

LUTON v. WATFORD.

Played at Luton on Christmas Day.

Result:—

Luton 2 goals.

Watford nil.

Teams:—

Luton—Platt; Blackett and McCurdy; F. Hawkes, White, and Gallacher; Warner, Macdonald, Brown, R. Hawkes, and Latheron.

Watford—Biggar; Aston and Lindsay; Main, McCartney, and Richardson; Badenoch, Turner, Foster, Reid, and Kelly.

Referee, Mr. C. C. Fallowfield.

The weather on Monday was not at all typical of Christmas. Pictures of outdoor scenes at Christmas invariably show the ground covered with snow and the people wrapped up as though the weather was very cold. And that idea seems to be in keeping with the time of the year, but on Monday afternoon the sun shone brightly, and but for the fact that bare trees were to be seen in the distance, anyone who visited the football ground might have fancied that it was a September afternoon. It was just the sort of afternoon when one wants to get out of doors, and it was not surprising that there was a very large crowd.

Some of them were shop assistants who do not very often have a chance of seeing a town football match, others were men who do not as a rule attend football matches, and yet others were visitors, a good many coming over from Watford. But whether they were keen followers of the Luton Club or had not seen the Blues play before, the spectators were there to enjoy themselves, for was it not Christmas Day?

But although it was a holiday and the people were there to enjoy themselves, the great majority wanted to see a good game, with the better team on top—preferably Luton. They had nothing to grumble about on that score, and before the interval a group of young men in one corner of the field gave vent to their good spirit by singing "The Glory Song." Fancy that on a football ground! It was a good game, and most of the spectators liked to see the pretty touches of the visiting forwards, especially as their efforts were generally more pretty than effective. This is not the style of football that one associates with the Watford team, but it was the style they played on Monday.

As is usually the case, victory went to the side which adopted forcing tactics, but the first goal of the match was rather fortunate for Luton. In the first quarter of an hour Watford did most of the pressing, but Luton opened their account eighteen minutes from the start. Once or twice Blackett had showed a tendency to take the ball up the field, and as the result of this Watford were given off-side near the half-way line. Blackett took the kick and sent well into goal. Brown and White got near the ball, and as the latter steadied himself before shooting, he was able to easily beat Biggar.

What appeared to be a second goal was scored by White about a quarter of an hour afterwards. As the result of a free kick taken by Blackett the ball went across the mouth of goal towards the left wing. R. Hawkes brought it back, and the centre-half scored. The people shouted, for they thought it was a splendid goal. The ball was taken to the centre of the field, but the referee went to consult one of the linesmen and gave a goal kick. This was a great surprise, and some of the Luton players protested, but to no avail. It certainly was rather smart of Hawkes to bring the ball as he did, but people who were in a good position to see said that he touched the ball with his face, not his hands, as the linesman may have thought.

There was no doubt about the legitimacy of the point which Bob scored four minutes before the interval from a corner, and at half-time Luton were leading by 2 goals to nil, a score which pleased the majority of the spectators, who testified their approval by cheering as the teams left the field. There was not so much cheering during the second half, which was well contested, but Luton might, with a little luck, have scored one or two goals. Once Macdonald took the ball off Brown's head within a few yards of the post, and they rolled over and looked at each other like two kittens.

A little later Macdonald might easily have added the third point for Luton. Following a fine centre by Latheron, Biggar came out to save a shot by Brown, and the ball went to Macdonald, who took plenty of time over the kick, with the result that one of the backs was able to rush into the breach and kick away. The home forwards were much smarter than the others when within shooting range. Warner did some useful work, but did not seem to like to get very near to Lindsay, as was the case with one or two other players before the finish.

The veteran back used his weight a great deal, especially towards the end of the match, and on one or two occasions there was a suspicion of foulness about his play. In the first half, when facing the sun, Latheron did not do very much, but he put in some well-judged centres in the second moiety. Gallacher showed considerable improvement on Saturday's form. Platt saved some goot shots from Reid, who is the top scorer of the Watford team and was their most dangerous forward on Monday, although Turner, who played for Luton some three seasons ago, put in some useful work. Watford played the passing game right to the finish, and it was that which lost

them the match, for they were always working for better openings than they had.