

Southern League

LUTON v. CARDIFF CITY.

"BLUES" WIN IN SECOND HALF.

FINE FORWARD-WORK.

Only in degree of strong interest did the match between Luton and Cardiff on the Town Ground this afternoon differ from the last meeting here between the teams. On that occasion—two years ago last Christmastide, both were going strongly for promotion from the Second Division of the Southern League to the First, while to-day Cardiff were fighting for the First League championship, as the table shows, and Luton's ultimate position was also likely to be greatly influenced by to-day's result. They did not meet last season, as Luton were in division two, and so some of the circumstantial romance of the last meeting gave an added interest to the present encounter.

The ground could hardly have been in worse condition, although up to four in the morning it was perfect after two days' drying frost and tempering winter sun. Rain and snow fell throughout the forenoon and as the weather later was again unpromising, there was every reason to fear that the attendance would be much below expectations.

There were at least 3,000 spectators, including many troops, when the teams lined up as follows, the composition of the Luton team having been subjected to considerable re-arrangement:—

LUTON.

Right. Mitchell. Left.

Elvey. Robinson.

F. Hawkes. Frith. Heath.

Roberts. Wileman. Rollinson. R. Hawkes.

Simms.

O

Evans. Barnett. W. West. Devlin. Goddard.

Hardy. Keenor. Harvey.

Layton. Doncaster.

Stephenson.

Left. Right.

CARDIFF.

Referee: Mr. F. W. Barton (Ealing).

Cardiff lost the toss and went up the field with a swing, but the Luton halves were in evidence and soon transferred play to the other end, where Wileman gave to Bob Hawkes, who had dashed into the centre, and he gave Stephenson a fine handful. Then Luton got away on the left, and Rollinson centred beautifully high from the corner flag, and Stephenson was just able to fist ten yards out, right to the feet of Wileman, who, however, drove high over the bar. Then Wileman by good play enabled Roberts to burst away, and he was responsible for a grand centre, which, however, was not improved upon. Then Frith dallied in mid-field, and West sent out to Evans, who drove the ball low, five yards in front of the Luton goal, where Goddard, with a splendid chance of scoring could only strike the bar, and the danger was past. Three minutes later Mitchell made a wonderful save on his knees from a melee close in, and then Luton had a look-in at the other end.

WEST SCORES FOR THE WALIANS.

At the end of ten minutes' play, a 'clever passing movement' by the Cardiff forwards found the home defence spreadeagled, and Goddard rapped the ball across to West to find the net with a fast low shot, with which Mitchell had not the slightest chance.

The home team retaliated, and Roberts forced a corner, which availed nothing. Stephenson had to run out to handle a moment later, and then the Cardiff forwards were pulled up for offside as Mitchell repelled a shot from Devlin on his knees. A clever pass by Frith enabled the home forwards to get going, but Roberts was pulled up for offside when galloping through, and a similar infringement by Rollinson drew a loud reproof from the spectators, the Cardiff backs being exhorted to "play the game!"

Wileman next essayed to force a passage, but without avail. Offside against the Cardiff forwards enabled the home forwards to get away, and with clever combination they worked right in front. Then Simms banged in a hard shot, which appeared a certain goal, when Stephenson made a miraculous save, which drew the plaudits of the crowd.

From the ensuing corner kick, Simms again shot in, but Stephenson again repelled cleverly, and when Rollinson headed in, Layton luckily diverted the leather with his leg. A moment later Wileman drove in a lovely high shot, and when the crowd was on the point of yelling "goal," Stephenson cleverly tipped the ball clear of the post.

LUTON FOILED BY STEPHENSON.

Luton were now having all the better of the game, and exciting melees took place in the visitors' goal-mouth. On one occasion Wileman and Simms were almost through, but Evans again came to the rescue, and after once repelling the ball he threw himself bodily at it as Roberts shot, and successfully prevented a score. Stephenson was slightly injured, but soon resumed, and the crowd—by no means of partial character—hooted the referee for several decisions on the offside rule which were very near things and to the disadvantage of Luton.

Goddard ran dangerously in, and, driving obliquely across, Mitchell had to have all his wits about him to get the shot away. It was raining harder than ever now, and Luton appeared to be still improving, and Rollinson skimmed the bar from play, following a free kick. The turf was now like a quagmire, and the players were gradually losing command, while some of them were unrecognisable. Bob Hawkes had a chance as the ball travelled fast and low across the goal from the right wing, but it was too greasy for him to trap, and he had the mortification of seeing it glance off his left toe over the line.

As the interval approached, Cardiff made another spurt, and Devlin was nearly through when "floored" by Robinson. Goddard forced a corner, from which Luton broke away, but the Cardiff defenders covered their goal splendidly. R. Hawkes, however, presented Rollinson with a fine opening, but he shot yards wide. Cardiff were again on the offensive when the whistle signalled a well-earned rest with the score:—

Cardiff 1

Luton 0

The first incident of note on resuming was a free-kick against Heath for pulling at Goddard, and Devlin worked in and shot over the bar, receiving a kick on the head at the same time, which necessitated his retirement. Almost immediately afterwards a really nice centre from Evans compelled Mitchell to save from Barnett.

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and the latter was laid out by a volley from Elvey. He resumed after short treatment, and Luton went away with a rush.

ROBINSON CELEBRATES PROMOTION.

Luton put on pressure and Stephenson twice saved magnificently, but his second attempt was misspent energy, for one of the Cardiff backs badly fouled Simms as he rushed the goalkeeper. From the resultant penalty Robinson put the teams on equal terms with a fast ground shot ten minutes after the re-start.

The Cardiff players protested hotly against the referee's decision, and an element of roughness crept into the game.

In the closing stages the Luton men became very busy. Doncaster and Layton literally threw themselves at the attackers and frustrated all efforts until two minutes from time, when Roberts shook off the attentions of the burly Layton, and centred.

Robinson shot in, and the ball struck Stephenson and travelled out to R. Hawkes, who tricked Doncaster and shot into the net amid great enthusiasm.

Result —

Luton	2
Cardiff	1

The attendance was nearly 3,000.