

LUTON AT SOUTHAMPTON.

Southern League, First Division match, played at the Dell, Southampton, yesterday (Wednesday). Result:—

Luton	3 goals.
Southampton	3 goals.

The teams turned out as under:—

Luton—Mitchell; Elvey and Robinson; F. Hawkes, Frith, and Needham; Roberts, Wileman, Simms, Rollinson, and Hoar.

Southampton—Steventon; Green and Ireland; Small, Denby, and McAlpine; Curtin, Dominy, Hollins, Jones, and Andrews.

Referee, Mr. W. E. Russell, Swindon.

As Southampton were members of the Southern Alliance, the visit to the rather peculiar ground very properly described at the Dell was not altogether strange to the majority of the Luton players. Although it was the first time one or two of the Southampton players had played against Luton, only one actual new player wore the Southampton colours in this match. This was Jones, who, however, was known to the older members of the Luton side on account of his shooting powers in a match when playing for Coventry City two seasons ago. Since then he has been with Notts County, but apparently did not repeat his Coventry performances. Curtis, who figured at outside right, was only transferred from Norwich City at the back end of last season, and therefore was practically a new player.

The attendance was naturally affected by the war, and would not exceed 4,000, including a strong khaki contingent in one corner of the field. A prompt start was made at 5.30, and Fred Hawkes, who was acting as captain for the day, lost the toss, but excepting that the sun bothered the Luton defenders somewhat, there was very little advantage lost.

Simms made the first dash through, but his pass out to Roberts was a trifle too far forward, and Steventon easily covered Roberts while the ball passed over the line for a goal-kick. Then for quite a spell the Luton defence were kept on the alert by the long swinging passes which the home forwards adopted, and neither back was quite so sure in his kicking as to make a Lutonian feel altogether comfortable. Still, they hustled about, and generally got the ball away. But five minutes from the start the Southampton right wing were allowed a bit too much rope, and Dominy, with a clever cross shot from long range, opened the score. It was in a way a surprise goal, and before Mitchell could realise the danger the ball dropped just under the bar in the far corner. No blame whatever falls to Mitchell, for it was quite impossible for him to get to it. Southampton continued to have the larger share of the game, but Mitchell kept the fort in great style when the home forwards got within shooting distance. Twenty-five minutes from the start a well-placed free kick taken by Robinson went to Wileman, who neatly turned the ball over to Simms, who was unmarked. The Luton centre went straight through, and with a grand drive from twenty-five yards' range, sent the ball just inside the goal about a couple of yards from the ground.

This success naturally put heart into the Luton attack, and right up to the interval there was not a deal in it, although Southampton enjoyed a greater share of the attempts at goal, Mitchell bringing off three fine saves in less than a couple of minutes when hard pressed. But on the whole the run of the game at this stage seemed to foreshadow a division of points at the interval. Five minutes before the whistle went, Luton's goal had a couple of marvellous escapes, although both arose through the one incident. Southampton forced a corner, and after one or two players had touched the ball it was sent well into the goal mouth, rather high up, and in the far corner, right away from Mitchell's reach. It appeared nothing could prevent a goal, but Frith, who was right under the bar, gave the ball a mighty punch, and for the moment saved the situation, but, of course, there was the risk of a penalty. Andrews took this, and his shot was a good one, but not quite out of the reach of Mitchell, who actually knocked the ball over the touch line for a throw-in near the corner flag. It was a fine save, and probably brought about

touch line for a throw-in near the corner flag. It was a fine save, and probably brought about the final result, for a goal at this stage might have meant a great deal, but Luton kept out a rather persistent attack until the interval, the score at that stage being one each.

Within nine minutes after the restart, Roberts managed to slip by Ireland and squared the ball in great style. Simms, getting the centre, tried Steventon with a sharp shot, which the goalie managed to stop, but he could not get the ball away before Rollinson was on the spot, and Luton's inside-left easily touched through in the coolest manner possible. Luton were then in front for the first time during the game, but they were not to hold the lead for long, as six minutes later the Southampton left wing opened up an attack which resulted in an equalising goal, although again Mitchell was unlucky, for it appeared he had Hollin's attempt well covered, but the ball in its flight touched Needham sufficiently to alter its course and was turned away from Mitchell into the net. Luton were now doing better than in the first half, but they were fighting hard to maintain their equality, Mitchell bringing off some very fine saves, one from a sharp ground drive being especially great, and the crowd were generous in applauding his work. But both goals were often in danger, and Rollinson and Simms each suffered hard luck when Steventon was beaten.

However, Luton were not giving up hopes of a victory and kept pegging away. Roberts, who was certainly doing better than in the first half, was giving Ireland a lot of trouble to hold, and once or twice got in good centres, and from one of these Simms netted the ball with a well-judged attempt on the run, thus giving his side the lead for the second time during the game. As there was only twenty minutes left to play there would seem to have been some hopes of a real surprise, for Luton were now more than holding their own, and twice Simms almost repeated his success at taking Roberts' centres before Steventon could get to them. As a matter of fact, from one of Steventon's saves the ball was sent down the field and before one was aware of the change, the Southampton spectators were delighted to know matters were once more equal. But over this point the Luton players were very sore, as undoubtedly the goal should never have been allowed, and it was distinctly hard lines on Mitchell, for he had just brought off one of his magnificent saves, and indeed the ball went behind the goal off a Southampton player for what should have been a corner. One linesman at least put up his flag, but the referee allowed the game to proceed, and before Mitchell could recover his position Jones sent the ball into the net.

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There were still fourteen minutes to go, and with the exchanges getting pretty lively almost anything might happen, but Luton came the nearest to getting the lead, Rollinson on one occasion missing by inches only with a well-judged cross grounder which practically shaved the outside of the upright as it travelled at a tremendous pace over the line, Steventon being yards away at the moment. There were quite a number of hard knocks, and Hoar was badly kicked on the knee, causing his retirement to the touch-line for attention, but he went back for the closing minutes, although he was limping badly and quite unable to run. About the last time Luton seemed likely to get the winning goal was when Roberts got across another of his ground centres. Steventon was just one step in front of Simms and thus cleared the danger. Just on time Luton were almost as near defeat from a couple of corners, but Mitchell held the fort and the whistle went with the scores standing equal.

Although three goals were put up against him, undoubtedly Mitchell was the outstanding figure on the Luton side, and he received a fine reception on taking up his position after the interval. He anticipated finely and decidedly unlucky with all three goals. Needham, in his first Southern League match, did well and put in a lot of good steady work. After the interval Roberts was the one who usually started the movements which spelt danger to his opponents, and Simms showed plenty of enterprise in going for goal. Wileman was scarcely so much in evidence as usual in front of goal and was apparently playing safety in the closing stages by lying among the halves.

It is unlikely that Bob Hawkes will play next Saturday. He is not fully recovered from the strain in the thigh which he received on the first day of training. That was proved to him in the practice match last Saturday, when he had to go gently. Chipperfield will be absent, perforce, from football during the first fortnight of the season. In the Beds Cup final at the end of last season he and another player had a disagreement. Chipperfield's month's suspension has, on appeal, been reduced to a fortnight.

To-day (Thursday) there is to be a match on the Town Ground between teams representing the Leicester and the Lincoln Territorials. Admission is 3d. (boys 1d.), and all the proceeds are to go to the Prince of Wales' Fund. The kick-off is at 5.30 p.m.
