

FROM THE FOOTBALL FIELD.

POINTS ABOUT PLAY AND PLAYERS BY "VIGILANT."

TOWN FORWARDS AGAIN FAIL.

Gillingham's display on the Luton Town ground a fortnight ago raised some hopes that they would be one of the team from which the Blues would "bag" all the four Southern League points. It was rather a rude awakening when the Kentish team went to Wales and took two points out of Swansea, and on Wednesday they proved their Welsh success was no flash in the pan by exactly reversing the result of their visit to Luton. They were clearly the better all-round side, but they largely owed their 2-0 victory to their centre-forward, Wood, who, as at Luton proved himself possessed of a degree of enterprise contrasting strangely with the methods of the Blues front line, and was a conspicuous success. He opened the scoring after 20 minutes with a splendid cross drive which always had Summers beaten and scored again from a penalty awarded for an alleged foul by Dunn, which the Luton players warmly contested. Apart from these successes he never missed a chance of shooting, and went very near performing the hat-trick, a thumping drive hitting the cross-bar, while another was only kept out by Summers with great difficulty.

Gillingham had only one change from the side beaten at Luton. Lee came in at centre-half, and he was a great acquisition, sharing with Lodie the honours of the home defence. Luton defence was as at Exeter. Summers again did well, Elvey and Dunn were solid backs, with Dick the best on the field, and Urwin was the pick of three hard-working halves, although Rutherford was rather more in the picture in the second half, and came as near scoring as anyone on the Luton side. Grimes was the only forward who did not play against Gillingham in the previous game, but the line was reorganised. Williams partnered Grimes, and Roo was with Henman with Simms in the centre. The re-arrangement brought little or no improvement. In midfield there was as much good combination among the Blues as among the homesters, but in front of goal the Blues were most weak, and even, when in the second half they had most of the game they hardly ever looked like scoring. Both Grimes and Henman showed pace, but their play lacked forcefulness, and their centring was far from accurate. Simms did some smart things now and again, but it speaks for itself that the Gillingham goalie was only about twice seriously tested.

ANOTHER POINT LOST AT HOME

Luton gave up another point at home on Saturday to one of their old Welsh rivals in the Southern League second division. As with Swansea, it was a perilously near thing to giving up the two and probably not one of the 6,000 spectators will suggest Cardiff gained anything more than their display entitled them to.

Reorganisation was again the keynote of the Luton attack. This time it was the turn of Birnie to be dropped for a trial in a different position with the Reserves, and Williams was entrusted with the centre berth. Hensman also fell out to make way for Sid Hoar, who has yet to secure his release from the Army, but was able to get leave to make his first appearance. It was a near go for yet another change, as Grimes got into a train at Hitchin that did not stop at Hatfield, and was carried on to London. Fred Bates was getting ready to turn out, although injured, when Grimes reached the ground just in time. The defence was as per usual except that Parker and Rutherford changed places. Six of the Cardiff players were with them when Luton last met the City, and Brittan is the old Northampton back. They made two forward changes in Barnett who played against Reading, and Davies, a local amateur making his first Southern League appearance.

Appended is the full list of players:—

Luton—Summers Elvey, Dunn; Urwin, Parker, Rutherford; Grimes, Tomlinson, Williams, Roe, Hoar.

Cardiff — Kneeshaw; Brittan, Layton; Harvey, Smith, Keenor; Davies, Grimshaw, Devlin, Barnett, Evans.

Referee, Mr. R. R. Crump, London.

The first half was goalless, but in no sense dull. At half-time some of the visiting players were complaining of the length of the grass and the handicap it was after the morning's showers. "It almost wants a steam roller to push the ball through it," said one, and that the ball was heavy was demonstrated by the fact that during the game Urwin and one of the Cardiff halves were laid out like logs through heading away from hefty kicks. Still, there was no want of healthy, earnest football, conducted at a well-maintained pace throughout and remarkably free from questionable tactics. There was not much artistic finesse, simply because the defenders would not allow it. On both sides the defence made them

themselves masters of the situation from the first and dominated the game all through.

