

FOOTBALL.

LUTON v. BARRY.

Played at Jenner Park on Saturday. Result:—

Luton 3 goals.

Barry 1 goal.

The teams were as follow:—

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

Barry — Varlow; Comely and Wightman; Prince, Catlow, and Greenaway; Bates, Price, Walton, Woolridge, and Isherwood.

Referee, Mr. F. Curtis, Bristol.

Luton turned out the identical side which trounced Treharris the previous Saturday, but Barry made several changes with a view to bringing the team up to Southern League strength. It is quite a new venture for a professional club at Barry, and the players are an unknown quantity in Southern League clubs, Isherwood being the only one with previous experience in such company. Varlow, the goalkeeper, originally played for a Bristol junior club, and Catlow, the centre-half, hails from Catford Southend. The majority of the team are locals, but on Saturday two new players from the Birmingham district were introduced and were expected to strengthen the team. The left back is a brother of S. Wightman, and played a few games for Merthyr last season as an amateur. He is engaged as a teacher at Merthyr, and travels each week to play for Barry.

Barry was a Soccer centre for several years before the advent of professionalism in the district, and at one time their games with Aberdare, Treharris, and one or two of the older organisations, were considered the tit-bits of the season, but it was not until the present season that they took the plunge and came out as an out-and-out professional club. Preparations were made last season, however, and the present ground was secured and a company formed with a capital of £1,000, the whole of the shares being taken up. The ground has been named Jenner Park, in honour of the landlady, who has granted a 35 years' lease at a nominal rental of £22 per annum.

When the company took over the ground it was in a very dilapidated condition, but, thanks to the co-operation of the enthusiasts, led by Councillor C. B. Griffiths, it has been got into something like ship-shape order for the present season, although there is still much to do before it can compare with the Luton ground, for instance. Still, a grand stand holding 300 spectators, has been erected, and was used for the first time on Saturday, while a terraced enclosure is in course of construction, and the ground, when finished, will be capable of holding something like 20,000 spectators. The cost of levelling, etc., has been over £600.

There is a Supporters' Club of 400 members, and they possess a banking account of close on £100, while they have provided dressing-rooms, offices, and gymnasium for the club. Lutonians will be interested to know that the first annual trip of the Supporters' Club takes place on Feb. 21st, when Barry play the return fixture at Luton, and therefore they will have the privilege of entertaining a crowd of Barryites, who will be making their initial acquaintance with English grounds.

The playing surface naturally has not yet settled down, and has purposely been left a trifle high on the side which has been made up at least twenty feet. This means that quite a series of ridges are scattered about the pitch, and as the grass is rather thick it makes the going a bit difficult. To make matters worse, there had been a lot of rain during the week, and in the low-lying portions of the field it was somewhat swampy.

Barry won the toss, and after a quiet opening, attacked, but offside robbed them of the advantage. Then Wileman got away nicely, and Donaghy centering well, Prince came to the rescue none too soon for his side. Some pretty play from Wilkie and Wileman followed, but eventually F. Hawkes sent in a fine drive, which was the merest trifle wide. Simms made a fine burst through, finally parting with the ball to Donaghy, who was wrongly judged offside by the referee, and Luton were robbed of their advantage.

Once or twice Bates gave the Luton defenders a bit of trouble, but he was not well supported, and it caused no surprise when Luton took the lead. The goal was mainly the work of Wileman, who forced his way right through into the penalty area after shaking off the attentions of the backs. Varlow made up his mind to attempt to block Wileman's passage by dashing out of goal, but the Luton player quietly tapped the ball to Simms, who was following up, and the centre-forward had merely to touch it into the net. It seemed a very simple goal, but Wileman did the correct thing in parting with the ball instead of trying to get it between Varlow and the upright on his own.

Price and Walker went away from the restart, and the former finished the movement by sending the ball skimming just over the bar, while a moment later the same player missed by inches only, following a slip on the part of Frith. Then Luton had a chance when Wightman headed the ball towards his own goal, but Varlow running out, just managed to get it first before either Simms or Rollinson could realise the splendid chance that came their way as the result of the mistake of the home back.

Just on half-time, Prince got the ball into the Luton goal, and a great shout went up from the

crowd. But the referee was evidently in some doubt about the point, and consulted his linesman, and eventually gave Luton a goal-kick. The spectators could not understand the ruling at all, but inquiry being made, it was discovered that Isherwood had hooked the ball back after it had been over the goal-line for Prince to get in his shot.

