had cleared a header from Moody, he was quite beaten by a swift shot from Busheil, who spun round, but sent just the wrong side of the net, though some in the grand-stand side of the field erroneously cried "Goal." Shaw made a beautiful save from Brown and sent to Moody, who cleverly headed out of Shaw's reach, only to find that Fidler had dropped back and saved the situation. Stansfield and Smith hampered each other in front of goal, and in the muddle which ensued the ball went wide. At half-time there was no score.

On re-starting, Luton made the first attack but the Rangers returned the compliment. A change of scene found the ball at the Rangers' end. Quinn and Brown hustled Wake, whilst Hawkes took possession of the ball, and dribbling in, the Luton half-back directed a good effort at the goal, but once again Shaw proved impassable. The attacks by either side always seemed to be negotiated by the defence, and try how they would the players could not open the score.

Just now a succession of clever attempts by Quinn were noted. Shaw is not one of the lengthiest of goalkeepers, and the Luton forwards troubled him, whilst Quinn absolutely revelled in it, with long shots just under the bar. The visitors' goalkeeper was not to be caught napping, and either fisted over or managed to catch and throw away. A thirty yards' shot from Quinn seemed hopelessly too long for anything, but the difficulty which it caused Shaw was immense. A free kick for a foul was awarded Luton, and Quinn, with one of his patent shots, again caused the goalkeeper much concern.

Smith and Brown ran down very prettily, but Shaw boldly sailed out of goal to meet the ball and took it from Smith's toe. Shaw ran too many steps with the ball, and received some rough treatment which made him seek cover after the whistle had gone. He was soon able to resume, and saved the free kick which followed his offence. It was immediately following this that the Rangers' goal came. Brindley broke away, and catching the Luton defence well up the field, took the ball to the corner. When tackled by Wightman, he passed back to M'Kie, who was near Naishy, and had only to give the ball a soft touch to send it past the goalkeeper.

Luton endeavoured to draw level, but all their efforts were met very resolutely, Shaw being great in goal. Browning sent a rare shot just a trifle too high, whilst Brindley hit Potts on the back with a shot which looked a likely goal-getter. Towards the end Luton had once more the better of the exchanges, but were safely held up by the Rangers' defence. Moody was brought down inside the penalty area, but though the circumstances looked suspicious, the referee did not award the kick hoped for, and Luton in the end lost the two points by the only goal scored.

Taking the game all through, but especially having regard to the character of the play in the second half, Luton were decidedly unfortunate to lose. The match was a very interesting one from start to finish, the Rangers playing a surprisingly good game. Their display on Saturday must have been a vast improvement on their usual form, or this would not have been their first League victory away from home.

The attack on both sides was good, the Rangers being a little the less skilful but more robust. Brown and Stansfield got in some good centres, and their placing of the corner kicks, of which Luton had many, was admirable. Quinn did some good work, but it was towards the end of the game that he excelled, and during that period he was the best forward on the field. It was really a glimpse of his best form. Moody tried very hard, but Smith, whilst showing good judgment in sending the ball out to the wings, rarely threatened much danger on his own. Wharmen and Brindley