

HOW LUTON FINISHED THE SEASON

With Nine Men at Northampton.

"Sandy" Brown puts through his own Goal.

It was with little hope of escaping relegation that Luton set out for Northampton, for whatever happened in that match it was almost certain the result at Southampton would keep Luton in the "bottom two." Events turned out pretty much as was expected, and even if Luton had won they were actually no better off. The only change from the previous week was the dropping of Walker in favour of Streeton, and this move certainly met with approval from the majority of local supporters. Northampton were able to field the same side which trounced Southampton on the Thursday except that Tull, who was representing the South-Eastern League, was substituted by H. A. Redhead, a local amateur, who has previously figured in the ranks of the Cobblers.

Although there was no special excursion, quite a large crowd of Lutonians travelled with the team, but there was almost an entire absence of colour which usually graces the breasts of excursionists on these annual visits to Bootopolis. The spectators were rather slow in turning up, and altogether it was difficult to imagine that the game was one in which any great issue was at stake. The teams turned out as follow:—

Luton:—Naisby; A. Brown and Potts; Fred Hawkes, Bushell and R. Hawkes; E. Brown, Streeton, Mardle, Moody and Stephenson.

Northampton:—Thorpe; Clipstone and Davies; Manning, Hampson and Tomkins; Walden, H. A. Redhead, Lessons, Lewis, and Freeman.

Referee, Mr. J. Baker, Nantwich.

Northampton had the advantage of the wind in the first half, but in the first minute Luton broke through, only to find Clipstone just a second too quick for Mardle, and the situation was cleared. Both sides secured unproductive corner kicks, but as would be expected the fairly strong wind helped to keep the play most in the Luton quarters. Bob Hawkes came to the rescue of his side with a clever tackle when Lessons appeared to have a fine opening, while a minute later the Luton captain getting a chance for a pot shot at the other end of the field let drive with a good attempt, which only missed the target by a yard or so.

A further corner kick fell to the Cobblers, and Freeman placed this so as to cause a bit of anxiety. During the rush the ball touched "Sandy" Brown's hands, and without hesitation the referee awarded a penalty kick. It was almost invariably conceded that in this the official was somewhat harsh, for it looked a purely accidental handling, but as it happened it mattered nothing. Hampson, who took the kick, shot direct at Naisby, and then on Hampson making a second attempt Naisby got to the ball in fine style, and finally cleared the danger.

Most danger from the Luton side came from

COMMENT ON THE PLAY AND PLAYERS.

When everything is taken into consideration the result was no disgrace to Luton. The Luton players who can take chief credit for that are Naisby, Potts and Bob Hawkes. Those three players stood out as a bit above the others, even including the victorious Cobblers. Potts, in particular, stood in the breach finely, and together with Naisby is to be congratulated upon circumventing the home attack when everything pointed to a big defeat. Bob Hawkes had a clever forward to hold in Walden, and it speaks well for the Luton captain to be able to record that the times Walden got clear were very few. From the attitude of the crowd it would seem a crime to attempt to stop their local pet. Potts was not treated at all well by the spectators. This was understood to be an echo of an incident last season, for certainly he did nothing to justify any such demonstration on Saturday.

Northampton won the match through their fine defence. In Thorpe, Clipstone and Davies they possess a trio who take a deal of getting by, and with only four forwards practically all the game, it could not be expected that Luton would be able to make much impression on their goal records.