

LLANELLY v. LUTON.

Played at Llanelly on Saturday. Result :—

Luton	1 goal
Llanelly	1 goal.

The teams were as follow :—

Luton—H. Bateman; Jarvie and Potts; F. Hawkes, Wilson, and R. Hawkes; Stephenson, Wilman, Smith, Holland, and Worth.

Llanelly—Bailiff; Peters and James, Gough, Martin, and Capel; Osborne, Fuge, Freeman, Payne, and Bird.

Referee, Lieut. W. C. Clover (Leicester).

It will be noticed that Luton played the same team as at Southend, but when the players left Luton, Wilman was a very doubtful starter on account of the injury received the previous Saturday at Tufnell Park, and Murphy was taken down as reserve. Llanelly were expecting to play a new back in Matlocks, of Trowbridge, but for some reason or other he did not turn up. It was given out that it would be Bailiff's last appearance for Llanelly, although his transfer to Everton was not absolutely settled on Saturday night when Luton left Llanelly.

It is quite a big journey to get to the ground even from Cardiff, as most of the trains stop at almost every station, and even when you reach Llanelly Station it is over three miles to the ground. However, the trams are quite convenient, as they go direct from the station to the ground; but in the case of the team on Saturday, a halt was made in the town for lunch before going to the pitch. By the way, it is rather curious that several of the local tram staff have been drafted from Luton, and they were very pleased to renew acquaintance with the players on the way up. As usual in these remote districts, any old Lutonian within reasonable distance makes an effort to see "the boys," and on Saturday one such had travelled up from Carmarthen, and was delighted to pay a visit to the dressing-room to have a few words with Fred Hawkes, as they were at school together.

The playing pitch is quite a new one, and although better than some in South Wales, inasmuch as it is full size, it possesses one particularly bad patch, and the recent rains had rendered it a regular quagmire for fully one-third of the playing area. There is a small stand with dressing-rooms underneath, but so far Soccer has not attracted very large crowds, and on Saturday less than 2,000 were present at the match.

Bailiff won the toss, and as there was a decided wind blowing, almost amounting to a gale at times, Luton were faced with a big task to keep the Tinplaters out up to the interval. Indeed, in the first minute, Llanelly almost brought about the downfall of the Luton goal, Bateman bringing off a brilliant save from Payne after

reeman had missed Osborne's centre. Luton took the running from a foul given against Peters, but Capel robbed Stephenson, and play was transferred by Fuge racing down, his final shot skimming the bar.

Bob Hawkes led a raid on Bailiff, and that worthy only prevented a goal by conceding a corner, but a minute later some good work by Worth looked even more dangerous, for Luton's outside left put across a sharp centre, and Smith made a big dash to get the ball, but was a second too late. It would have been a finely worked for goal if it had come off.

Gough obtained the ball from Bob Hawkes, and Llanelli got down in a threatening manner, but Jarvie proved a yard or so faster than Fuge, and placed the ball over the line. The game was fairly even for a time, and Bailiff saved from Holland, whilst James headed away a promising shot from Stephenson. Luton were attacking when a clever move from Martin relieved the situation and incidentally led up to a goal for Llanelli. The ball was sent well up the field, and it was a question as to whether Potts or Fuge would get it, both making a simultaneous dash, and the local inside-right came off best. As Luton's defence were well away from their goal, Fuge had a clear run into goal, but Freeman was through the backs, and he ran on in front of Fuge, and the latter passing the ball to him, it was a simple matter to place the ball in the net. It was a surprise to find the referee allow the goal, for Freeman was undoubtedly offside, as there was only Bateman between him and the net. The referee, it transpired after the match, considered it was a back pass, but in this view he was certainly mistaken, and it was decidedly hard luck to be behind from such a ruling.

But Luton were more than a trifle fortunate a minute or so later when Payne shipped Jarvie and, with only Bateman to beat, sent wide. Twice Worth sent across centres which, with a little bit of luck, might have been turned into goals, but each time James managed to clear.

Turning round, Luton proved by far the cleverer team in midfield, but they could not engineer a real opening for quite a long period, so determinedly did the locals defend. Peters, as at Luton, was none too scrupulous in his methods, but the play was not at all rough on the whole. Luton's left wing set up a hot attack, and Bailiff exercised good judgment in running out and punching away from Worth. Then Payne made a hash of a "gift" opening by placing wide with no one but Bateman to beat. Undoubtedly a goal at this stage for the Scarlets would have won the match, but Luton struggled on, and eighteen minutes from time were rewarded with an equalising goal.

Part of the credit for this point can go to Bob Hawkes, who was playing a fine attacking game at this stage. Indeed, the left wing triangle all had a hand in the movement before Holland tried a shot. The inside-left was at rather an awkward angle, but screwed the ball nicely across, giving Bailiff no chance whatever. This point renewed hope in the Luton attack, and with the possibility of getting two valuable points before them, they played a dashing game, and there was really only one team in it now.

Stephenson led a raid from which the home goal had a marvellous escape, for all three inside men were up to meet the centre. Wileman let fly, and it seemed certain a goal would be the result, for the ball was travelling well out of Bailiff's reach, but it rose just a shade too high and hit the cross-bar. Even then it seemed the ball would be forced through, but the return drive was cleared by one of the backs standing right under the bar. It was the nearest thing of the match, and two or three times in as many seconds it was a matter of inches only. This proved the final incident of note, and a draw possibly represented the game, taking the chances right through.

Bateman played a very fine game in goal, but unfortunately in fisting away on one occasion from a flag kick, he knocked his thumb up, and will have to nurse it in order to get it fit again for the Good Friday match at Cardiff. Jarvie and Potts were scarcely so safe as at Southend, but they played a vigorous game with good judgment as a rule. Bob Hawkes delighted the local crowd with his clever work, while his two comrades were never overplayed, and worked hard to retrieve the misfortune of the award of what will always be considered an offside goal. Although they only scored once, the forward line played an improved game, Holland in particular shining both as a feeder to Worth and as a shot at goal. Still, Wileman was again the best forward, and it was lucky for Luton that he was able to take his place in the team. Smith worked hard as usual, and was unlucky on more than one occasion, the terrible state of the playing pitch causing the ball to run unkindly.

Llanelli are a troublesome side to beat at home, and possess several very good players. Bailiff, of course, is well known, and little need be said of him, but in Fuge (who, by the way, did not play at Luton) they have a forward who should make a name. He possesses plenty of pluck, and is continually working for an opening. It is understood that more than one big club have made overtures for his services, but at present no business has been done. The crowd were scarcely so enthusiastic as has been reported, but when the goal was allowed we had a performance of the local war song, "Sospan Fach" (whatever that means), and again at half time the players were greeted with this bit of Welsh singing from the spectators, in honour of their leading at this stage it is presumed.