

LUTON FAIL ONCE MORE AT CARDIFF.

PLAYER ORDERED OFF THE FIELD.

Cardiff City have not taken the Southern Alliance seriously, and figure at the bottom of the table, but it was given out that they intended to make a bold bid for a victory to wind up their home matches. It was expected that there would be a good gate to see the City for the last time, but the wretched weather conditions which prevailed throughout South Wales on Saturday quite upset calculations, and, excepting on the stand, the crowd was very thin. Three thousand would be an outside estimate, and the majority of these would be ticket-holders, for the takings were only £22.

Two changes were made on each side from the teams which played the previous week, J. R. Elvey and J. Chipperfield, of the Clarence, taking the places of Potts and Holland respectively. For Cardiff, Kneeshaw resumed his usual position in goal, while G. Burton came into the forward line instead of his brother, and this meant that Clarke crossed over to inside left. It proved a rather unfortunate day for Clarke, for just before the match started he received a telegram requesting

him to return home to Bradford owing to the serious illness of a member of his family. It was, however, discovered that the train service was not suitable for an early journey, and he decided to take his place in the team and leave immediately after the game.

As events turned out he would have been better advised to have stood down, because about two or three minutes before the finish he was ordered off the field for a foul on Fred Hawkes, after having been cautioned once or twice by the referee. The incident which brought about this unfortunate occurrence was not plainly seen from the crowd, and the spectators were inclined to resent this decision, and when the referee came off the field matters looked a bit ugly, but by the efforts of the home officials Mr. Curtis was able to get to his room without any serious mishap. It appears that Fred Hawkes went down, and Clarke running up took a deliberate kick at his knee, and without hesitation Mr. Curtis pointed to the dressing room. At once several of the Luton players appealed to the referee to modify his ruling, and yielding to their entreaties, he went so far as to consult the nearest linesman, but he could only confirm his superior's decision, and Clarke had to leave. Undoubtedly the decision was correct. Still it was very unfortunate that Clarke should receive marching orders at such a late stage of the season, particularly as it is understood he is not signed for the coming season.

The actual teams were constituted as follows:—

Luton:—H. Bateman; J. R. Elvey and Jarvie; F. Hawkes, Wilson and R. Hawkes; Stephenson, Wileman, Smith, J. Chipperfield, and Worth.

Cardiff City:—Kneeshaw; Doncaster and Croft; Harvey, Latham and Hardy; Tracey, G. Burton, Devlin, Clarke, and Evans.

Referee, Mr. F. Curtis, Bristol.

Luton won the toss, and the wind assisted them in the first half, but they were not able to monopolise the pressure, and the City forwards were continually breaking through. Evans, in particular, was a thorn in the side of Elvey, and once or twice managed to get clear away, but he either over-ran the ball or placed behind. But at last he succeeded in getting the ball well into the goal area, and Devlin promptly netted, thus placing his side one up quite early in the game. This was soon followed by a second goal from the same player, as a result of some exciting exchanges in the goal mouth, following a corner kick, Devlin lifting the ball over the heads of a crowd of players into the net. As a matter of fact, the ball actually touched one of the Luton defenders, and this probably gave the City their goal, for it just turned the ball sufficiently for Bateman to be deceived by the angle it reached the net.

Luton were encouraged by a reduction in the lead when a pass out from Wilson led up to a race between Croft and Stephenson for the ball, and the Luton player easily won, and working across put in a beautiful cross centre, which Wileman trapped and drove into the net. In quick succession shots were sent in by Wileman, Smith, and Chipperfield, but they could not add to the score, Kneeshaw proving equal to all calls at this stage. There was just a chance that Luton would recover and make a fight of it for victory, but a rather unexpected goal was hereabouts added to the home score. Tracey getting an opening, following strong pressure on the City goal, had an easy run down the field quite unmolested. He lobbed the ball into the goal mouth, and Bateman, coming to fist away, ran into Wilson, and actually knocked his comrade down in the goal.

lobbed the ball into the goal mouth, and Bateman, coming to fist away, ran into Wilson, and actually knocked his comrade over in the mud. Burton, who was dashing up at the same moment, had simply to touch through the open goal. No further scoring took place up to half-time, the score standing—Cardiff City 3, Luton 1.

The second half opened in a remarkable manner. Smith tipped the ball to Wileman, who returned it sharply, and a long pass was sent out to Stephenson, who raced at top speed towards the goal line, and centred splendidly. Kneeshaw made much the same mistake that Bateman did in his attempt to gather the centre, and practically turned the ball through, but Chipperfield running up made certain, and the margin was then reduced to a single goal once again. But almost from the restart the City added another point, Evans getting the ball finely across after neatly rounding Elvey. Bateman stopped the ball near the far upright, but did not clear, and Burton rushing in easily netted.

Play was very even for some time after this, but near the finish a free kick just outside the penalty area brought further disaster to Luton. Hardy with a sharp cross drive finding the net for the City. For some reason or other the game developed on rough lines, and two or three of the players were spoken to by the referee, and eventually Clarke was ordered off as recorded above. Result: Cardiff City 5, Luton 2.

COMMENTS ON THE PLAY AND PLAYERS.

So far as midfield play was concerned there was not the difference between the teams that the score would indicate. But the City forwards were smarter than the Luton five, and this gave them a big advantage. The state of the playing pitch, especially in the neighbourhood of the goals, also contributed to the heavy scoring, for the ball simply "slithered" through the mud, and played all sorts of pranks, which deceived the defenders on both sides at times. Luton were best served by Wileman and Stephenson of the forwards, while all the halves worked well. Evans was the star performer for the City, although Devlin played a forcing game at centre. But the favourite of the crowd was Latham at centre-half. His repeated efforts to score a goal were enthusiastically cheered, but he could not manage to do the trick, although, on one occasion, Devlin gave him a splendid opportunity when he could have tried a shot himself.
