

DURRANT SCORES THE WINNING GOAL.

Luton played their thirteenth match of the season on Wednesday, and secured their eleventh victory—an excellent record. The victims on this occasion were Portsmouth, who came to Luton in search of Southern Alliance points, and went back beaten by 4-3. It must be confessed that Luton were slightly lucky to win, for Portsmouth had quite as much of the exchanges as the home team, but the Luton forwards seem to have a knack of getting a goal just when it is wanted, and a rally in the closing stages turned a threatened defeat into a victory. The best feature of the match was the good supply of goals, for apart from this it was a rather uninteresting display. Luton made one or two changes in their team, the most notable being the introduction of Durrant at outside right. Durrant did good work for Luton some seasons ago before he went to Leyton, and the experiment was looked upon with much interest. Fred Hawkes was absent from the half-back line, and Brewis made his first appearance at Luton as a centre-forward. Rollinson was partnered on the left by Stevens, who usually plays outside right. The teams were:—

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

Portsmouth—Heath; Johnson and Dexter; Walls, Hamilton, and Reid; Hogg, Mounteney, Quinn, Buddery, and Shaw.

Durrant showed that he had lost but little of his old skill, and played well enough to promise that he would be the best man Luton could play at outside right. His work in the first half was very good indeed and indirectly led up to the two goals which were scored, while towards the close he secured the winning goal. Stevens was not a success at outside left, and the forwards missed the dashing play of Simms. Wileman and Rollinson both played well, and there is little fault to find with the halves; the two backs were not in their best form and had hard work to cope with the fast forwards of the visitors. As a team Portsmouth struck one as having more possibilities than Luton, as they were both faster and heavier, and they should have no difficulty in winning the return game.

There were only about a thousand spectators present when Quinn kicked off. The opening play was very quiet, neither goalkeeper being troubled, although Luton gained a corner. Brewis had a splendid chance when Durrant, well fed by Wileman, put across a swift square centre, but the ball was too swift for him to catch it. Quinn was robbed by Bob Hawkes when he had an open goal and a centre from Stevens nearly brought about the downfall of the visitors' goal, Heath having to run out to clear. A sparkling run and a fine shot by Durrant followed, and Heath had to concede a corner, which yielded yet another flag kick, and this Stevens put behind. Soon after this Rollinson scored the first goal. Wileman and Durrant did the spade work and Brewis had his shot diverted by one of the backs. The ball went to Rollinson, who made good use of the almost open goal.

Mitchell stopped a brilliant centre by Hogg and cleared from the rush of two forwards. The ball was not cleared, however, and both Quinn and Hogg made good attempts, but again Mitchell made magnificent saves. A penalty was given against Dexter for a foul on Wileman, but the ball struck the bar. Durrant sent it back again, and the ball came from one of the backs to Brewis, who headed the second goal. Two minutes later this point was negatived by a misunderstanding between Mitchell and Jarvie. A centre was put in by Shaw and both defenders left it to one another. The result was that Hogg was able to dash up and place the ball in the net. Just before half-time Buddery equalised.

About three minutes from the re-start Portsmouth were in front. A free-kick against Bob Hawkes for hands resulted in the ball being well placed to Buddery, who netted with an unstoppable shot. A fine run by Durrant promised well for Luton, but he placed the ball too far back in centring, and Rollinson lost the ball. A centre by Stevens saw several Luton forwards manœuvring for a shot, but only a corner kick was gained. This was well placed by Durrant, and after a melee in the goal mouth the ball was cleared. Hands just inside the penalty area gave Luton a chance to equalise, and Bob Hawkes made no mistake with the shot. A lofty forward pass by Frith landed in front of goal, and in the struggle for the ball between the forwards and goalkeeper, Durrant was injured, but he was able to resume although he limped somewhat. Heath made a good save from a shot by Stevens after Brewis had driven the ball on to one of the backs, but soon afterwards, after a regular bombardment, Durrant drove the ball into the net with a