

ENGLISH CUP.

Luton Defeat Oxford City.

GREAT GOAL-KEEPING DISPLAY.

Although Luton only succeeded in beating the Oxford City amateurs by one goal to nil on Saturday, in the 5th round of the Preliminary Competition for the English Cup, it must not be assumed that they had a narrow escape. The score is absolutely misleading. The issue of the game was never in doubt. The Oxford men very rarely proved really dangerous, but on the other hand, Luton were almost continually on the aggressive. Oxford owe a deep debt of gratitude to Harley, whose brilliant display of goal-keeping alone saved them from a heavy defeat. Taken on the whole, the game was not a particularly good one. The typical Cup-tie style was adopted, and no good combination was witnessed—or at least very little.

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Whilst Luton were at full strength, Oxford were comparatively weak. The home eleven were greatly disappointed in the fact that the Rev. K. R. G. Hunt was unable to play, whilst another disappointment was experienced owing to the non-appearance in the forward line of F. J. Draper, one of their most regular players. The latter was unable to turn out owing to a family bereavement. The teams were:—

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

Oxford City—H. Harley; H. Cawdell and F. T. Ansell; G. Hawken, W. H. Millin, and H. P. Slatter; M. B. T. Robinson, R. Hill, B. F. Parker, A. T. Jakeman, and E. Tobin.

Referee, Mr. W. R. David, of Shrivenham.

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Luton's superiority was early manifested, and for the first twenty minutes the Oxford men were penned in their own half with the exception of one or two minor attacks on the Luton goal. In one of these, Mitchell was penalised for carrying the ball, although opinion differed upon the justification of the decision of the referee. The free kick, however, did not result in any particularly dangerous incident. Roberts, at outside right, played very well throughout, and it was the result of his clever work that Simms was enabled to score Luton's only legitimate goal of the match. The little winger sent the ball across beautifully, and Simms converted with a clever overhead kick. The goalkeeper was greatly hampered at the time, and the ball passed into the net well out of his reach.

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From this time onward to the interval, the Luton forwards proved menacing, and Harley gave occasional glimpses of his brilliance. He made two especially noteworthy saves—one from a header by Rollinson, and one from a shot by Simms, both of which he only saved at the expense of a corner.

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The Oxford defence had the happy knack of concentrating just at the right moment, and they displayed no hesitancy in kicking clear at the slightest opportunity. This saved them

upon many occasions. Their quickness throughout greatly disconcerted the Luton men. Luton forced numerous corners during the first half, but so well were the forwards covered that not one was turned to account.

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Wileman, just before the interval, had very hard luck in not increasing the lead. He sent in one of his characteristic unexpected shots, and the ball, with Harley well beaten, passed just an inch or two wide.

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There were several outstanding features in the second half, and among these were, Harley's fine goalkeeping, Bob Hawkes' brilliant play, and the number of spirited dashes made by the Oxford forwards. Harley brought off numerous saves, the forwards shooting much better than they did in the earlier part of the game. Shots from Rollinson, Simms, and Wileman were dealt with with a calmness and precision that were delightful to watch. Had any of these shots beaten him, he would not have been discredited. The only time he was beaten was when Simms sent in a capital shot following some good wing play by Roberts and Wileman. He was, however, ruled offside.

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The Luton forwards were somewhat handicapped throughout this "45" owing to the fact that both Wileman and Hoar were suffering from injuries received early in the game. This was a great pity, because Hoar, more particularly, had put in some clever work, greatly to the embarrassment of the Oxford defence.

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Bob Hawkes played one of his best games of the season, and it was unfortunate that he did not score. After having robbed the visiting forwards, he dribbled through and sent in a capital shot, which Harley just managed to save. The goalkeeper came off triumphant in a second effort on the part of "Bob" to pierce his defence.

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Taken all through, Mitchell was rarely troubled. Dunn and Elvey dealt with the attacks of the forwards very capably. Tobin, however, towards the close of the game, got in two very stiff shots, with which Mitchell dealt very coolly. Nevertheless, they were two great saves.

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Luton's superiority over Oxford was prominently manifested in the half-back line. The Luton trio put in some good and useful work, feeding their forwards well, and had the front line not been handicapped, no doubt more goals would have been scored, despite Harley's cleverness.

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The Oxford forwards played well up to a certain point. They were over-anxious, however, when they were near goal, and this proved their downfall. Tobin was about the only man of the line who displayed calm judgment in attack, and it was principally from him that the shots came. Hill, about five minutes from time, had a fine opportunity to equalise. He had only Mitchell to beat, but he was over-anxious, and Dunn was able to recover and clear.

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Oxford are no doubt a fine amateur team, and gave a creditable exhibition. The mixing of professionalism and amateurism is, however, always disastrous, and the game was by no means an attractive one. There was no consistency of method. It was a game that could aptly be termed "scrappy." There was no good combination, and, apart from the two efforts by Bob Hawkes, no really good individualism. The referee was apt to be over-stringent at times—even pedantic—and this had a great tendency to spoil the game. The Oxford spectators gave vent to their feelings a little too strongly after the match. They were, in one or two instances, openly hostile to the Luton players. Their demonstration was totally unjustified. The game was very free from unsportsmanlike tactics.

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The "gate" was considered a good one for Oxford. Just over two thousand spectators were present, and the receipts amounted to £57.