

FOOTBALL NOTIS AND NEWS

Luton again win away from home.

The Luton players can certainly claim to be consistent in their inconsistency, for following the inglorious display of the previous Saturday against Southend at home, in their very next Southern League match they beat the Rangers pointloss at Kenal Rise by three goals. By the way, in point of time the return of the Rangers to their old pitch makes them the nearest Southern League club to Luton, for the Luton players arrived on the ground within an hour and a quarter of leaving Luton station. It was remarked on Saturday it was quite unlike a London journey, for alighting at Cricklewood the team and officials were motored through typical country scenery to the ground. It is eleven years since Luton last played on this spot, and as the stand and dressing-rooms do not appear to have received even a coat of paint in the interval, it can be imagined that the whole structure bears a somewhat dilapidated appearance. Just at the time the crowd should have assembled a heavy snowstorm burst over the district, and naturally this kept many away, the attendance at the finish being little over 3,000. But the storm was soon over, and the teams lined up under sunshiny conditions, although there was quite a strong breeze about. The teams were constituted as under:—

Luton:—Mitchell; Elvey and Dunn; F. Hawkes, Frith and R. Hawkes; Roberts, Roe, Simms, Robinson, and Hear.

Queen's Park Rangers:—McLeod; Millington and Pullen; Broster, Wilde and Whyman; Thompson, Birch, Miller, Gregory and Donald.

Referee, Mr. A. E. Casely, Wolverhampton.

With the exception of Mitchell at centre half, the Rangers had out their strongest combination, for Gregory was preferred to Simons, who had been playing in the forward line recently. Like Luton, the Rangers have suffered severely in their home matches, and have earned a majority of their points away. Indeed, the records are almost identical, the points away being exactly the same, while the single point lead possessed by the Rangers over Luton was secured at home. It will be noticed that Luton made one change only from the team which won its way into the Southern Charity Cup final, Bob Hawkes coming in to the exclusion of Heath, and at the moment this is probably the strongest combination at the disposal of the club, although it entails the absence of Wilman, who has been a regular member of the side for the greater part of three seasons.

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The Rangers secured the advantage of the wind, but for the opening quarter of an hour it was Luton who were seen to the greater advantage. Within five minutes they were a goal up, and with very little luck might have had a couple more, for McLeod was fortunate on at least two occasions in getting out of a tight corner following some brilliant work on the Luton left wing, backed up in each instance by clever play on the part of Bob Hawkes. The goal scored by Simms was the direct result of a neat pass from the Luton captain to Hoar, who easily shook off the attentions of Millington and planted the ball well over to the opposite wing. It seemed that Roe would have a shot, and McLeod dashed out to meet him, but neither player quite dominated the situation, and the ball rolled towards the centre for Simms to score an easy goal. Several times after this Luton missed scoring by the closest shave, Rollinson in particular having hard luck with a clever header from a well placed corner by Hoar.

Midway through the first half the home forwards took a greater share in the game. Both wingers, being well fed, brought the ball through in good style, but their inside comrades were not in shooting form, and their final efforts were usually cleared by either Elvey or Dunn, very few reaching Mitchell at all. Just before half-time Roe almost increased his side's advantage as a result of a single-handed burst through the centre, but he was hampered all the way by the close attendance of an opponent, and his final shot lacked sting, while he had no comrade to whom he could pass the ball, and therefore the chance went begging. Still a lead at the interval was pretty good, seeing Luton had been playing against the wind.

On crossing over it was found the wind had dropped considerably, and for a time the game was fairly even, with very few exciting incidents to record. Luton were quite holding their own, even if they did not put on a deal of pressure, and when after twenty-two minutes' play Simms increased the lead by snapping up a centre from his left wing it was practically a certain win for Luton. Ten minutes before the finish Simms completed the "hat trick" by converting still another centre from Hoar, who thus had a big share in each point. It was not until after Luton's third goal was scored that the Rangers put in a shot which appeared at all likely to score. This was a sharp drive from the left wing, and hit the upright and turned behind. It is more than likely Mitchell would have saved the goal in any case, for he made a dive for the ball and at first it was thought he had given a corner, but the patch of white on the ball was evidence it had come into contact with the woodwork. This was the final incident, and Luton ran out easy winners with the score:—

Luton 3, Queen's Park Rangers 0.

Although the Rangers on the whole were attacking quite as much as Luton, they never appeared so dangerous when they got in front of goal. Indeed, on the chances Luton might easily have doubled their score, Roberts, Simms and Hoar each missing very promising openings. Mitchell had little to do, so well did Elvey and Dunn defend. Luton's right back made the fewer mistakes, but Thompson exhibited a wholesome respect for Dunn if the latter was anywhere near when he received the ball. Probably Bob Hawkes put in the most

brilliant field work of the half back line, but both his comrades were also in sound form, and were always on top of the Rangers' attack. The Luton forward work was not always sustained at the same level, but in the early stages of the first half and closing period of the game they seemed to be able to get through the home defence pretty much as they pleased. Simms was generally on the spot when the ball was put into the mouth of goal, and bothered McLeod no end. Hoar was the more dangerous winger, but Roberts put in many fine centres without the best of luck attaching to his efforts. Roe and Rollinson acted as feeders in the most approved style without unduly asserting themselves in the eyes of the spectators. The Rangers' defence did not impress one a deal. McLeod was none too confident in his clearances, and should have cleared at least one of the goals before Simms had a chance to get in his shot. Thompson was the forward most in evidence. Donald was very clever as usual, but made little headway. Gregory was the most likely looking scorer, but he was very wild in front of goal.