

LUTON v. MARDY.

Played at Mardy on Saturday. Result:—

Luton	2 goals.
Mardy	1 goal.

The teams turned out as under:—

Luton. — Mitchell; Elvey and Jarvie; F. Hawkes, Frith, and R. Hawkes; Stevens, Wileman, Brewis, Rollinson, and Wilkie.

Mardy. — Middleton; Jones and Jenkins; Arthurs, Griffiths, and Tebbutt; Cartmell, Hall, Fitzsimmons, Pinney, and Lockett.

Referee, Mr. E. E. Small, Bristol.

Instead of making the homeward journey after the Abertillery match, the team and officials went on to Cardiff, arriving at the old headquarters, the Grand Hotel, about nine o'clock on Wednesday night. The party of eighteen were in good spirits as a natural consequence of the win away from home, and a really fine time was spent on the most extended trip the Club have undertaken. Thursday morning was spent by a tour round the docks, which was greatly enjoyed by all the party, and in the afternoon the City ground was placed at the disposal of the players for a bath and rub down, which was necessary to take out the stiffness caused by the travelling and the hard match at Abertillery. While the players were taking the water, the officials made a tour of inspection round the ground under the guidance of Councillor Wall, who spends practically all his time at Ninian Park superintending the extensive alterations that will eventually make the City ground one of the best equipped enclosures in the Southern League. It will be remembered that 25,000 spectators were crowded on the ground last Good Friday, and many were none too comfortable, but even now there would be no difficulty whatever in getting at least 30,000 on the ground, and all of them have a chance to get a view of the game.

Friday was given over to recreation chiefly, although a walk along the cliffs at Penarth tended to keep the players in training. Previous to taking the tour to Penarth, by the invitation of Mr. Douglas Ritchie, who will be remembered by the majority of Lutonians, the whole party inspected one of the latest flying machines, which was on exhibition in a local hall. As this was the second machine of this character which had visited South Wales, there was a deal of curiosity, and the hall has been visited by quite a large number of people. The players were very interested in Mr. Ritchie's explanation of the various points, and were able to examine the interesting machine in detail. After lunch at Penarth, a little paddling was indulged in, but the rain which came on sent the party back to Cardiff a little earlier than the arranged programme.

Seats had been booked at the Empire, and it was quite a merry party which graced the front row of the circle of that well-known hall. It might be mentioned that Smith, the old Luton centre-forward, came over to see his old comrades, and was one of the party at the Empire. Altogether, the first visit of the season to South Wales proved a most enjoyable trip, and the players were hugely delighted with the arrangements, all agreeing it was the finest outing they had taken part in for many years.

As will be seen, the same side turned out at Mardy as against Abertillery, while the only change from the previous week on the Mardy side was Cartmell for Potter. The kick-off had been advertised for five o'clock, but so bad was the outlook on arrival that the referee was in favour of bringing the start forward by half-an-

hour. Eventually, the officials agreed to commence the game at 4.45 and by this time there was a decided improvement in the light, and as events turned out it would have been risking nothing if the original time had been adhered to. Except for the cramped playing area, there was not a great handicap at Mardy, for the hurricane which was in evidence last year at the corresponding fixture was missing, although curiously all the goals were again netted at the same end, and it is pretty certain now Luton will never have the chance of seeing a goal scored at the Colliery goal, for within a month the Mardy officials intend to remove to a large pitch which is being prepared about a quarter of a mile away. As Luton are not anxious to make any further journeys to Mardy they did not inspect the new pitch, and trust they will not be compelled to do so next season, for the district is far from an inviting one, although the local officials did all they knew to make the short stay a pleasurable one, and prepared tea in the Workman's Hall, which appears to provide the only recreation outside a public-house in the neighbourhood.

