

## Luton well beaten at Portsmouth.

In tackling Portsmouth on their own ground, Luton were found, on Saturday, with their stiffest work of the present season, and it was generally recognised that a draw would be quite a satisfactory result. After the two victories of the previous week, no changes were made in the composition of the Luton team, while Portsmouth were so far satisfied with their side that, but for the breakdown of Upton during training, they also would have made no alteration from the week before. But this only entailed the return of Tattum, who was the original first team choice when the season commenced.

The gates of Portsmouth have suffered seriously as a result of the war. Still, there would be at least 8,000 present on Saturday. Of these, nearly 1,000 were present on the invitation of the club, these being the Portsmouth Battalion of Lord Kitchener's Army, and at the finish of the game they paraded round the ground, headed by their band, and were enthusiastically cheered by the spectators. There were also a big contingent of wounded Naval men seated on the stand, who were very much interested in the game, while among the khaki clad spectators were several Lutonians, who were very anxious for the success of their old team. Unfortunately these were disappointed, and they had to admit, too, that the better side won.

The teams turned out ten minutes before the advertised time, as under:—

Luton: Mitchell; Elvey and Dunn; F. Hawkes, Frith, and R. Hawkes; Macfarlane, Wileman, Simms, Rollinson, and Roberts.

Portsmouth: Neil; Potts and Probert; Walls, Harwood, and Abbott; Thompson, Stringfellow, Budding, James, and Tattum.

Referee: Mr. F. W. Barton, Ealing.

Portsmouth had the wind in their favour in the first half, and the exchanges at the outset were brisk and full of incident. After a first time raid from the kick off on the part of the home side, Luton got down through their right wing, and Probert was rather fortunate to clear Macfarlane's centre. Immediately after a free kick in favour of Luton, within five or six yards of the corner flag, spelt danger, but this was cleared after a little trouble. At the opposite end of the field the Luton goal was even more fiercely endangered, when a slip on the part of Elvey let in James, and but for Dunn dashing over to the rescue, a goal must have resulted. As it was, Dunn could only touch the ball over to Elvey again, who did nothing better with it but place it straight to one of the Pompey forwards. A quick pass out to Tattum presented that player with a fine opening, of which he took full advantage, and Mitchell had hard work to clear the shot. The inside forwards swarmed down in fine style, but the Luton goalie just managed to shake off their attentions, and clear, although he slipped up in doing so.

At this stage, the game was by no means one-sided, and Simms sent in a beauty on getting a ground pass from Rollinson, and Neil was heartily cheered by the home crowd for getting the attempt away. Mitchell also brought off a remarkable save from Stringfellow, who sent in a first time attempt quite unexpectedly. Either side, with a little luck, might have opened the scoring, but the good fortune fell to Portsmouth, after ten minutes play. The home forwards swept down the field in a line, and after a clever piece of work on the part of James, the ball went out to Stringfellow, and he sent in a fine cross shot, which gave Mitchell no chance whatever.

From this point, the game went strongly in favour of Portsmouth, and the Luton forwards never again got the whip hand. Although, of course, there were many times when they



managed to threaten the home goal, there was no real sustained attack, like that put on Mitchell at various periods for the remainder of the game. About the nearest Luton came to equalising arose when Wileman neatly tipped the ball to Rollinson, who was better placed, and Rollinson let drive in good style, but his range was a trifle too high, and Neil was not called upon to show his ability to deal with a drive from a difficult angle. Still, as previously indicated, Portsmouth enjoyed much the better of the game, the Luton defence having to work tremendously hard to check their continued runs. It stands to the credit of the Luton defenders, and Dunn in particular, that no further scoring took place up to the interval, when the score stood:—

Portsmouth, 1, Luton, 0.

Luton were the first to show up after the change of ends, Simms, Wileman, and Rollinson each being prominent in turn, but even then Neil was not often called upon, his backs being well able to deal with the majority of the chances. Then the home forwards, assisted as they were by a clever trio of halves, gave the Luton defence further trouble. Mitchell saved finely from Thompson and Budding, but the latter missed a gilt edged opening when Thompson squared the ball finely across the goal, and it only needed a touch to make certain. There was some resentment on the part of the home spectators when the referee stopped the game with Budding practically clean through, after beating Frith for possession of the ball, to enable the Luton centre half to recover from what the crowd considered a sham injury.

A foul, about which there was considerable doubt, led up to a second goal to Portsmouth. The free kick was a yard or so outside the penalty area, and Walls, who took it, put the ball nicely in the mouth of goal. It fell close to Elvey, who seemed to have an easy chance to clear, but in settling the ball he dallied a second too long, and Budding practically took it off his toe, and with a rising shot gave his side the decided lead of two goals. Within three minutes Elvey again failed to clear the ball, and Budding repeated his former success with a good shot. With a three goal deficit against them, all chance of Luton saving the game was lost, and they seldom caused the Pompey defence to become alarmed about the final result. Ten minutes from the finish, however, Simms, getting the ball from Macfarlane, drove it into the net, and to that extent put a better complexion on the score sheet. There was just a chance of a surprising alteration, when Bob Hawkes, seizing upon an opening, sent in a regular "hot 'un" from twenty yards distance, which Neil could only just prevent entering the net, but on the whole the game went in favour of Portsmouth, and it was rather a relief than otherwise when the final whistle blew with the score:—



## Portsmouth 3, Luton 1.

On Saturday's form Portsmouth will be well among the top "sawyers" at the finish of the season. Without question, they proved themselves the smartest team Luton have so far run up against, and if the team can be kept together and escape serious injuries, they will make a bold bid for the championship of the Southern League. On the Luton side, the player who stood out above his comrades was Dunn, who gave by far his most satisfactory show yet. He played just as whole-heartedly as in all his games, but he kept his head much better than in some matches, and was just about the finest defender on the field. Elvey did not have quite so happy a time as is usual with him, and seemed a bit upset through one or two slips which he made. Mitchell was another Luton player who did quite well, but as a team they were overplayed. The half-backs were at times overworked, and they could not give the assistance to their forwards they were able to at the Palace the previous week, and as a consequence, Luton were not able to put the pressure upon the Pompey defence necessary to bring about victory.