

FORWARDS FIND FORM.

Wileman's "Hat Trick" against Abertillery.

Weather conditions that were ideal for players and spectators alike favoured Abertillery's first visit to Luton, and although the new comers could only claim a win and a draw out of six matches, they attracted close on five thousand spectators to the Town ground on Saturday afternoon. It was rather surprising to see such a large crowd assembled to witness a team that was quite an unknown quantity, but it is safe to say that none amongst the crowd left the ground with a tinge of regret at the afternoon they had spent. If the weather was delightful, the game was equally so, and the most mundane individual must have been satisfied with having had value for money, not merely in the matter of goal-scoring, but also in the quality of the football displayed. With Donaghy still resting his Ilford injury, the home-sters turned out the team that travelled to Tre-harris a week previous, viz.: Mitchell; Elvey, Jar-vie; Fred Hawkes, Frith, Bob Hawkes; Stevens, Wileman, Simms, Rollinson, Wilkie. Abertillery claimed to be two short of their full strength, a forward and a local half-back, through injuries, but the team was exactly the same as that which Luton beat on the Abertillery ground by the odd goal of three. Most of the players have figured in prominent English League football, as will be seen from the names:—Hurst (at one time with Brad-ford City); Adams (with Walsall five seasons); Jamieson (assisted Milwall several seasons); Wel-mot, Craig, Hauxby (from West Hartlepool); Sangster (a Londoner who was a Queen's Park Ranger for several seasons), Jordan (has played for Southampton, Stoke, Reading and Merthyr), Bad-deley (the player manager who was formerly with Stoke, Blackpool and Walsall), Griffiths (a local who has played for Bristol and Aberdare), Bridgett (for four seasons with Leeds City).

The teams lined out in brilliant sunshine, but the sun hampered the players to such an insignificant extent that Bob Hawkes, who had choice of ends, disregarded and took the advantage of a very useful breeze. The result was never in doubt after the first twenty minutes, for the home forwards started off like a whirlwind, and, backed up by superb half-back work, displayed such bril-liant combination and go-ahead tactics that a much more redoubtable defence than that of the visitors could have been excused faltering. Beautifully fed by Bob Hawkes, Wilkie had a big share in the opening of Luton's account four minutes from the start. His centre was a perfect one, and breasting the ball by the backs, Wileman got it under con-trol and gave the goalkeeper no chance. Wilkie was in irresistible mood, and had already given the goalkeeper cause for considerable anxiety three or four times when, with the game twelve minuts' old, Stevens got away from a fine swing-ing pass from Simms, rushed by the back and centred clean across the goal close to the bar. Wilkie recovered the ball on the line, returned it to the centre, where Simms failed to gather, but Rollinson came to the rescue and did the trick, the goalkeeper unsuccessfully protesting that Wilkie had centred from outside the line. The third goal came eight minutes later, and resulted from Bob Hawkes joining the front line. From his pass Wilkie centred on the run with wonderful accuracy, and Simms again missed right in front of goal, but this only made it easier for Wileman to de-feat the perplexed custodian.

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It really looked up to this point as if Luton were going to set up fresh records, for they were scarcely missing anything, and it was only due to Hurst that the score in twenty minutes was not twice three. Fred Hawkes showed that he can keep them low by severely testing the goalkeeper with a hot grounder close against the upright, and was only inches out with a long ranger, and from corners Hurst made a succession of five saves. In one of these he was hurt, but he continued to exhibit magnificent form, and though Luton never once relaxed their pressure, he was not again beaten before the interval. Just before the change of ends, however, the visitors were lucky to escape a penalty award, as Simms was bowled over with the goal at his mercy, and in the scrimmage which resulted in Hurst rescuing the ball, the goalkeeper was not the only one of the visiting players who handled it. Still, it was a plucky piece of work by Hurst, and when he changed ends after the interval his brilliant display was freely recognised by the crowd.

The Abertillery forwards had a very capable leader in Baddeley, and their combination during the first half was often promising, but it was not good enough to cope with the dexterous work of the Luton halves, who were all right on top of their game, and Elvey and Jarvie had a comfortable time, while Mitchell was rarely employed until the second half. It was not until then that the visitors got their first corner, and for a few minutes they gave promise of improving, but the larger share of the exchanges which fell to their lot was purely on sufferance, and as soon as Luton renewed their exertions the game became as one-sided as ever. The Abertillery defence were all at sea, with the exception of the goalkeeper, who continued to be their saviour, and their exasperation showed itself in a good deal of unnecessary roughness. Simms and Stevens were particularly marked out for this sort of attention, and the crowd frequently did not see eye to eye with the referee, Mr. R. R. Crump, of East Dulwich, in passing over fouls, which were often clumsy and very apparent. Stevens was very persistent with his dashes, in spite of the treatment meted out to him, and there were unsuccessful appeals for penalty awards in respect of offences against both the right wingers.

