

FROM THE FOOTBALL FIELD

LUTON LOSE ANOTHER LEAGUE POINT AT HOME.

It is rather monotonous to be for ever telling the tale of how Luton excel their Southern League opponents in pretty well every respect and yet fail to carry off the points. Nevertheless this is the only accurate impression of Saturday's match with Millwall. The home team in the first half gave a display of forward football which would have disgraced none of the "crack" sides and were more than vain for it when they secured a two-goal lead. It was a piece of rank bad luck that they held that lead for only a minute, an error by the referee giving Millwall a fruitless penalty. After change of ends Luton maintained a strong pressure, but badly failed in shooting, and the choicest goal of the game gave Millwall a draw in the last few minutes.

Millwall are altogether a different side from that which last visited Luton. In fact only three of their side took part in the game at New Cross last October. Still they were considered at full strength, except that McAlpine took the place of Vaisey at half-back. The return of Hoar, in place of Grimes was the only change contemplated on the Luton side, but Summers, who is away at Derby, failed to report and Whitehead therefore re-appeared in goal. Teams:—

Luton.—Whitehead; Elvey, Dunn; Urwin, Rutherford, Parker; Hoar, Hill, Simms, Williams, Bookman.

Millwall.—Wood; Fort, Woodley; McAlpine, Tinsch, Kinella; Hodge, Cooke, Broad, Keen, McDougall.

Referee, Mr. W. Summerell, Bristol.

Six thousand spectators recognised Dick Elvey's selection for the English XI. by a rousing demonstration as he walked to the centre for the spin of the coin, and inside two minutes they had something more to cheer about in an opening goal for Luton. There was some little degree of luck about the point. Wood leaped out to intercept a threatening centre from Hoar, caught the ball smartly, but kicked it on to Hill, and it rebounded at right angles across the goalmouth where Bookman was up with nothing more to do than to tap it into the undefended goal. Such a thrilling start naturally gave an impetus to the game, and with the going easy the players at once settled down to brisk and vigorous exchanges, both sides swinging the ball about freely, and making ground fast.

Millwall might easily have equalised on two occasions for Cook wildly shot over when Hodge had given him the finest of openings, and from a dashing run on the left Dunn was very lucky to get across and bar a shot from Keen, but the Luton defence was so solid that Whitehead was not tested. Spiritedly led by Simms and Williams, the home forwards were displaying unusual method, and the halves were feeding them with fine judgment. Their visitors could not break up the Luton attacks, and for the greater part of the half Wood was the outstanding figure in repelling the almost continuous assaults on his charge.

A fine forcing shot by Hill nearly got out of his grasp and amply tackled by Simms he had the greatest difficulty in getting clear, and an overhead shot from Simms was only saved just under the bar. From another effort by Simms, who ran well over to the right and centred, he ran out some yards, and just handed out over the heads of several of the players. Before he could get back Parker shot in, but just on the edge of the goal area he made another leap, and a brilliant save. Wood's work was magnificent, but he had a good deal of luck, especially when Williams hit the cross-bar, and Hill missed the rebound in the neighbourhood of the corner flag. Bookman got the ball back into the centre and Wood then effected another marvellous full length save, stopping a shot from Simms just on the line.

Luton's shooting at this point was of an order that was bound to tell, and, after 2 minutes goal No. 2 came. Wood once more had to go full length to save from Williams but although he appeared to stop the ball Simms and Hill were instantly on him, and in trying to scramble out the goalkeeper pushed the ball into the net. Unfortunately within a minute or so Millwall also scored. In intercepting a run on the right Dunn fell with the ball in his possession, and the referee adjudged him guilty of intentional handling. It was inconceivable that anyone should form such an impression, but still a penalty was given, and Broad made no mistake with it.

It was a discouraging blow after Luton had played so well, and the homesters were no quite so prominent after. Even so they were unlucky not to regain their two goal lead before the change of ends, as from a lovely run and centre by Hill, Rutherford followed up and shot the ball on to the upright with Wood completely beaten.

The homesters still continued the most prominent after change of ends, but while they did well in midfield there was not so much method in their work near goal, and the shooting was often hurried and wild. Simms and Williams were the most persistent shots, but there was more powder than direction in their efforts. Simms' two best were a roasting drive from 30 yards which went perilously close and another big lunge which Wood had to throw himself at, and flat save with a great effort, but he also missed a fine chance when he volleyed yards wide from a brilliant centre by Hoar.

Play was neither so bright or exciting as the first half until the last quarter of an hour when Millwall frequently got going dangerously. Whitehead was rather fortunate to be in position to catch the ball when a header clearance by Rutherford rebounded from M. Dougall, but apart from this he had no real anxiety until seven minutes from the end when Broad came into the picture with a free-kick that was as brilliant as it was unexpected. He gathered up the ball from a free-kick in such an excellent position that there were a strong appeal for offside, as without a moment's dalliance aimed in a lovely shot which glided just inside the post.

This reverse put the homesters once more on their mettle, and they never ceased attack until the final whistle went. Wood had to perform another of his full length feats in saving a magnificent shot from Hill, and brought off another beauty from a corner, so it was due to him that the final score stood

Luton 2, Millwall 2.

Broad is the leading goal-scorer in the Southern League, and Millwall have to thank

his opportunism and Wood's magnificent goal-keeping for saving them from defeat. There was no finer feature of the game than Wood's display. He was daring in his risks, and brilliant in his anticipation, but even so a forward of Broad's shooting ability on the Luton side would have determined the result.

Each of Luton's inside forwards shot hard and often, especially in the first half, but generally they lacked steadiness in front of goal. Apart from this, both Williams and Simms played rousing football, the former doing as well as anybody. Bookman was seldom in the picture, and Hear and Hill were easily the most workman-like wing on the side. The halves showed a most noticeable improvement in their passing, Urwin especially so. Elvey had no rival at back, but Dunn was a valuable partner, although he seems to be dogged by bad luck. With Whitehead's goalkeeping no fault could be found. He was unlucky to be beaten twice.

Apart from Wood and Broad, the most conspicuous figures in the Millwall side were Keen, the recently signed pro. from Chesham, Tairish at centre half and Fort at back.