

FOOTBALL NOTES AND NEWS

By "Goalie."

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

A CATASTROPHE

NEWPORT COUNTY RUN RIOT.

PROMOTION PROSPECTS DAMAGED.

The result of Luton's Southern League match at Newport on Saturday came as a great shock to Lutonians. The County were not regarded as a particularly stiff hurdle in the race for promotion, and the defeat by the large score of 5-1 gives Luton less rope in some of their harder matches, as well as damaging their goal average. Luton have ten more matches to play, only four being at home, Swansea, Ton Pentre, Newport County, and Aberdare, while the remainder are to be played at Croydon, Southend, Cardiff, Swansea, Ton Pentre, and Llanelly. The first four of the away matches are very difficult propositions indeed, and the promotion race is bound to be rather too close to be pleasant.

Except for the fact that Stephenson returned to his old place at centre-forward, Smith being dropped, Luton had the same team out as in their previous match. The long journey into Wales was not commenced until ten o'clock on Saturday morning, and this may to some extent account for the poor performance Luton made. One must not lose sight of the fact, however, that Newport County played an exceptionally brilliant game, and hardly ever enabled Luton, who found themselves all at sea on the grassless pitch, to settle down. Henderson and Potts had a very busy afternoon, and it was not their fault, nor Abbott's. The halves were only moderate, and in the forward line, Bob Hawkes was the only player to live up to his reputation. He seemed to be everywhere, and scored Luton's solitary goal.

Stephenson started for Luton, and sent to Murphy, who tricked Fyfe, but was pulled up by McDougall, who, with a fine run, passed to Bowdler. The latter ran on, and passed to W. Fyfe, who scored for Newport amidst great enthusiasm within two minutes of the start. This roused the visitors, and Wileman raced away and forced a corner. Holt, however, secured, and brilliant combination by Howell, Fyfe, and Bowdler again placed the visitors' line in danger, but Bowdler was ruled offside. Another great run by the Newport left saw Holt clear. He drove hard to Abbott, who saved brilliantly. An error by Thornton let the visitors in, and Murphy tested Husbands, who proved safe, and Thornton was responsible for again placing the Strawplaiters on the defensive. Slinging the ball about, the home team non-plussed the visitors, but many chances to score were lost owing to infringing the offside rule by over-eagerness.

From a free kick Luton got down, but Taylor checked them, and Hawkes, smartly following up, prevented him clearing, but brilliant work by the Newport forwards ended in Holt scoring another goal amidst frantic enthusiasm. Unfortunately for Newport, Fyfe was more or less of a passenger, having been hurt early in the game. A determined effort on the home goal by Wileman and Murphy was checked by Parry, and from a ludicrous kick by McDougall, George Fyfe sent across to W. Fyfe, who beat Abbott, and placed Newport three goals up, after 25 minutes' play. From the kick-off Stephenson tried desperately, and got through, but Parry cleared with a huge kick. Another brilliant attack initiated by McDougall, who was playing a great game, was stopped by Potts, and a foul against Lean put the Usksiders on the defensive. Taylor robbed Murphy and sent down to Holt, who shot, but Abbott saved at the expense of a fruitless corner. At the interval Newport led by 3-0.

Within a minute of the re-start the homesters were swarming around Abbott, who cleared in turn from Holt and Ike Fife. Bob Hawkes, who was trying hard, brought off a fine run, but the ex-international was pulled up by Lean. Ike Fife was fouled by Potts when going well for goal, but nothing resulted from the free-kick. A moment later the referee had occasion to speak to a player on either side. Parry missed his kick, and Bob Hawkes slipped through, but was pulled up in the nick of time by McDougall. After Fyfe had grazed the bar with a shot, Bob Hawkes ran through the defence. Husbards ran out of his goal and missed the ball, so that the ex-international had only to touch the leather into the net for Luton. Directly afterwards Murphy was nearly through, but Fyfe intercepted. Luton were now having the better of it, but the slippery state of the ground handicapped their shooting.

A burst by Bowdler brought Newport relief. He forced a corner, and from the free kick a fierce struggle took place in Luton's goal-mouth, and McDougall at last kicked behind. Fyfe was next nearly through, then Hall brought off one of his characteristic runs, and with a grand shot from the line scored Newport's fourth goal with an attempt that Abbott apparent was unable to see, as he made no effort to save it. Another call was then made on Abbott by Bowdler, but the latter missed a most easy chance. Play now slackened considerably, and the heavy ground was having a palpable effect on the players. A dash by Bowdler nearly brought another goal, but Abbott brought off a grand save. Two free kicks to Luton relieved the pressure but Newport were soon back, and George Fyfe just headed over. Directly afterwards the same player headed the ball through. Result:—