

The Football Field.

A WELCOME WIN.

Luton Gain Two Valuable Points from Exeter City.

Damp and miserable weather and a wet and slushy ground, against anything like decent football, did not deter a large number of supporters from attending the match on the Luton town ground on Saturday, when Exeter City were the visitors. Luton won, and well deserved it, but it was only towards the end of the game they put on the last points, which gave them the victory by four goals to two.

Mr. F. G. A. Sharpe, of Lichfield, had charge of the game, and the teams were called together as follows:—

Luton:—Naisby; Wightman and Potts; Fred Hawkes, Bushell and R. Hawkes; Brown, Walker, Streeton, Moody, and Stansfield.

Exeter City:—Whittaker; Fort and Evans; Rigby, Bassett and Prideaux; Parnell, Lockett, Watson, Cornan, and Garside.

The opening exchanges were fairly even, until Luton settled down to serious business. Fred Hawkes sent in a hot shot that just skimmed over the bar. A corner fell to Luton directly afterwards, and the ball being well placed by Brown, the Exeter goal had a lucky escape. Then came another corner, from which Walker headed against the bar. After that Exeter had a short respite, and Watson set up a movement, which promised well for them until it was checked by Bob Hawkes. Naisby was then called upon to handle from Cornan, and promptly saved the situation by throwing away. Stansfield obtained possession and made a smart sprint, but finished weakly, and Exeter again got on the move, and were back again, Naisby having to save from a smart drive by Garside. The home side attacked repeatedly after this, and Brown put in several accurate centres. Whittaker did well to gather a long dropping shot from him, but a minute later the goalkeeper was well beaten. Brown, after eluding Evans, got in a judicious centre, and Moody headed a lovely goal. The game had been in progress about fifteen minutes when this success was obtained.

After the restart, Streeton got in a smart run, and when tackled by Fort judiciously placed the ball well out to Brown, who forced a corner, from which, however, nothing came. Bob Hawkes tested Whittaker with a long shot, which was easily cleared, and Exeter then invaded, but their forwards finished tamely. After out-pacing Evans, Brown centred into the goal-mouth, but Moody, with only Whittaker to beat, put the ball over. The interval was fast approaching when Walker sent out to Brown, who centred in fine style, and Moody promptly headed Luton's second goal. It was practically a replica of the first goal, and from now until the interval Luton pressed strongly, and several times another point seemed inevitable, but Exeter escaped each time, and the half-time whistle sounded with the score:—Luton 2, Exeter City 0.

The second half saw Exeter take the field without Parnell, their outside-right, who retired owing to an old injury. Playing only four forwards, the visitors did much better than when they had five, and for some fifteen or twenty minutes they gave Luton quite a lively and anxious time. They were encouraged by scoring two goals, the first by Lockett and the second by Garside. The scores were now level, and Luton did not seem to be able to get the ball away. Exeter were playing up with much dash and go, but a new turn was given to events. Following a foul on Streeton, Brown scored a fine goal for Luton, to the accompaniment of much cheering. Nothing daunted, Exeter attacked, and Naisby had to rush out to clear. Directly after Bob Hawkes put well out to Brown, who got in a clever centre, and Streeton headed the ball into the net. Shortly afterwards the same player headed over from a free kick. Exeter made a spirited attempt to recover lost ground, but without success, and the game closed with the score:

Luton 4, Exeter City 2.

COMMENTS ON THE PLAY AND PLAYERS.

It was an interesting match. It would have been too much to have expected really good or stylish football on a ground in such a wet and muddy state, and yet while the players splashed and slid about in all directions there were many exciting incidents and glimpses of neat and smart footwork. What could have been better, under prevailing conditions, than the splendid piece of work put in by Bob Hawkes in the second half, when he neatly trapped the ball from a long kick, and working his way to the Exeter goal beat five or six men in quick succession, only giving way when he was badly fouled, and Luton were awarded a free kick?

In the first half the game was all with Luton, who played up in such a confident style that Exeter showed up badly in contrast. In the crowd outside they were even saying that Exeter appeared to be one of the weakest teams that had visited Luton this season, and it really seemed that Luton had a very easy and comfortable time before them. But Exeter made things hum in the first twenty minutes of the second half, and incidentally caused the critics to change their opinion. They played with surprising dash and go, and gave the home supporters a bit of a fright when they were still giving the Luton backs a warm time after putting on two goals, and thus drawing the scores level. It was a relief when Brown drove in a smart shot which scored Luton's third goal, and the result of the game was beyond doubt when a little later Streeton got his head to a fine centre from Brown and scored the fourth point for Luton.

Brown had a hand, or rather foot, in all four goals scored for Luton, and, although he missed once or twice rather badly, on the whole played a good game. Moody and Walker also did well, and Streeton had the satisfaction of scoring what was really a very fine goal. Bob Hawkes put in some splendid work, and Fred Hawkes, as usual, was always there when wanted. Potts, at back, played a cool, plucky and safe game, but it was one of Wightman's "off" days.

Some of the morning papers had given Exeter to win, but on the play they did not deserve such credit. Undoubtedly Luton were the better team, and they gained two valuable points, giving them another lift up the League ladder.