Play was not long at a time away from the vicinity of the visitors' goal, and the goalkeeper had made fine saves from Wilkie and Simms in quick succession, when Simms drove home a beauty from twenty yards' range, which was just under the bar. This occurred twenty minutes from the restart, and from this point Hurst was nearly always in the picture, his saves including a shot from Wileman, which was quite characteristic of the player, and one of his best. Ten minutes later, however, he had not a ghost of a chance in preventing Wileman from achieving his "hat trick." Simms and one of the backs both essayed to get their heads to a fine centre from Wilkie, and they both missed, leaving Wileman with the goal at his mercy. And didn't he ram it home? Immediately after Rollinson was distinctly unlucky to miss with a sparkling cross shot, but he was rewarded before the end by an easy goal from Stevens' centre. Luton were also awarded a penalty for one of the left back's many fouls on Stevens. The crowd badly wanted Bob Hawkes to take it, but he gave Wilkie the chance to get among the goal scorers, and the outside-left clearly showed he is not accustomed to shooting straight at the goal, his effort going yards wide. It was just previous to this that Abertillery came their nearest to scoring in the match, Sangster getting away from a mis-kick by Jarvie, and crossing the ball with a centre, which Mitchell kept out of goal with difficulty. But there was no one up to make use of the opportunity, and the only result was Abertillery's second corner kick, so that the final score was:

LUTON 6, ABERTILLERY 0.

The game was too one-sided to call for many comments, but it is only fair to the visitors to say that in being outplayed they were not disgraced, because Luton were in irresistible form. Their backs and goalkeeper were almost onlookers for the reason that better half-back play has rarely been seen on the Town ground. Bob Hawkes was a regular wizard, and frequently "brought the house down" with his clever artistry, and the simple trickery by which he circumvented the opposition, and the recognition accorded his colleagues was not less marked, Fred Hawkes once more performing brilliantly. The forwards also gave their best display of the season, the only fault being that Stevens was "hall mark"—except as a penalty

shot—and Wileman was in superb form. With the Luton half backs and forwards the honours were shared by F. Hurst, who has nothing to cause him to look back upon the game with regret. The defence in front of him, however, was very shaky, and the forwards had little or no help from their half backs.

THE CENTRE FORWARD POSITION.

A correspondent, who signs himself "The Silent One," writes:—"I beg to submit that the Directors and Supporters' Committee of the Town Club should make a great effort, before it be too late, to strengthen the team at centre-forward, its weakness in that important position being obvious. In any case, why has Brewis, who bears an excellent record of marksmanship, never been given a chance to show what he can do in a home Southern League match? I think the great majority of the spectators would like to see him. It is fortunate that such a capable outside right as Jamie Durrant has been signed on, and everybody hopes he will be fit and well for all the important promotion matches."

FOOTBALL NOTES AND NEWS.

By "Vigilant."

LUTON'S LAST HOME MATCH FOR A MONTH.

It must be a matter of keen regret to many, after the brilliant exhibition to which the light blues treated a rightly appreciative crowd on Saturday, that there is a month to elapse before they have another competition game on the Luton Town ground. The display of the forward line, which has lately left room for considerable improvement, was the more gratifying after the disappointing result at Treharris, and right through the eleven could not fail to strike one as a likely promotion-winning side. It was not merely that they beat Abertillery by six clear goals. Treharris earlier on were beaten on the Town ground by six clear goals, but in that case the Luton team were a long, long way from covering themselves with glory, whereas on Saturday they were absolutely in real tip-top form—aye, and form which would have accounted comfortably for any Southern League rivals. Abertillery, without question, played the smartest football of any of the Welsh teams that have visited Luton this season, and yet they were outplayed so completely that one could not have marvelled at the final score, however large it might have been. Luton have never come so near this season to being classed as a great team, and if they can show anything like the same form at Llanelly next Saturday, and Ton Pentre a fortnight later, they can hardly fail to arrive at their next home game with the maximum number of points.

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It is not often that there are three of the Welsh Second Division clubs playing in England on the same day, but it was so on Saturday. Barry were at Brentford, and were beaten by 5—0, but were rather lucky not to have a worse fate than Abertillery had at Luton. Mid Rhondda visited Croydon Common and showed the people at Selhurst how lucky the Robins were to bring a point away from Tony Pandy. They were beaten by 2—0, but still they proved a stiff proposition, and Luton will not have to be off colour when they come here on Nov. 15th. Two of the three matches played in Wales resulted in pointless draws between Ton Pentre and Mardy and Treharris and Pontypridd. This was Ton Pentre's second point and Treharris's first, and Pontypridd's failure there shows that, like Newport County, they are not the side they were reputed to be.—Newport on Thursday beat Brentford, the conquerors of Swansea a week ago, in a Southern Alliance game, but on Saturday they came down 3—0 at Swansea.

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