

FOOTBALL NOTES.

By "Goalie."

LUTON BEATEN AT HOME.

COVENTRY'S WONDERFUL RECOVERY

A FLOOD OF GOALS.

At one period of Saturday's game, few people would have dared to prophesy that the home team would be beaten,—and well beaten too. Luton were having all the game, and a victory appeared quite safe: but nothing is certain in football—this is one of the causes of its popularity—and at the end of the game Luton retired beaten by 4-2. For about seventy out of the ninety minutes the game lasted the home team were doing all the pressing, and they scored two goals,—and one of them from a penalty. On the other hand, Coventry outplayed the home team for twenty minutes, and in that time beat Naisby four times.

During that disastrous twenty minutes, the whole team fell to pieces. Naisby was shaky, the backs miskicked, the halves were too busy to feed their forwards, and the latter were robbed of the ball like so many schoolboys. The equaliser was a bit of a shock, but the second and third goals coming in quick succession seemed to stun them and take all the heart out of them. In the last quarter of an hour, urged on by the seven thousand spectators, the home team rallied, but their luck was dead out, and it was not until the close that Moody was able to lessen the defeat.

The Coventry City team are not a team of stars. Their forwards work no intricate carpet patterns, but they go straight for goal, and shoot at the slightest opportunity. The Luton forwards went for goal all right, but the less said of the shooting the better. The Coventry "star" was Alden, the outside right, who completely mastered Wightman, and led up to the scoring of three of the goals. The inside forwards, Jones, Brown, and Turnbull, are good individualists, and Parkes scored two fine goals. The half backs were not particularly clever, but their bustling methods—they all seemed to have copied Bradley, the old Lutonian,—proved very effective. The two backs kicked well, and Evans was safe, even brilliant at times, in goal.

The Luton forwards never really got together, and the real weakness was at centre-forward. Stephenson was quite unable to distribute his passes judiciously, and he hardly once troubled the goalkeeper. The other forwards played a good game, particularly Stansfield, and it is pleasing to record that Brown seems to have recovered his form. Bushell was less effective than usual at centre-half, and he allowed the visiting centre-forward to have too much rope. Bob Hawkes was about the best of the Luton players, though even he spoiled a good display by giving a goal away, and Fred Hawkes was as sound as he generally is. Potts was the better of the backs, for it was due in a large measure to Wightman's unsteadiness at times that Alden was able to do so much damage. Naisby had not much chance with the shots that scored, but he has certainly played better than he did on Saturday.

In order to avoid clashing with the royal blue of the visitors, Luton donned their claret jerseys, and, Bob having won the toss, set Coventry to play against a slight breeze. The weather was ideal for football, and the ground was hard and firm. Luton opened strongly, but for a few minutes, Evans had little to do, as most of the shots went wide. At the other end, Potts cleared well from Brown. Ernie Brown and Walker then transferred operations by some good passing, but Walker's centre was taken by the goalkeeper, who had rushed out before the other forwards could get to it. Occasionally the Coventry left wing would put in some good work, but on the whole, Luton did most of the pressing, in spite of their half-backs kicking too hard at times. The Coventry centre-forward once tricked Wightman only to blaze the ball over the bar, while at the other end, the visitors' goal had a wonderful escape. Walker received the ball close in, and shot for goal. Just as the sphere was passing over the line, Evans fell at full length and pushed it away. Brown rushed up, but his shot hit the post, from which the leather went behind.

Brown, of Coventry, made ground with a fine run, but his pass was wasted by Alden, and Evans' charge was then fairly bombarded, Moody, in particular, having hard luck in not scoring. To show how Luton had the game in their own hands, it may be mentioned that it was not until twenty-five minutes from the kick-off that Naisby was called upon to handle. A slight injury to Bradley caused a little delay, and Barnacle, the Coventry back, had to be cautioned for some irregularity. Moody had a fine opportunity soon afterwards, but he shot over from ridiculously close range. Play now became somewhat tame, but at last Luton came again, and after a corner had been cleared, Yates handled in the penalty area. Bob solved the difficulty as to whom to trust the responsibility by taking the kick himself, and without wasting a moment he set the ball and blazed it past the goalkeeper. This woke matters up, and Walker sent in a grand shot, but half-time came soon afterwards with Luton deservedly leading by the only goal.

The second half saw a complete change come over the game. Quite early Wightman mis-kicked and let in Alden, who was going strongly for goal, when Potts dashed up and cleared. Offside against Moody gave Coventry another opportunity to make ground, and Wightman was hurt, but he resumed after receiving attention from the trainer. The Coventry right wing was twice pulled up for offside, but at last, a good run by Alden enabled Brown to equalise for Coventry. Both teams now made desperate efforts to obtain the lead, but the Luton forwards were well held by the bustling Coventry halves, and they could not get within shooting distance of Evans.

Stansfield got in a grand centre, but both Moody and Stephenson missed the ball, and Walker was dispossessed before he could shoot. Coventry then broke away again, and Parkes scored their second goal. The visitors now became irresistible, and with the Luton defence cracking up, they looked like gaining a run-away victory. Alden put across a lovely centre, and Brown easily found the net. Luton retaliated, but were driven back, after failing to score from two corners, and close on time, Alden broke through, and passed to Parkes, who beat Naisby with an oblique ground shot. The spectators had given up urging Luton on, and had commenced to cheer the visitors, Alden especially coming in for congratulations. At last, Brown centred across to Moody, who was able to beat Evans, and thus lessen the defeat. Time came almost immediately afterwards with the score:—

COVENTRY 4, LUTON 2.