

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.

TON PENTRE SWAMPED.

LUTON'S EASY TASK.

Thank goodness all teams in the Second Division of the Southern League are not of the same calibre as Ton Pentre, who visited Luton on Saturday and lost by 7-1. It might easily have been 17-1. The visitors have not yet won a match in the League, and they are not likely to. Several changes had to be made in the Luton team. In the first place Bateman kept goal instead of Abbott, who was given a rest. Then Fred Hawkes had the misfortune to hurt his ankle, and so the half-back line included Bob Hawkes, Thompson, and Wilson. Stephenson was to have played centre, but the absence of Bob from the forward line necessitated the inclusion of Smith, who was hardly fit to play. Stephenson went outside right with Wileman inside, and Murphy and Worth operated together on the left wing. It is of interest to note this team is the same with which Luton opened the season, with the exception of the goalkeeper.

The most important game in the League on Saturday was at Southend, where the home team drew with Cardiff one-all. This makes Southend four points worse off than Luton, but as they have two games in hand, they are virtually level. A lot will depend on to-morrow's match at Southend between Luton and the sea-siders, for the winning team will be the most likely one to obtain promotion. To revert to Saturday's game, if it can be called a game! The chief weakness of the visitors was in goal, where they had to play a reserve. He fielded the ball very badly, and was apt to let it fall at the feet of the opposing forwards. Some of the Welsh forwards were fast and thrustful, but they had no idea of combination. It would be invidious to criticise the Luton players seriously, as they obviously took matters too easily. Still one could not help noticing that the defence was at times rather shaky, in spite of the weak opposition. The forwards mostly spent their time in making individual attempts to defeat the Welsh defenders, and that was why the score was kept within reasonable limits.

It was not until a quarter of an hour had elapsed that Luton managed to open their account, although they went near when Smith, receiving a fine pass from Bob Hawkes, struck the cross-bar. The next time Bob had a shot himself, and the ball just missed the corner of the goal. Then Worth received the ball from the centre, and racing away he placed the leather beautifully in front of goal. Smith shot for goal, but Percival saved. The ball rebounded again to Smith, however, who easily placed it in the net. The next goal came from Wileman, who scored from a corner taken by Worth, and when Percival dropped a long shot from Thompson, Smith ran up and registered the third. Bob Hawkes was going through in a typical manner when he was fouled just outside the penalty area. Taking the kick himself he drove the ball like lightning just under the bar. The last three goals had been scored within the space of five minutes, and it was not long afterwards before Smith headed another goal from a corner by Stephenson, and thus completed the hat-trick. Thompson had a good chance to get into the list of goal-scorers when a penalty was awarded for a foul on Worth, but he shot straight at Percival, who saved. At the interval the score was 5-0 for Luton.

The second half was very tame indeed. About three minutes after the re-start, Clark took advantage of slackness in the home defence to register Ton Pentre's only goal. Then a penalty was given against Wilson, but Williams shot hard at Bateman, who saved. Luton's sixth goal was a very peculiar one. The ball came to Wileman about twenty-five yards from goal, and without moving he sent the leather goal-wards. It could hardly have been called a shot, for the ball had no pace, but it rolled past the backs and into the corner of the goal without Percival making the slightest effort to save. He apparently thought the backs were going to clear. The last goal was a beauty, Stephenson making a successful first-time shot. Result:—

LUTON 7, TON PENTRE 1.