

FOOTBALL.

Southern League.

THE WHIRLIGIG OF FORM.

LUTON ATONE FOR THEIR POOR DISPLAYS.

Luton football enthusiasts had been somewhat in the dumps of late owing to the poor form of their favourites, and the match at Gillingham on Saturday was looked upon as a certain defeat. Their joy can be imagined, therefore, when the news came through that at half-time they were leading by three clear goals, followed by the final score of 4-2 in Luton's favour. The best part about it, too, is that it was no fluke victory, but was due to the good form of the forwards. The directors returned almost to the old team, and this appears to indicate that they were not satisfied with the line of the previous Saturday. Wileman reappeared to partner Roberts, and Rollinson returned to inside-left, but he had Lindley as a partner instead of Hour. The half-back line included the two Hawkes, with Johnson at centre. These changes turned out trumps, and Luton gained their away victory.

As one would expect from a line of forwards who have scored more goals than any team in the League, the Luton forwards were deadly in front of goal, and it was only a matter of inches that shots other than those which scored failed to enter the net. Luton's total of 15 goals in seven games is proof of the excellent work of the forwards, and it is a pity that they are not as well served in defence. The opening exchanges in the encounter at Gillingham were not unfavourable to the local team, but the Luton forwards always appeared the most likely lot, and when Johnson miskicked, Rollinson was quick to seize an unlooked for opening, and beat the Gillingham goalkeeper with a nice shot. From that point to the interval Luton were much the cleverer team, their forwards making many fast runs, and being well supported by the halves. The Gillingham defence was outplayed, and Roberts scored with a long shot which the goalkeeper misjudged, while Wileman got the ball past him a third time. So Luton led at the interval by three clear goals.

When the game was resumed, the visitors were inclined to take matters rather easily, but after their goal had been raided once or twice the forwards played as prettily and effectively as in the first half, and Wileman scored his own second and his side's fourth goal. Gillingham had no chance of winning, but Leslie shot through from a penalty kick, and just before time Lee also drove the ball into the Luton net. Previous to this second success, Rollinson and others of the Luton forwards had been near to passing the Gillingham "keeper," one hot shot from Rollinson hitting the side net. The difference between the teams was chiefly at forward. The Luton five appeared like scoring practically every time they got within shooting range, while those of Gillingham were far from happy in their finishing efforts. The Luton front line had an excellent understanding. Simms led them in excellent style, while Lindley combined speed with good control of the ball and a capital knowledge of the art of centring. Wileman was the most dangerous of the quintette, and shot with power, while Rollinson also put in much useful work. Bob and Fred Hawkes not only tackled well, but fed their forwards with judgment, and Johnson met with a fair measure of success in dealing with Glen. Mitchell gave the spectators ample proof of his skill in goal, whenever the home forwards managed to get in a shot.