

LUTON FOOTBALL NOTES.

By "The Goalie."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

A POINT FROM MILLWALL.

NAISBY IN FINE FORM.

WHY LUTON LOSE AT HOME.

Luton have so far this season secured seven points, four of which have been won away to only three at home. It is not often that a team is more successful on opponents' grounds than before its own supporters, and in this case it appears to me that the fault in this case lies with a section of these self-same supporters. The five thousand or so people who attend the Luton matches appear to lose heart very quickly, and if the machinery of the home team is not running smoothly, they do not do what true supporters should, encourage the players, but they wax sarcastic, cheer the visitors, and indulge in a form of chipping that must be very irritating to some of the players. One or two of the men have to my knowledge submitted this as an explanation of their loss of form. Perhaps the Luton supporters will note this, and give the home team the same encouragement when they are losing as when everything is going well.

Some good comments on Saturday's game at Millwall are given by Tam, in the "Morning Leader." "By way of a change," he writes. "Millwall played in red jerseys against Luton. The colour suited them. We saw a tearing game, and we were reminded that since the earliest days of the Southern League Luton have been one of the teams that always could extend Millwall. It is remarkable how tradition lives in spite of developments. The result of the match under notice was a draw 1-1, and I think Millwall should have won. They did not do so, first because they found Naisby, the Luton goalkeeper, at the top of his form; and, next, because they did not take their chances during the second half, when Naisby was hopelessly placed. And it would not have surprised me if Luton had put on the winning goal, after all the pressure that had been applied by Millwall's forwards.

"Take notice of the way Luton scored their goal before the game was a quarter of an hour old. Millwall set out as though each man in the attack wanted to be in the prevailing fashion and do the 'hat trick' in the matter of goal-scoring. They swarmed round Naisby, and after the goalkeeper had repelled them in his best style, Luton's forwards went straight away, forced a corner, and found the net through Fred Hawkes, their right half-back. It was a very fine goal, if a somewhat lucky one, as Hawkes took the ball first time and banged it past a crowd of players who were nearer to Shaw.

"It was not the number of times Luton got away afterwards, but the manner in which they did so that made one think there might be more scoring at any moment. But the Millwall goal was not captured again, and for the most part the play was in front of Naisby. The full-backs who supported the custodian, Wightman and Potts, were all right so long as they had plenty of room, but when they were hustled they were flustered, and it chiefly depended on Naisby, who succeeded in getting in the way of shots that were meant for the goal. He saw other shots go over the bar and by the side of the posts.

"Millwall did not get the ball between the posts till soon after the change of ends, and then Lipsham made the running. The outside-left lifted the ball across, and there was something of a scramble in front of Naisby. The ball came to Carvossa in the rush, and the inside-right caught it on his instep, and, turning with it, lifted it over the heads of the defenders to the top of the net.

"The scoring would not have stopped at this if Carvossa had taken two easier chances, and right till the finish Millwall kept up the pressure. If the shooting of their forwards improved, so did the goalkeeping of Naisby, and it was near the finish when Luton came away again with one of those dangerous rushes that might have ended in a winning goal. It is equally true that Millwall tried till the very last, and although Luton were handicapped a few minutes from time through losing Potts, their full-back, Naisby was good enough. It was a fight to a finish, and spectators ask for nothing better."

Thus Luton came away with a point, not won by superior play but by sheer grit. It was this quality which pulled them through against Brentford, and which gave Queen's Park Rangers a shock, and it is this same quality which will before long lift them from the tail-end of the League table, and place them in the more prominent position they deserve. Result:—

MILLWALL 1, LUTON 1.