Neither side could claim any appreciable superiority in the end to end play. Both showed plenty of vim and go, and fair combination in midfield, with Cardiff a trifle more enterprising in shooting, but the defence kept them at such a respectable distance that the goalkeepers were rarely seriously troubled. Devlin gave Summers a rare handful in the first two minutes, and the goalie had to be even more brilliant to save on the ground from Barnett. These two forwards shared the attacking honours of the half with Hoar who frequently came into the picture with clever work. Inside ten minutes he gave the finest of chances to Roe, who, with the goalkeeper unable to make up his mind what to do, simply shot first time without ever seeming to look for the direction of the goal, and was yards out. From another of Hoar's centres Roe did much better. He squared the ball from near the line. Kneeshaw jumped out to intercept it, was brought to his knees and hemmed in before he could dispossess himself, and had to throw away anywhere. Hoar returned the ball so smartly that Kneeshaw was dependent upon Brittan falling back to save the situation. This was the nearest thing of the half at the Cardiff end, and Luton had a very narrow escape in the last few minutes. Summers failed to properly field a centre from Evans, and the ball actually slipped by him. Both Elvey and Dunn had happily got back in the goal, and one of them managed to clear with only a few feet to spare. Apart from these incidents the outstanding feature of the half was a brilliant run by Urwin from the middle line right through the opposition. Williams put a brilliant finish to it with a rousing shot, but the ball rose a trifle too high.

Cardiff owed the opening goal two minutes after the change of ends to the smartness with which Evans outdistanced Elvey and wound up with a great centre. Devlin failed to fasten on to it, and Parker fared no better, and with Grimshaw crashing in from an unexpected quarter Summers had not a ghost of a chance. When this reversal was followed by a severe knee injury, causing Dunn's retirement, matters looked far from rosy for Luton. Dunn was able to return after being bandaged, but limped so badly that he was of little use, and, in consequence, he changed places with Hoar. In spite of this handicap Luton put up a really fine show, and did as well as at any part of the game. It was a long time before their pressure had any effect, but at last they did get the measure of the Cardiff defence in a series of exciting assault from corners. Williams and Urwin were both prominent in sending in and each time the ball was luckily kept out. It was a regular mix up, and when Urwin's drive was stopped "hands" was unsuccessfully claimed. Instead another corner resulted. Hoar was called up from back to get in one of his redoubtable flag kicks, and, using his height to advantage, Rutherford headed through.

It had taken Luton 25 minutes to draw level, but Cardiff then became the more prominent, and in eight minutes were ahead again. Grimshaw smartly dashed through from the edge of the penalty area and scored pretty easily in the far corner of the net. Whether because he was suspected of letting Grimshaw through, or because he was wanted for a last attacking effort, Hoar then went back to his old place. Whatever the reason the change paid. Luton kept Cardiff on the defence, and the ball bobbed backwards and forwards about the goal mouth until Williams smartly seized on a chance, and through a crowd of players drove a great shot well out of Kershaw's reach. This was in the last minute, and so the final score was:—

Luton 2, Cardiff City 2

No little credit is due to the homesters for their game uphill fight in the second half. But still this constant loss of points at home is disappointing, and it is time the tide was turned. According to the club programme, "the directors intend to find a winning team, and experiments will continue until they succeed," but the experiment everyone is waiting to see is with new forward talent. The one outstanding success was the new talent introduced, if Sid Hoar can be so described. His contrasting suggested some want of practice, but he was quite the cleverest and most resourceful of the home forwards, and Cardiff appreciated the advantage it was to them when he was taken from the forward line to deputise at back. Williams was an improvement at centre, and showed promise of developing into a gingering force with a little perseverance. In other respects the forwards were as disappointing as ever. Grimes was feeble, Roe does not seem at all happy on the left, and Tomlinson was no more than moderate.

The shuffling of Parker and Rutherford was not the success anticipated. Parker was by no means a failure in his new position, but he compared unfavourably with his two comrades. They played fine spoiling football, and set the forward a good example by their robust dash, but they do not give the front men the support they might by judicious feeding. Cardiff's middle line did much better in this respect and this, coupled with the go-ahead dash and smart shooting of their inside forwards, made their attack immeasurably superior to the homesters. All the backs were as solid as rocks, with Elvey and Brittan the stars. Dunn played finely until he was "crooked," and, after losing him, Elvey was really a marvel. Nothing could be said to the discredit of either goalkeeper.