

FOOTBALL NOTES AND NEWS.

Luton's Fourth Successive Defeat in the Southern League

Luton Town sustained their fourth successive Southern League defeat on Saturday. It was the fifth home game which the Blues have failed to pull off, and our soldier visitors have just about despaired of seeing them win again. Nearly six weeks have elapsed since Luton won at home, and Saturday's was the fourth home defeat, and the illuminating remarks one heard among the crowd as they filed off the Town ground, made one marvel that the "gates" are keeping up as well as they are.

Exeter City, though well up in the League table, shaped by no means like a great side, but the team as a whole played more methodical football than the homesters. There was little individual brilliance, except perhaps for the outside wingers, Holt and Goodwin, but they showed the understanding, resolution and dash that counts. They were always the more dangerous, although Luton deserved on the play to be leading at half-time, and in the second half their superiority was so pronounced that, even allowing for the earlier ill luck, the homesters could not grumble at the score of 2-0 in Exeter's favour. Luton had the same side that made such a good show at Cardiff, with the exception that Frith returned to the side after an absence of three weeks, and displaced Wilson at centre-half, and the crowd rightly appreciated the outstanding features of their display by their shouts of "Good old Dick" and "Wake up Frith." The centre-half was once more clean off colour, and absolutely out of it, and the half line was overplayed pretty well through the game to such an extent that the backs had a gruelling afternoon. It seldom falls to one's lot to see a back get through such a tremendous amount of work in an hour and a half's football as Elvey did; he was easily the outstanding player on the field, for apart from his dogged determination he displayed magnificent judgment in getting his side out of heaps of difficulties. It was Elvey who beat down seventy-five per cent. of the dangerous looking raids, and but for his display Luton would have fared badly.

Up to a point the forwards gave the best display that has been seen for them on the Town ground this season, and did almost everything but score goals, but they fell off a lot after the first half. They suffered, of course, from the poor support they received from the half-back line, but even then there was an absence of precision and control in their movements, and in front of goal they were most feeble. Roberts was the most consistent performer, and by far the most dangerous, but Rollinson had some brilliant flashes, and was unlucky not to have scored more than once. He went very close with some beauties, but on the other hand he shot straight into the goalkeeper's hands from the best chance he had. Simms also had one great shot fisted over the bar in marvellous style, but he, too, had the misfortune to slip up and actually sit on the ball in the goal-mouth, when Rollinson, as well as himself, had the goal at their mercy. Altogether the Exeter goal had some remarkable escapes in the first half, but the home goal was also similarly placed in the last minute, when a brilliant shot from Goodwin, the outside left, was right out of Mitchell's reach and struck the upright with a crash.

The second half was only a couple of minutes old when Exeter opened the scoring. Holt, the outside right, was allowed to get away, and succeeded in drawing the defence before he centred for Goodwin, the centre forward, to half volley it in the net, and give Mitchell no possible chance. A minute later, Green, the inside right, just topped the bar with a gem, and in another minute Roe, receiving from Simms, went clean through and had the goal at his mercy, only to do the seemingly impossible, hit the upright. For five minutes or so Exeter were rather lucky to avoid an equaliser, but after this the visitors were right on top. Holt hit the upright with a cross drive, which had Mitchell beaten, and through Robin-

son's hesitancy he got another chance, eluded Frith, and drove in a ground shot, which Mitchell just reached, only for Goodwin, the centre, to score an easy goal. The visitors were always the more dangerous after this, and had the more chances, the defence being frequently well beaten, but they failed to seize on them, and in the end Luton were well beaten by two goals to nil.

Luton are now thirteenth in the table, with eight points for eleven matches, and a goal average of 16 against 24, while their neighbours at Watford, who scored the only goal at Croydon, head the list with 15 points for nine matches. The Robins are at the bottom of the table, with only one win and two draws to their credit, but they have played two matches less than Luton.