

Football Features.

BY "OLD CROCK."

LUCKY WIN AGAINST CHARLTON.

Lutonians have had a glut of more or less interesting football fare this Easter. There have been no fewer than five games on the Town ground since Good Friday, and the fact of the first team's holiday fixtures being with a London club enabled the enthusiasts to follow the team in all their three Third Division encounters.

Quite a holiday touch was given to Charlton Athletic's visit to Luton on Saturday by the presence on the terraces of a human mascot in their red and white colours, flags and banners to match, red air balloons which took to flight before the end of the game, and a whole collection of musical instruments. A merrier band of supporters could not be imagined, and their spirits were not daunted by defeat, disappointing as it must have been in the light of the visiting team's deserts. Neither team were altogether happy in adapting themselves to the difficulties caused by a tempestuous and extremely choppy wind, but Charlton stood out by themselves in forward combination and sparkling sharp-shooting, and were distinctly unlucky to retire in arrears.

Charlton were making four changes—two forward and two half-back—from Good Friday, but Luton's only alteration was necessitated by Walker's injury, Foster taking the centre-half position. Teams:—

Luton Town.—Bailey; Lennon and Tirrell; Molynaux, Foster, and Roe; Hoar, Reid, Mathieson, Butcher, and Bookman.

Charlton Athletic.—Barnes; Burton and Goodman; Dowling, Whalley, Hampson; Castle, Bailey, Cox, Steele, and Wilson.

Referee, Mr. H. Telfree, Southampton.

Seven thousand spectators had little to enthuse about in a goalless first half. With the wind in their favour the Town had much the larger share of the exchanges after the first ten minutes, but while affording territorial advantage the elements also reacted disadvantageously. The forwards found ball control a very difficult proposition, and with halves as well as backs apparently unable to resist the temptation to lift the ball at every opportunity, they scarcely ever showed signs of settling down to effective football. Charlton's backs increased the handicap by exploiting the one back game with crafty judgment, and it was only on rare occasions that really serious danger was threatened.

Bookman made the most promising opening, and from one swinging pass by Mathieson he dropped in a centre which Butcher took at close quarters. Barnes saved close against the post, but the referee adjudged it a goal kick instead of a corner. Another near escape was when Burton fouled Mathieson on the edge of the penalty area and headed away Tirrell's free kick from under the bar with Barnes right at the other end of the goal. Foster went very close with a header from Bookman's corner kick, and it was simply marvellous how both Mathieson and Reid failed to get their feet to a centre from the outside winger when a touch must have done the trick.

Charlton made ground much quicker than the home-sters and shot more freely, but generally their range was too long to be effective. Their most promising efforts were at the beginning and end of the half, particularly the latter. Bailey looked a certain scorer when Roe cleverly robbed him in the goal mouth. Castle drove in a great shot which Bailey handed on to the cross-bar, and from the rebound Cox was only a little out in elevation, while from another fine effort by the outside right Steele drove wide of the post with Bailey hopelessly out of

Luton.

Twelve minutes of the second half brought Luton a goal. Reid, who had just previously missed a fine opening by burring his shot, steered the ball nicely to Mathieson between the backs. The centre stumbled in trapping the ball, and seemed to have thrown the opportunity away, but recovering quickly he lunged straight away with the right, and Barnes was evidently surprised to see the ball career in a bee-line for the end of the goal that was undefended. Anything might have happened in the next few minutes. Foster brought off a great spoiling effort when Wilson seemed through, then Burton dashed across the goal, and got his foot to a low shot from Reid that was sailing in and immediately after Cox had broken through to within striking distance when Foster got his shoulder on the spot and sent the shot yards out of its contemplated course.

Bailey twice came into the picture with a fine save from a grounder directed by Whalley and a flying kick out from his namesake, and on numerous occasions he was darting from end to end, to see shots whizzing by on the wrong side, one by Castle being a very near thing. It was all Charlton, and their peppering was particularly hot, but in the last fifteen minutes Bookman changed the scene with a great run and centre which gave Reid a great chance. He trod on the ball, and with Mathieson hotly following up the chance of a recovery was prevented. Charlton were, however, not successful in getting the ball clear. Foster picked it up on the left and drove into the goal mouth, Reid breasted it on to an opponent, and it went on to Butcher, to shoot through at close quarters.

A minute later and Mathieson had the hardest luck imaginable in failing with the best shot of the game. Tricking Godman, Hoar raced away and negotiated a lively centre low down, and Mathieson side-stepped the ball in only to see it hit the upright and spin back into play. Bookman returned it to the goal mouth, and Hoar let drive for all he was worth, but Barnes saved at point blank range. Apart from these incidents, Charlton continued to do all the attacking and shooting, but their luck was out. Their cup of misfortune was full to the brim when a long runner from Whalley got by Bailey and came back from under part of the bar for Titterton to kick away. Charlton claimed that it dropped over the line, but Luton were just as confident in claiming a penalty for "hands" against Whalley directly afterwards, and the two negatives left the result:

Luton 2, Charlton 0.

On the Luton side practically all the honours rested with the defence. Bailey kept a perfect goal, and has not often been kept so wide awake as he had to be to retain a clean sheet. Lannon was in one of his most dashing moods and Tirrell showed fine generalship. All three halves showed up strongly in defence, but they were of little service to the forwards who, in turn, were woefully ragged. Mathieson led fairly well and was individually effective, but Bookman alone took the eye to any degree. Hoar did several good things, but was not often in the picture.

Charlton were altogether a better line of forwards and were extremely unlucky to be outscored. Castle was the shining light, and Cox also looked large in spite of his 5'4" 1/2 inches, and the line was beautifully balanced. Whalley at centre half was a

lower of strength in both attack and defence, and Burton played a sterling game at back. Barnes had not a deal to do, and the shots that scored left him helpless.

EXCELLENT LUTON DEFENCE

Luton Town 2 Charlton..... 0

Charlton did well enough at Luton to deserve a better result. A high wind spoilt play considerably, but the Athletics showed better knowledge of overcoming the conditions than did Luton, and it was only the excellence of the home defence that prevented the London forwards from achieving a better result.

The goals were scored in the second half, Mathieson netting cleverly after good work by Hoar, and Butcher converting after a smart run by Bookman.

Luton: Bailey; Lennon, Farrell; Molynous, Foster, Roe; Hoar, Reid, Mathieson, Butcher. Bookman.

Charlton: E. Barnes; Burton, Goodman; Dowling, Whalley, Hampson; Castle, Bailey, Cox, Steele, Wilson.