When the game was re-started it was evident the "Linnets" had shot their bolt, and Luton would, bar accidents, come out easy winners. Varlow was kept on the qui vive most of the time, and appeared none too comfortable in consequence. Rollinson, getting a pass from the centre of the field, went through, and quite surprised Varlow with a pot shot, the goalkeeper simply throwing up his arms in a despairing way when he found the ball making a bee line for the net. Anyway, the ball passed between the goalkeeper's outstretched arms, and Luton were placed in a winning position with a clear two-goal lead.

Luton took matters a bit easy for a time, and Isherwood getting away, caused Mitchell a little anxiety with a nice cross centre, which only needed the slightest touch to be a goal, for at least three of the home forwards were well up, and how they missed the chance is a mystery. It would have been very unlucky for Luton if this movement had resulted in a goal, for Isherwood was undoubtedly offside when he got the ball; still, the referee would apparently have allowed the goal if the ball had been netted.

Wileman, however, soon seized upon another opportunity in a very similar manner to the opening goal, but this time he held the ball, and finally drove it home at a terrific pace, Varlow being quite amazed at Wileman's lightning shot, for he never moved an inch to prevent a goal. Everything pointed to Luton getting another goal or two before the finish, when a sudden break-away by the home left wing was never cleared, and the ball coming to Walton, the home centre had the rather unexpected pleasure of beating Mitchell, who was deceived through the ball bouncing off a ridge at a surprising angle. Mitchell could not be blamed for the goal, as it was entirely due to the bumpy nature of the ground.

Luton woke up again at this, and right away went down, and Rollinson got the ball into the net within a minute of the Barry goal being scored. Without any hesitation whatever, the referee pointed to the centre for a goal. But he had not seen quite so much of the movement which led up to the point as the crowd on the stand side of the field, who quickly let him know something was wrong, and he consulted one of his linesmen, who evidently told him Wileman had hooked the ball with his arm just before passing it to Rollinson, and to the delight of the crowd this goal was knocked off the Luton tally after the players had actually lined up in the centre of the field. Once or twice after this Luton came within an ace of netting again, but they could not quite manage the trick.

If Luton had won by four or five goals it would not have flattered them on the run of the second half, for although one account of the match makes out Luton played a poor game, this was far from correct, and they were literally all over their opponents after the interval. In no department did Barry come up to the Luton standard. Indeed, except for Comely, Bates, and Isherwood, none of the home players did anything above the ordinary, and it was only occasionally those players were much in the picture. The team as a whole were triers whenever Luton slacked a bit, but as a rule they were overweighted, and the defence were very hard-worked at times.

The English teams are all together at the top of the table with Luton, who have won every match so far, leading. But it has to be remembered that Luton have not yet met any of the teams that are looked upon as the ones most seriously to be reckoned with. Still, they are entitled to credit for what they have done. They have already played three matches in Wales, and got the maximum points on grounds which take a little getting used to.

Croydon, who are nearest to Luton in the table, gave a good display at Aberdare, and ought to have won by a better margin than 2-1. Page scored both for Croydon, and Aberdare's goal was from a penalty. Croydon look like giving a good show this season. Brentford, too, are scoring, but allowances must be made for the weakness of Ton Pentre, who are little better than Treharris, whom Luton beat so soundly the other day. Brentford got seven goals, the scorers being Chapman, Hendren, Johnson, Jackson, and Clarke. They have now the capital goal average of 15 for and 1 against, and have won every match.

Stoke are third in the table, but they have played two more matches than Brentford. They had a clear win of three goals against Aberystwyth in the Potteries. Swansea are not coming on so strongly as was expected of them. Neither side scored at Mid-Rhondda, but it has to be remembered that Swansea were severely handicapped through an accident to Weir, their centre-forward, whose retirement quite disorganised their attack. Mid-Rhondda came very near to scoring, but the Swansea defence was capital, thus bearing out their good record of being the only team in the League with no goals scored against them.

Newport shared the two goals at Mardy, while Pontypridd, who were such a difficult side to reckon with last year, played a goalless match at home with Caerphilly. In the second half Pickett broke away and passed to Lowrie, who shot. Bateman appeared to carry the ball over the line, but the referee, after consulting the linesman, decided in favour of Caerphilly. Bateman's play, particularly during the later stages, is declared by a Welsh paper to have been brilliant.

Luton Town have fixed up a friendly with Ilford, at Ilford, next Saturday. The Clarence will be playing on the Town ground in their F.A. Cup-tie with Tufnell Park, whom they beat in the Athenian League last Saturday as the result of a splendid recovery.

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