

SHARING THE SPOILS.

As the second meeting of Luton Town and Millwall Athletic failed to provide a goal, the teams have shared the four points. The game of the previous week was the first time the Town had failed to score at home, and the first goal-less draw of the season, and on Saturday they did it again. They have played 12 matches, including Cup-ties, and as Saturday's game was only the tenth in which they have failed to score, we have not a lot to grumble about, but if any player ever felt vexed with himself it was Allan Mathieson last Saturday. He had a glorious chance to win the game about five minutes from the end, but he failed badly, and it must be conceded that the chief honours for the sharing of the points were merited by the defence.

It was only a "middling" sort of game. There was a lot of bustle and rush, especially by the "Lions," and the vanguard, as a line, never got into complete working order. They were tackled vigorously and promptly, and Simms and his left wing were so closely harried that they were not often able to settle down. The right wing, however, was constantly menacing the "Lions'" defence, and gave tit for tat in the way of vigour, although the smallest and lightest wing on the field. I have never seen either Butcher or Hoar play better, for they were much too fast and clever for Griffiths, and Fort often had to come over to the assistance of Woodley in order to frustrate the little men's mischievous schemes. Hoar's speedy dashes were usually made possible by the sagacity of Butcher, and the speed with which they manœuvred and showed up the holes in the "Lions'" defence evoked much admiration. Had there been the slightest faltering on the part of the "Lions'" defence in dealing with Simms and his left wing the assaults initiated by Hoar and Butcher must have fructified. As it was Butcher once hit the bar with a quickly taken snap shot when Wood was helpless to save, and on several occasions in the first half off-side decisions—two of which were errors—prevented Simms taking advantage of Hoar's clever passes.

The miss by Mathieson, however, came as a result of Simms' genius. Snapping the ball from Butcher he wore through a rush of opponents and planted the ball dead in front about six yards out, and Mathieson, quite unattended, took his time about using it, and then the ball skidded off his foot and went a yard or two wide. After the match Allan told me that the shadow of the centre-half caused him to take the ball more quickly than he would otherwise have done, and as the sun was shining quite brilliantly, that is a feasible excuse, but under any circumstances he should have scored, for he might have walked the ball through. He won't make many blunders of that description, anyway. Simms did not get many chances, for he was well watched. As a distribution agent he was thoughtful and ingenious, but whenever there was a centre offering a possible shot, one of the hefty defenders was bang on top of Simms, and the few shots he did have were from difficult situations. The left wing certainly were not in International form. Mathieson occasionally showed exceptional craftsmanship, but somehow he did not seem to get as much of the ball as usual, and he lay too close to the middle men—perhaps, however, due to the fact that the "Lions'" defenders were adopting off-side tactics. Bookman got in a few runs, but he did not court the unceremonious attentions of Fort, especially after he got knocked into the fence and had his leg damaged. On one occasion in the first half he cut in and just missed the target, the ball going right across the goal-mouth, while in the second half he got in a couple of efforts from one of which Simms just failed to score, and on another occasion the ball went wide.

The halves were quite good, and just nicely balanced with those of the home side. The new man, Walker, was more than useful at centre-half, although not so speedy in tackling as Parker. He got in the way of the opposition a great deal, and he distributed the ball with judgment and skill. Personally, I think he will be better as a wing half, for he does not "strip big" like Parker. However, he put up a very good game, and will repay perseverance, I am quite sure. Molyneux was in his happiest mood once he got acquainted with Musgrove, and the latter's contribution in the second half was practically nil. Molyneux was also a considerable factor in the opportunities of Butcher and Hoar.

Lennon was in brilliant form at back, his work being sound in every respect, and in kicking and tackling alike he excelled. I liked his play better than that of either Fort or Woodley, for he did not sky the ball when there was any time at all in which to dispose of it. Frank Hull made one serious mistake, and there were occasions when he was rather easily beaten, but he gave a solid and resolute display on the whole, and showed much of the promise that induced the Town to sign him as a professional at the beginning of the season. Bailey was in brilliant form throughout, and made some splendid saves. The spectators gave him a cordial welcome when he turned out, and frequently applauded his good work. He, as a former custodian of Millwall, found more gratification than his colleagues in keeping a clean sheet.

The "Lions" had several changes from their team of the previous week, and undoubtedly strengthened the side in all departments with the exception of goal, and even there Landedale could not have done better than did Wood, who was very smart and judicious. Fort was the more brilliant of a strong pair of backs, and Voisey and Riddell were great halves, while Griffiths was industrious, if rather unscrupulous. In the forward line Moule was not a great improvement on Hannaford, and little was seen of him, but Sayer and Sutherland were very clever. Kelly was a fine winger, but Musgrove faded away after a flattering start.

MILLWALL. — Wood; Fort, Woodley; Voisey, Riddell, Griffiths; Kelly, Sayer, Moule, Sutherland, Musgrove.

LUTON.—Bailey; Lennon, Hull; Molyneux, Walker, Parker; Hoar, Butcher, Simms, Mathieson, Bookman.

Referee.—W. E. Russell, Swindon.