The game started with Luton doing most of the aggressive work, and Rollinson got away in good style very quickly, but Brewis made a wide attempt from the pass from the wing and spoilt a very promising opening. Naturally, the ball was not long at one end of the field, for a single kick sufficed to take it from one goal to the other, and if Mardy possesses nothing else they have a good pair of backs, as will be known from the fine show they put up at Luton the previous Saturday. Mardy were first dangerous when Cartmell got away on the right, and forced a corner kick. Then Mitchell punched over the bar for a second corner, the ball coming very awkwardly, but this time the flag kick was cleared on account of someone fouling in the goal area. Bob Hawkes gave Middleton a teaser from a free kick, but the goalkeeper managed to hold the ball and prevent it passing into the net. Still it was not long before the Luton attack were awarded a leading point, Wilman, as at Abertillery, being the player to first pierce the goal. A sharp shot had been sent in, and although Middleton stopped it in the first instance, he failed to clear, and Wilman running in had no difficulty in sending into the net.

Mardy were not exactly cowed by the reverse, and for a few minutes really looked like equalising matters. Lockett, indeed, would consider he had hard luck when he sent the ball hard on the crossbar at the far corner of the goal. Again a regular scramble almost under the bar caused the Lutonians to look a little anxious, but ultimately the danger was averted by Arthurs landing the ball on the wrong side of the net.

However, Luton always appeared the more likely scorers when they got an opening, and after twenty-two minutes' play Brewis increased the lead from close range, following a regular melee in front of Middleton. With a two-goal lead, there was just a tendency for the Luton forwards to ease up, and right up to the interval there were comparatively few incidents, the score still standing with Luton in possession of a clear two-goal advantage.

Luton went away on the re-start, and only hands in goal given against Brewis prevented a further goal. The spectators were urging their pets to wake up, and the game became a trifle more lively, and the award of a penalty kick to Mardy six minutes after the resumption once more gave the Rhondda supporters encouragement that they would have the pleasure of seeing the points remain with the Welsh contingent. The award, however, was rather a surprising ruling on the part of Mr. Small. It was quite evident he himself saw nothing to call a halt, and the game was proceeding in the ordinary way when the linesman on the stand side was observed to walk into the field, and after a talk with the referee there arose some suspicion of a penalty being given, the crowd waiting anxiously; meanwhile, the referee walked right across to the other linesman, and to the delight of the spectators the whistle-holder pointed to the penalty spot. It was a shock to the majority of the Luton players, and particularly to Jarvie, who was the presumed culprit, and he stoutly denies that anything wrong took place. It should be mentioned the penalty area at Mardy comes within three yards of the touch line, and the incident took place almost on the extreme edge.

Jenkins took the kick, and Mitchell brought off a brilliant save, sending the ball yards away, but as luck would have it, Pinney was the first player to reach the ball, and with a cross drive easily netted, and thus Luton were once more faced with the task of keeping Mardy from scoring the equalising point for the remainder of the game, as was the case last season. Fortunately, the home players were not assisted by the terrific wind, which gave them so much advantage in the closing stages last year, and the exchanges on the whole were pretty even. Once or twice Stevens forced the play, and it looked odds on a goal, but the home backs came to the rescue each time. Just on time Wilkie got across a fine centre, and the inside man left it to Stevens, who had practically an open goal, but after steadying himself, he weakly placed the ball outside, and thus lost a fine chance to improve the goal average.

Mitchell was not at fault, and kept a fine goal both at Abertillery and Mardy, while the back play of Elvey and Jarvie was, on the whole, very sound. The halves were much more in the picture than last week at Luton, and although Frith did not quite come up to his Abertillery standard, he did very well, his pace coming in very handy at times, when the Mardy forwards managed to slip the backs. Fred Hawkes had a very successful time in South Wales, and taking the two matches together was probably the most consistent member of the middle division. Bob Hawkes, however, at Mardy played a fine game, and was a great favourite with the crowd, who admired his clever footwork. Although they expressed themselves very pleased, he did not get on the target this time with the deadly effect of last season.

The forward work was scarcely so convincing as one would like, and Brewis has not yet proved himself the ideal centre. He was too easily kept off the ball by the opposing defence, and did not make the most of his chances. Wilman and Rollinson were the best of the line, with Stevens always a trier, and his weight proved useful in close quarters. Wilkie took matters rather easily, and will need to put more energy into the work to be really effective away from home.

Mardy have one outstanding player in Jones, and at times he appeared to be the team himself; at any rate the defensive part. Lockett was played to mostly in the forward line, and if he was left alone always threatened danger, for his centres were invariably well placed. Still, the home attack was never more than moderate, and as at Luton the previous week, was seldom actually dangerous.