

Southern League.

MILLWALL v. LUTON.

Played at New Cross on Saturday. Result:—

Luton	1 goal.
Millwall	1 goal.

The teams turned out as under:—

Luton*— Naisby; Wightman and Potts; F. Hawkes, Bushell, and R. Hawkes; Brown, Shepherd, Stephenson, Moody, and Stansfield.

Millwall—Shaw; Kirkwood and Jeffery; Frost, Borthwick, and Liddle; Morris, Carvossa, Vincent, Quinn, and Lipsham.

Referee, Mr. T. Kirkham (Burslem).

Everyone recognised that Luton were faced with a big task at New Cross on Saturday, for the recent form of Millwall has been very convincing, and there was the further fact that our old centre-forward, Smith, although now quite fit, cannot find a place in the team. Not many clubs can afford to leave out a centre-forward of his ability, and certainly Millwall are lucky to that extent. They have several new players in the side this season, but curiously, the chief improvement appears to be among the players who were on their list before last April. The newcomers include an amateur goalkeeper in Shaw, who works on the ground during the week. But methinks this is only a temporary arrangement, until such time as the Club can sign him as a professional, as he, being an ex-soldier, cannot become a paid player until twelve months has expired from his release. The only actual fresh forward this season playing on Saturday was Carvossa, who until last April was an amateur playing with South Weald, an Essex club, while among the halves Borthwick and Liddle were fresh faces for Luton.

The crowd on Saturday would number about 12,000—a big falling off from the previous week, when it is reported over 30,000 were present. But then that was the match of the day for Londoners, and such gates as that of last Saturday were by no means common at the East Ferry-road ground. There was a fair sprinkling of Lutonians at the match, although not so many as at Park Royal a fortnight since.

Millwall went off with a rush at the start, and the Luton defence was pretty busy for the first four or five minutes. Then Luton's attack had a look-in, and Brown so hampered Jeffrey that a corner was forced, and before this was cleared F. Hawkes had placed his side a goal up. It was a really fine shot, especially coming from "Freddy," for he nipped in grandly, and finding himself unmarked, although between him and the goal there was quite a crowd of players, he took deliberate aim with a low drive which Shaw could not possibly get at. This goal naturally inspired the Lutonians, and they stood up against the Millwall onslaughts in such a manner that for quite a long period it seemed likely Luton would repeat last season's success, for, of course, the Luton forwards were by no means idle, and both Brown and Stansfield were continually dropping across some fine centres.

One promising movement was started by Shepherd transferring on the run to Stephenson, and the latter, with a fine pass out to his left wing, ran forward to receive the centre, but Stansfield took the ball into touch and the opportunity was lost. At the opposite end of the field Naisby was rather lucky in meeting a sharp return from Quinn, the ball coming direct to hand from Quinn's shot. Potts came in for a word of advice from the referee after bowling Morris over, but the charge appeared quite a fair one, although the Millwall player was injured, and this caused the crowd to hoot rather loudly.

Luton were fully holding their own, and twice Stansfield forced corners. Shaw had considerable trouble in clearing one of these, the ball dropping almost under the bar, and a simple touch must have meant a goal, but the home custodian just managed to punch the ball over the Luton players' heads. Lipsham contrived to wriggle clear on one occasion, and put in a fine centre, which Naisby cleverly fielded, and was rather roughly charged immediately after getting the ball away, for which offence the referee awarded a free kick. A miskick by Potts looked bad for a moment, but he recovered and sent into touch from Vincent's pass out to the wing. A minute later Lipsham had a fine opening from a long pass from the opposite side of the field, but he simply sent the ball straight in front for a goal kick. Again, when Wightman missed the ball altogether, the Luton lead was endangered, but Naisby dashed out and cleared easily.

Bob Hawkes seized on a chance in midfield, and taking aim somewhere near the 18 yards' line, sent in a terrific drive which must have scored if the elevation had been slightly lower; as it was it just shaved the crossbar on the wrong side. He was brought down rather heavily just as he had kicked the ball, and limped badly for a few minutes, but soon got over this, and took a prominent part in the game to the end.

Twice during the game we had a diversion caused by dogs coming on the field of play. Naisby managed to collar the first without much trouble, but on the second occasion the game was stopped for a minute or so, and chase was given by a number of players, Moody eventually succeeding in catching the unwelcome visitor and carrying it to the fence. A throw-in within a couple of yards of the corner flag by Quinn led up to a good opening, but Frost, when directly in front, kicked weakly, and this was about the last chance Millwall had before the interval.

Millwall started strongly on change of ends, and after one or two misses were able to equalise inside four minutes of the re-start. Lipsham dropped the ball right across the goal, and it was a race between Naisby and Morris as to who should get it first. As a matter of fact, neither player could get control, and it rolled just wide for Carvossa to nip in and with a rising shot equalise the score, Naisby not having time to recover his position under the bar. From now to the finish the game was a fight between the home attack and the Luton defence, and although Wightman and Potts were many times hardly pressed, they maintained a stubborn front and managed to keep out any further goals. Of course Luton made several attacks on their own, and one shot from Moody certainly deserved to score, but as a rule they were defending two-thirds of the time.

Hard knocks were rather too frequent to make matters pleasant, and for quite a considerable spell each side was reduced to ten players, although not at the same time. The players who were compelled to leave the field were Moody, Potts, and Vincent. The Millwall centre was the first to go,

being led off the field after some attention. Almost as soon as he came back, Moody went off with a nasty cut on the head. He also fell on his hand during the game, and suffered a deal of pain. An examination after the match caused a suspicion of a broken bone, although at the moment this is not confirmed, but the injured member was to be put under the X rays on Tuesday, and the result will probably be found in another part of this issue.

Potts' accident came in the closing minutes, and although at first it was feared a serious injury to his ribs had been sustained, later information was that it was not so, and with a short rest he will be able to play against the Palace. Brown also got in the wars quite early in the second half, but he did not leave the field. Therefore, under all the circumstances, Luton must be congratulated upon earning a valuable point where many considered they were in for a heavy defeat.

Although in the London Press most praise is given to Naisby for his brilliance, it is scarcely fair to the other members of the team, who fought their hardest to maintain the advantage gained by Fred Hawkes' clever goal early in the game. Both backs have kicked cleaner, but never did they put more energy into their tackling, while the middle line were always on top of the dangerous inside trio of forwards on recent form. It was not expected the changes forward would make for greater combination, but they played Millwall at their own game, and the match was very fast throughout.

Swindon and Northampton were the only visiting teams in the Southern League to win on Saturday, the Railwaymen beating Exeter by 4 goals to 1, and Northampton succeeding at New Brompton by 3 goals to 1. Brighton drew at Watford (3-3), Bristol Rovers at Brentford (2-2), and Stoke at Reading (1-1). The other results were:—Queen's Park Rangers, 4; West Ham, 1; Plymouth 4, Coventry 1; Crystal Palace 6, Norwich 0; Southampton 3, Leyton 2.