

THE LAST AWAY MATCH.

Luton Lose by the Only Goal.

Johnson Injured: Blues Play One Short in Second Half.

Except that R. M. Hawkes found himself unable to get away, the side sent to Brentford on Saturday was the strongest now at his disposal of the club, and considering the arduous holiday programme this was something to be thankful for. Bushell returned to the team and Johnson, of course, was the substitute for the captain. The Bees' chief absentee was Reid, their centre-forward, and this caused a reshuffling of their front rank. Sibbald was given the centre post; he thus played in the same position in which he made his initial (Southern League) appearance, when Luton visited Griffin Park last season.

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The gate was naturally much below the average. There was nothing particular at stake with the two clubs, and the Cup Final, together with an important match at Chelsea, kept down the attendance. Indeed a few minutes before the start, the ground seemed to be quite deserted, but at the finish there were about 3,000 present. The majority of these stopped to see a local cup-tie which took place immediately after the League encounter, and they really appeared to be more interested in this minor contest; anyway there was more enthusiasm displayed.

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The teams for the league game were as under:
Luton: Naisby; Wightman and Potts; F. Hawkes, Bushell and Johnson; Brown, Walker, Stephenson, Lashbrooke and Stansfield.

Brentford: Ling; Rhodes and Buxton; Richards, Hamilton and A. Barclay; Bartlett, Land, Sibbald, Ryalls, and Anderson.

Referee, Mr. G. Rose, Coventry.

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Luton commenced in great style and were soon troubling the home defenders. First Lashbrooke and Stansfield were in the picture, and Harold working towards goal forced an unproductive corner off Rhodes. An even more promising movement came along, following a fine pass by Stephenson, after beating Hamilton. Lashbrooke going through, tested Ling with a stinging drive, but the Bees' goalkeeper was on the alert and saved in fine style. Almost immediately Luton were attacking again on the left, and Lashbrooke forced still another corner, and this was cleared in the first instance, but the ball came out to Wightman, who standing just inside the centre line, returned the ball with sufficient force for it to pass over for a goal kick.

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The game had not been in progress more than ten minutes, when Bartlett and Johnson came into collision, and it was seen that the Luton player had received some serious injury. The game was stopped for quite a long time, and eventually Johnson was taken to the side to receive the attentions of Lawson, and the game continued with Lashbrooke falling back. Of course, this took a lot of sting out of the attack, who up to this point had been monopolising the game. Still a third corner was forced, but like the previous ones this came to nothing.

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The first time the home side got dangerous was the result of a free kick against Potts, who fouled Bartlett, but Stephenson cleared this with a fine kick. Lashbrooke, who was a sort of forward-half-back, now put in a clever piece of individual work, and tricking both the half and full back sent in a terrific shot right across the goal. It appeared a certain goal, for the ball was travelling away from Ling, but the goalkeeper was just in time and brought off a splendid save, which earned him a round of applause.

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Hands against Ryalls gave Wightman a chance to have a pop at goal with the place kick, and he all but netted with a fine effort, the ball landing on top of the net. Johnson now came back, but he limped badly, and was not able to get about a great deal. The Bees were now having more of the game, and they were awarded a couple of corners without producing an effect on the score sheet.

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Just before half-time Hamilton got the worse of a tussle with Walker, and falling on the hard ground hurt his head, but after some attention he remained on the field. The game was very featureless for quite a long period, and the only glimpse of excitement came when Stephenson sent in a "trimmer," which, travelling at great speed, went a yard wide for a goal kick. Hands against Potts some forty yards out gave the home side a chance to get a shot at Naisby, but Anderson put by for a goal kick, and the interval score stood—

Brentford 0, Luton 0.

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Johnson came out with the others after the interval, but now the home side had the advantage of the wind they were doing more aggressive work, and Wightman and Potts were compelled to play on the defensive. They did not please the crowd when the ball was kicked into touch, and this being done pretty frequently many ironical cheers went up at the tactics employed to check the home forwards. About the best effort by Luton was an attempt by Bushell, which Ling saved with a fine punch down the field. This was quickly followed by the deciding incident of the game. Bartlett getting the ball somewhere near the corner flag dropped in what was evidently intended for a centre, but the wind curled the ball in, and Naisby, in attempting to punch it away, appeared to knock it against the upright, and it dropped into goal. It was a very lucky point, for the centre only just reached the goal, and really appeared likely to be taken wide of the post by the wind, and was quite a surprise point. During the time the ball was rushed through Johnson hurt his ankle once more, and it took some time before the game was restarted. Then the Luton player came off and took no further part in the game.

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From now to the finish the Bees were the more likely side to score, but they failed at the critical moment, and Naisby had very little opportunity of exhibiting his skill. Sibbald was the most dangerous home forward. He and Wightman were continually coming into contact, and, as a rule, the Luton back came off best. Although he had one or two fouls given against him, Wightman did not play at all a dirty game, and did not deserve all the remarks that were hurled at him. Now that the home side had secured the lead little interest was taken in the exchanges, and it seemed quite a relief to the players and spectators when the whistle went for time, with the score standing—

Brentford 1, Luton 0.

COMMENTS ON THE PLAY AND PLAYERS.

Taking the match as a whole it was a typical end of the season game, and the players on both sides did not seem to trouble a deal. Still, as is usually the case under such circumstances, there was quite a number of mishaps. In the first half Luton were the better side. Indeed, up to the time that Johnson met with the injury which eventually compelled his retirement in the second half, there was only one team in it. But with the crippling of Johnson the side fell away, and up to the interval the blank score sheet was a fair representation of the exchanges. On the run of the second half, Brentford were entitled to their victory, and it speaks well for the defensive play of Wightman and Potts that the score was not heavier.

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Up to the time that Stansfield had Lashbrooke for his regular partner this pair provided the finest football of the day, and the Luton inside left was extremely unlucky with his shooting, for he put in at least three attempts which fully deserved to count. By the way, this was his final match of the present season, as he takes up his cricketing duties at Bradford to-day. This will make his fifth season with Bowling Old Lane Club, and his friends at Luton will wish him every success at the sister sport. By the way, it may not be generally known that Lashbrooke has played in first-class cricket for his native county, Essex, and but for his League engagements would have had a more regular place in the team.

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Brentford have not been doing quite so well recently as in the early part of the season, when they threatened to have some say in the settling of the championship. They have a fine back in Bux-

ton, and his whole-hearted play was very refreshing in a somewhat weary game. In this match the Bees had the assistance of A. Barclay, the Ilford amateur, and he played quite a good game. Indeed, he was their finest half-back. Forward it cannot be claimed that we saw much effective work, and although Sibbald doubtless played cleverer football than Reid would have done, he quite failed to make his mark on the score sheet, which, given the same chances, the local spectators were pretty confident their regular centre-forward would have done. But then, of course, Reid might not have been able to obtain these "snips," as I heard them designated.