

SOUTHERN ALLIANCE.

A SET-BACK AT CROYDON.

ROBINS REPEAT CUP TIE VICTORY.

Luton's chances of annexing the championship of the Southern Alliance are now rather remote, for they were beaten on Saturday at Selhurst by Croydon Common by 3-1. The Robins now lead by four points, but Luton have a game in hand, their remaining matches being Portsmouth and Cardiff at home, and Milwall and Cardiff away, all of which are far from easy.

With the exception of the opening few minutes, the Common were always the more accomplished side, and but for the good work of Bateman in goal Luton would have been beaten by a more decisive margin. All round, Croydon excelled, the play of the backs being quite a feature of the game. Watson, who was in goal instead of Newton, was very safe, and he dealt with many awkward shots in fine style. Hutchins was the better of two sterling backs. His tackling, if ultra vigorous on occasions, was always sound. He kicked well, too, and the forwards often made fine headway from his big lunges up the field. The half-backs also did capital service, without being brilliant. They fed the men in front of them with marked accuracy, while their tactics in defence left little to be desired.

The forwards, ably led by that dashing and fearless player, Page, combined well, and gave the Luton rearguard some very anxious moments. Page kept his wings together in skilful fashion, and his individual attempts to take the visitors' defence by storm aroused enthusiasm among the crowd. Upex and Barnfather also shone, the latter's centres being beautifully timed and placed with accuracy. There was one man in the visitors' defence who caught the eye, and that was Bateman, who gave a capital display in goal. He effected many clever saves, and was one of the outstanding players on the field. Forward Luton did well in mid-field, but they failed to round off their attacks. Wileman and Johnson were the most prominent of the line, and it was the former who put Luton in front within three minutes of the start, a fine centre from Johnson giving him an opening which he was quick to take full advantage of.

From that point, however, the Common did nearly all the attacking, and after several determined attacks a corner was forced, following which Page headed into the net well out of Bateman's reach. Croydon kept up the pressure, and shortly before the interval Upex gave them the lead with a splendid shot after Allman had made the opening. Thus at half-time the home side led by the odd goal in three. As was the case in the first moiety, Croydon had much the better of the game following the change of ends. The second period was well advanced, however, before the Common obtained their third, and what proved to be the last, goal of the match. Barnfather was making his way towards goal when he was brought down by unfair methods in the penalty area, and from the resultant kick Upex easily scored. In the final stages, both Page and Hutchins were injured, the latter having to leave the field. Despite this handicap, Croydon more than held their own, and in the end won comfortably. Result:—

CROYDON COMMON 3, LUTON 1.