

LUTON v. TON PENTRE.

SOUTHERN LEAGUE.—Division II.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Luton Town	2 goals.
Ton Pentre	nil.

Teams:—

Luton: Mitchell; Elvey and Robinson; Fred Hawkes, Frith and Bob Hawkes; Durrant, Brewis, Simms, Robinson and Hoar.

Ton Pentre: Percival; Kirtley and Tanner; Curtis, Simpson and Chetwood; Roberts, Jones, Levi, McGregor and Reese.

Referee: Mr. J. Lilley (Rushden).

Gate receipts, £113. Attendance, about 4,500.

Ton Pentre proved a much better team than Luton bargained for. The game showed that this Welsh club's recent successes were the outcome, in some degree at least, of worthiness on their part. One can now understand why they beat Caerphilly 4-0, Aberdare 6-0, and almost drew with Croydon. They are a considerably improved side since Luton went and beat them on their own goal yard by 4-0. For all that, there was a feeling that Luton ought to have done better than they did on Saturday. The thought of what will happen if Luton do not show better form than that, at Swansea, would obtrude itself as one watched those almost fruitless strivings. Some of the players even blamed the ball—players on both sides. But the referee carefully examined it and pronounced it organically perfect (so it appeared). Bob Hawkes also held it up to demonstrate that it was all right. As for Jimmy Bygrave, he pronounced very decided opinions about its fitness as he armed it off the field at half-time to a consultation of "experts."

But square or round, the ball was the same for both sides, and if some of the Luton men had swung it about instead of hugging it so close they would have given much more chance to their own side to do better with it. The Ton Pentre fellows were much too busy a lot to let their opponents come through in a bunch. A large amount of the credit for keeping Luton out was due to Tanner, the right back. I am not

surprised that the Ton Pentre folk think a lot of him. He played with splendid judgment and thoroughness, and though he had Luton's best forward of the afternoon, Durrant, to look after, Tanner held his own well. Levi, the old Norwich man, led the Ton Pentre attack, and a fine leader he was. If the Luton defence were in trouble it was generally Levi who was the chief factor in causing it. In the first two or three minutes of the game, the Ton Pentre forwards developed quite a dangerous attack. Simms and Frith got in one another's way and Levi darted off with the ball. He looked like getting in a good shot, but Fred Hawkes just managed to put him off his stride. All the danger was not past, however, for Elvey, in rushing across to make a final clearance, slipped and fell. The spectators felt relieved when Luton got out of this early difficulty.

The run of the game was almost immediately turned by a fine effort on the right by Durrant. Tanner exerted every effort to head Jamie off. The best that Tanner could do was to give a corner. That corner was the first of a big crop, for in a comparatively short time no fewer than four kicks were taken from the flags, two at each corner. From one, Brewis very nearly headed a goal. Just after that, Bob Hawkes placed the ball out to the left. It seemed very improbable that Hoar would be able to keep the ball inside the line. In fact, one of the Ton Pentre men thought so little of Hoar's chances that he stopped instead of proceeding with his original intention of attacking the outside-left. Hoar, however, overlooked the ball, kept it in, and then centred beautifully. Simms met it perfectly with his head and turned it past Percival in a very clever manner. A few minutes later Rollinson drove in a great shot, but the ball went just outside the post. The home men certainly seemed like adding to their score, but that "contrariness" of the ball, which would persist throughout the match in hitting players, had already begun to show itself. For a considerable time the Luton men kept well around the Ton Pentre goal. A fine centre by Hoar was taken by Brewis and placed advantageously by him in front of goal. Tanner cleared, and as he did so, got a nasty twist from Rollinson.

Fred Hawkes once more brought the play around the goal with a fine kick from the side line. Rollinson seconded this with a good hard drive, but Percival gathered the ball well. A few minutes later Durrant swung it across nicely. Rollinson netted, but was offside. A period of dullness followed, and Luton were advised to "get to business" and to think of promotion. Though the home men strove hard, yet they got in one another's way, or wrongly anticipated one another's movements. The plagues of Pharaoh seemed to descend upon them and a blight settled on their best intentions. Then it was that someone brought an indictment of witchcraft against the ball. But when that offending article had been accidentally kicked into someone's back garden and another ball was temporarily substituted, things were no better. Still, Luton kept plodding away. Percival made a great effort to stop a long drive from Rollinson. The goalkeeper just managed to steer the ball round the upright for a corner. Then a goal seemed certain when Rollinson and Simms dashed through together, but the latter was knocked over as he kicked, and the ball passed harmlessly over the line. However, Simms managed before half-time to get Luton's second (and last) goal. He owed a lot to Brewis, who placed the ball beautifully in front of the centre-forward so that he got it on the run and had but to apply a simple straight kick. Simms kept his head and did it.

Percival had a few warm moments in the second half, but for all that a good deal of the play was but a repetition of the exasperating features of the first portion. Durrant came into prominence several times. Once Rollinson headed his centre just over the bar. Then Durrant and Tanner had a great race, which ended in the latter, who was on the inside, just

managing to kick the ball for a corner. Later he made another good save from Durrant. Percival brought off a splendid save from Hoar, who shot well after a dash up the wing. The goalkeeper also did well in being able to turn for a corner a long range shot by Bob Hawkes. Ton Pentre had a very useful man in Percival, but their chief strength was in their backs. Their halves were good plodders who kept on the go, while their forwards, as has been said, were well led by Levi, who in the opening of the second half, showed how dangerous he was with a fine cross shot from a difficult position. Mitchell, in the few shots he had to deal with, was very sure. Robinson did some excellent things, but later he was not so safe as Elvey. Fred Hawkes played a really splendid game. He was easily the best in defence and did some very useful work in the attack. Bob did well, but Frith was hardly so good as he has been lately. Durrant had a very good afternoon. It had been thought advisable to ensure Wileman's absolute recovery by resting his knee still another week. Brewis justified his inclusion if only by the delightful way in which he placed the ball to Simms for the first goal. Both Simms and Robinson had some hard luck with their attempts. Robinson and Hoar were a particularly fine wing in the early part of the game. They kept one another well supplied and Hoar centred with that precision which is such a valuable part of his play. But later he took to shooting instead of passing. Too much of that will not only spoil him, but his team's chances also.

