

LUTON FOOTBALL NOTES.

By "The Goalie."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

TOO LATE!

BEST VICTORY OF THE SEASON.

Playing extremely dashing football, Luton quite overwhelmed Reading on Saturday, and won by 7-1, Bert Moody helping considerably in this by performing the "hat trick." This revival, however, has come rather late, and perhaps too late to save Luton from relegation. By beating Southampton, New Brompton are quite safe, but the Saints are still in the danger zone, being a point ahead of Luton for a game less. Southampton, therefore, have two games to play before the end of the season, and Luton one, and that a very difficult one, too, their opponents being Northampton, who have done very well this season. Should Luton win, and Southampton lose both their games, the latter will accompany Leyton into the lower regions, while should they secure one point to Luton's two, they will still go down because of their inferior goal average. It is therefore touch and go, with the chances on Southampton. The following is the position of affairs:

	P.	W.	L.	D.	F.	A.	P.
Southampton	36	9	16	11	43	59	23
Luton	37	9	18	10	49	66	23
Leyton	37	6	20	11	26	62	23

The game could not by any means be termed great, and Luton's superiority may have been due to slackness on Reading's part, for they are in a safe position and have nothing to lose. Of course to net seven goals in these days is an achievement upon which the players are to be congratulated. The experiment of playing Mardle at centre forward proved very successful, for he infused a great deal of life and dash into the forward line. Walker was the only forward who did not shine at times, and as for the rest of the team, they were chiefly concerned with backing up the efforts of the forwards. Naisby had an easy afternoon, but he made some fine saves all the same. During the time that Reading were making such headway in the English Cup, Caldwell, the goalkeeper, made a great name for himself. During the week, however, he was transferred to Everton, and Caulfield appeared in his place. The latter proved a rather poor substitute, being at fault with two or three of the goals that scored, and this somewhat takes the gilt off Luton's performance.

Luton showed very promising form at the start, Mardle distinguishing himself by a delightful pass to Brown. This was not improved upon, but only three minutes had elapsed when the centre allowed the ball to pass between his legs to Moody, who shot in the net over the goalkeeper's arm. Thanks to Stephenson and Bob Hawkes, Luton still kept up the pressure on resuming, but both teams were handicapped by the lively ball too much to display any good footwork. A blunder between the visiting goalkeeper and the back nearly let Luton through, but an opportune kick by the latter saved the situation. A moment later Moody had a glorious opportunity, being alone in front of goal with a dropping ball, but he headed instead of kicking, as he might easily have done, and the ball went over the bar. Stephenson had terribly hard luck with a grand shot which hit the bar, and the backs stopped the subsequent shots from the half-backs. Still they pegged away, however, and from a beautiful centre from Stephenson, Mardle dashed through and scored the second goal after fifteen minutes' play.

Luton were now playing at the top of their form, and it was not long before from a corner kick, Mardle headed into Caulfield's hands, and the goalie dropping the ball, Moody planted it into the net. With a little more steadiness, Mardle might have scored a fourth a moment later, while a hard shot from Moody flew just past the post. Reading rarely got away, and with their defence wavering an addition to the score seemed imminent at any moment. Caulfield somewhat retrieved himself, however, by making a brilliant save from Moody, whose shot seemed bound to score before the goalkeeper dived for it. Reading now had a turn of attacking, and Greer tried a couple of good shots. Naisby, however, was not very sorely tried, the visiting forwards being rather weak in front of goal. Perhaps the lethargy which crept into Luton's methods was due to the hot sun, but in response to the appeals of the crowd they woke up and scored another goal. The goalkeeper had saved from one of the forwards and immediately Moody, Mardle, and Stephenson were on him. The second named charged him over and securing the ball, shot into the empty net. Half-time was fast approaching, but before the whistle went, Moody headed number five from a corner taken by Stephenson.

The second half was decidedly slow. Five, ten, and fifteen minutes passed slowly by with nothing to record,—and then Bob headed the ball! After another five minutes' dreary dallying, however, a shot by Bushell found the net, and then Ernie Brown, not to be left in the cold, obliged with number seven with a really fine cross shot. Then came another period of end-of-the-season lethargy until Stephenson roused hopes with a capital header. It beat the goalkeeper, but one of Reading's backs headed the ball away. The closing stages were enlivened by a fine drive by Bob Hawkes, which passed over the bar, and Moody had the goalkeeper in difficulties with a soft header. The ball was bundled away, however, and going to the other end, Reading attacked in a spirited manner which brought out some fine work by Naisby. He quite deserved to keep a clean sheet, but close on time a penalty was given against Potts, and Foster scored Reading's solitary point, making the score:—

LUTON 7, READING 1.