

FOOTBALL

LUTON AND THE CUP.

DEFEAT OF WATFORD.

CAPITAL PLAY AND A GRAND "GATE."

Saturday last was an important date in the history of the Luton Club, for it was the day appointed for the battle royal between those old rivals Watford and Luton. The teams had met twice this season (a win for Luton and a draw being the outcome of these games). But these were merely "friendlies," and this was an important fixture in the Association Cup competition, a distinction with a very great difference. The fact that the West Herts. club had obtained choice of grounds was regarded as a point in favour of the team over the border, and there was a little anxiety in the minds of those Lutonians who were not rabid partisans. It was conceded by competent judges that there would not be much in it between the teams; and, though the "blues" proved themselves all over the better side, the prophets were right for once in a way. The dense fog which caused the abandonment of so many matches in different parts of the county fortunately did not affect Watford, and so the match was able to be decided. The interest taken in the encounter by Luton folks was demonstrated by the hundreds who set out on the journey over the county border, and whose cheers were somewhat of a set-off against those of the supporters of the home eleven. The fog-fiend held Luton firmly in his clutches on Saturday forenoon, and there was some doubt whether the match would be played after all. A telegram from Watford intimated that there was no fog there, and that induced many to undertake the journey who were wavering. The North-Western Railway authorities had arranged for a special train at 1s. 6d. return fare, and this was liberally patronised. The Football Club guaranteed 300 passengers and it was not expected that that total would be doubled; but that was the experience, for close upon 600 persons took advantage of the trip. The arrangements for issuing the tickets were admirable and with the utmost dispatch and without confusion the train was loaded—a fact that reflects credit upon Messrs. Crick (L. and N.W. agent) and Few (the G. N. stationmaster). Every compartment was crowded, and the story goes that in some there were no fewer than 16 passengers packed sardine fashion. However, football lovers are always good-humoured on such occasions, and the inconvenience was cheerfully borne. The start was made with due regard to the virtues of punctuality and 10 minutes later Dunstable was reached. Then by way of Leighton and Tring the journey was conducted, the fog which prevailed at almost every point being dubiously regarded. As Watford was neared, however, it was perceived with satisfaction that there was no trace of fog and that the sun was shining brilliantly. The arrival was made in such good time as to allow of a comfortable walk to the ground, and when the hundreds of enthusiasts streamed in they found a large crowd assembled round the ropes. These included some Lutonians who had made the journey by way of St. Albans (others, by the way, who patronised a later train were not so fortunate). The crowd was estimated at close upon 6,000, a record for the ground.

Mr. Nat Whittaker had charge of the teams as referee, and the sides (which were both at full strength) were made up as follows:—

Watford: Waller; Cother and Nidd; Wragg, Harding and Hamilton; Brown, Lyon, Harvey, Pangborn and Chalmers.

Luton: Ord; Lindsay and Sharp; F. Hawkes, White and Williams; Durrant, Blessington, Brown, Tierney and Colvin.

Luton won the toss and Watford kicked off with the sun shining in their faces. Just after the start the visiting forwards made their way up well, only to be driven back by Nidd. The Watfordians retaliated, Brown giving Sharp some trouble, the back eventually relieving by kicking into touch. Durrant raced away at top speed, but Cother got in the way in admirable style. Tierney, when he appeared to have a very fair chance, sent wildly over the bar, and after some even play Ord found it necessary to clear from Harvey. Watford advanced nicely after mid-field play had been the rule for a space, and Lindsay kicked over the touch-line. The Luton centre man shortly afterwards found himself in front of Waller with nobody but the custodian to beat; but to the amazement of the onlookers he sent in such a weak shot that the "goalie" had little trouble to save. This was misfortune number one for Luton, for it ought to have been a certain goal. The homesters were penalised for fouling and when the attack of the "blues" had been repulsed Lindsay was hooted for