FOOTBALL NOTES.

The Importance of Next Saturday's Game at Swansea.

The game with Ton Pentre was one of those instances of the fact that every now and then during the season a team will give a poor exhibition, try as it may to reproduce other forms. While Ton Pentre are entitled to credit for all they did, yet there is not an atom of doubt that if the teams met again say next Saturday, Luton would simply pile up the goals against them. Having struck that patch of impotence last Saturday, it is sincerely hoped that next Saturday Luton will strike one of their best patches. The result of the match is of the utmost importance. Swansea are a very good side, and Luton will have to be at their best. Luton will put in the field the same team as last Saturday except that Wileman will take the place of Brewis, Wileman having recovered from the wrench to his knee. Clever as Brewis is, Wileman has that extra bit of dash and the knack of suddenly darting through the opponents' defence unexpectedly, which makes his inclusion a source of still greater strength to his team.

The kick-off at Swansea is to be at 8.15 in order to enable the Luton team to catch the 8.35 from Swansea. They will then reach Luton at about 11 p.m., as they come via Paddington. If they return with one point their supporters will be highly delighted, for Swansea are going to try their utmost to win. The result will be anxiously awaited, and because of the importance to promotion of the games between Stoke and Pontypridd and Mardy and Croydon, Mr. Charles Green is arranging that the result of these two matches shall also be exhibited with the usual telegram at the Herts Motors the same evening, for as these are being played at some distance from London, they are not likely to be given in the evening papers. A half-time wire from Swansea will be sent to the Luton Town ground, where a Luton League match is to be played.

Arrangements are being made to accommodate 400 passengers for the excursion from Luton to Swansea, so that even if there is a rush for tickets at the last moment, there should not be overcrowding. The train leaves the G.N. Station at 4.20 a.m. on Saturday and the fare is 7s. 6d.

With a side which included their two new men, Balcock, of Crystal Palace, and Ivor Brown, of Reading, Swansea gave Croydon a warm time at Selhurst, and the calibre of the team that Luton have to visit this week-end is indicated by the fact that Croydon on their own ground only managed to beat the Swans through a penalty. It was about the best game seen at the Nest this season, and Swansea, it is said, proved formidable opponents in every department. The return of Hutchins, after being kept out for some time by an injury, added considerably to the strength of the Croydon defence. It was hard lines for Swansea to lose by a penalty goal (they protested against the kick being awarded, as they considered the ball was not handled), but Croydon were just a little the better of the two teams. Promotion seems pretty certain for the Robins now because their programme includes several "easy things." As well as playing a match at Croydon, the Swansea Club had a team out in the semi-final of the Welsh Cup. Their opponents were Llanelli, who qualified by a score

of 1-1 to meet Wrexham. Swansea fielded a strong team, for they have a good number of players on their books. The gate receipts amounted to £178.

There was some remarkable scoring amongst the lower teams of the second division of the Southern League in Wales. Abertillery, who had previously only scored 23 goals, put on 11 against Caerphilly, who did not find the net once. Ratcliffe having opened the scoring. Male, Griffiths, and Baddley added further goals within ten minutes. Ratcliffe netted two more, Jordan scored from a corner, and Bridgett added the eighth goal before the interval. On the re-start play eased off somewhat, until Baddley livened matters up by making a brilliant run on the wing and sending in a shot that gave Bateman no chance. Jameson dribbled through, but was fouled in the area, and from the penalty Adams scored, while Griffiths netted the eleventh. Caerphilly were made to appear as a lot of schoolboys. The huge score was the result of making the most of opportunities — a point that the Tilleryites have hitherto failed to do.

The other high scorers were Mid Rhondda. Treharrie put out a side which included several reserves, and were completely out-classed. Within twenty minutes Love scored three goals in succession. Evans and Carmichael added two more, and although Mid Rhondda slackened the pace in the second half, they managed to put on another five through Wilson (3), Collier, and Bain. What changes these Welsh teams experience! It seems only the other day that the boot was on the other foot and Mid Rhondda were getting whacked by 5 goals to 1 at Luton. Mardy on Saturday trod the bottom team, Aberdare, further into the depths by beating them 4-0, while Barry unexpectedly beat Pontypridd by two goals to nil, one of which was scored by Wightman.

The Council of the Beds Football Association at their last meeting suspended a number of players for various offences. It was also decided to notify the referee in the Luton Clarence v. Crusaders match that the Council are of opinion that he should have taken more serious steps to check the rough play. All the suspensions are to date from March 9th. In consequence of what happened at the Heath United v. Wingrave match, a police constable will in future be a spectator of the Heath home matches when the ground is open again. It has been closed for 26 days from Feb. 23rd, and the club are not allowed to play within a radius of three miles from it during the same period.

The Beds Senior Cup final—Luton Clarence v. Luton Albion—is to be played on the Luton Town ground on Saturday, April 11th. Mr. A. Tearle (Luton) will be the referee, and Messrs. E. Wood (Biggleswade) and T. Bunker (Leighton) the linesmen.

On account of the Crusaders not being able to raise a team, the Albion have stepped into the breach and will play the Trinity for the benefit of the Luton League funds on the Town Ground on Saturday next.