"blues" had been repulsed Lindsay was hooted for sending out of play. The crowd invariably saluted this player in like fashion whenever he became conspicuous. A foul against Chalmers on White was duly punished. The ground was very slippery and this seemed to affect the play of the visitors more than it did that of the home lot, Durrant being one of the worst sufferers in this respect. At the Luton end Sharp and Williams had a misunderstanding with the result that Brown got away, though only to steer over the touch-line. White gave away a corner and the kick was well placed, but Sharp got away capitally. Durrant obtained possession from a well-judged pass by Brown, but was adjudged off-side. Lyon was somewhat badly winded, but was soon able to resume. Then Tierney secured well and presented Durrant with a grand opening; but the right winger shot yards above the bar, although the Watfordians abandoned play and appealed for off-side. This was let-off number two for the homesters. Watford went away capitally on the left wing and Pangborne gave Ord considerable trouble with a hard shot. Wragg beat Colvin in first-rate style. Blessington sent in a brilliant shot which Waller disposed of finely, though at the cost of a corner. This was well placed, but one of the Lutonians hooked the ball over the goal-line. Harvey gave a first-rate exhibition in the centre as the outcome of which the home forwards got well under weigh, Hamilton winding up by steering wide of the mark. From a free-kick Lindsay sent in splendidly and the ball travelled across the mouth of goal to Colvin, who tried hard to score. Waller also went for the ball, and the result of the collision was that Colvin was compelled to retire with an injury to his face. Fortunately his absence was not of long duration. Another long-range effort by Hamilton proved resultless, and at the other end Brown signalled Colvin's resumption by sending in a very fine shot which went just over the bar. Next Colvin sent across well to Durrant, who centred and Brown headed over. The home forwards threaded their way through the Luton defence, though only to be checked by off-side, a decision which was repeated in the next minute. A foul against Lindsay close to goal looked ugly for the "blues"; but the danger was averted without difficulty. The Luton centre man was pulled up for fouling when close to Waller's charge. From a free-kick against Pangborn for fouling the strangers forced a corner and Williams sent wide just afterwards. Though there was plenty of dash about the play and excitement ruled high, it cannot be said that the combination was good on either side or that scientific football was very largely in evidence. A splendid run by Luton Brown was followed by Durrant going off at a great pace and centreing well after beating his men cleverly. The game slowed down somewhat after this, and when the interval arrived the positions were:

LUTON, 0; WATFORD, 0.

Just after the recommencement a foul was awarded against Watford, and hands against White ensued. A wild kick-out was credited to Watford, following which Tierney lost the ball very badly. A shot by Durrant produced a corner which brought considerable trouble to Waller, who only saved with difficulty. Durrant struck the post with a good one, and a first-rate effort by Lindsay had no better luck than to travel over the goal-line. Once more the Watfordians appealed for off-side instead of playing on, and as a consequence Durrant was able to have another shot at goal. A glorious attempt by Brown from a centre by the outside right almost succeeded, the ball going about a foot on the wrong side of the post. Chalmers soon afterwards obtained possession and as the result of a misunderstanding between Lindsay and Ord (who came out of his goal) was enabled to score in the easiest possible fashion. This success was enthusiastically cheered by the home supporters, and it made the visitors correspondingly glum. It was the softest goal imaginable. The reverse served to wake up the "blues," and when Blessington found himself within shooting distance he let go with an attempt that gave Waller no chance whatever. This was the signal for an outburst from the Lutonians present, and the applause was well deserved, for the goal was a beauty. A minute or two later a corner was given by Nidd. This was splendidly taken and from a pass by Colvin Brown had no difficulty in scoring, thus presenting Luton with the lead. The three goals were scored in about 10 minutes. From this time onward there was only one team seriously in it. The Lutonians displayed more like their true form, and the Watfordians fell off considerably. After the ball had burst, corners fell to either side, though without result. Colvin at one stage sen into Waller's hands with a very long shot, and as the end was rapidly approaching Tierney skimmed the bar with a shot that fully deserved to score. When the whistle blew the positions were:

LUTON, 2; WATFORD, 1.

The special train left on its return journey at 6 and home was reached about an hour and a half later, a very pleasant time having been spent. The trippers were delighted with the success of their favourites and were full of praises of the excellent arrangements made by the railway authorities.