

WATFORD v. LUTON.

Played at Watford on Friday. Result:—

Luton	2 goals.
Watford	2 goals.

The teams were as follow:—

Watford—Biggar; Aston and Brooks; Fyfe, Hitch, and Richardson; Matt Broughton, Turner, Foster, Niblo, and Law.

Luton—Platt; Hogg and McCurdy; F. Hawkes, White, and Jones; Warner, Gittins, Brown, Pickering, and Barnes.

Referee, Mr. A. E. Farrant.

The weather was delightfully fine for this match on Good Friday, although the brilliant sunshine which favoured the spectators did not conduce to the comfort of the players, and the latter also would have been all the better pleased with a softer ground. As there was a pooling arrangement in force, the directors of both clubs were highly gratified to see the thousands of people swarming through the entrances, but were not a little puzzled as to what to do with them, the accommodation at the Watford ground not being meant for more than a seven or eight thousand gate.

On this occasion there must have been nearer ten thousand present, and the consequence was that many had a difficulty in seeing all the play. Probably those most awkwardly placed, however, were the poor Press representatives. The reporters are given seats near the front of the grand stand, and in the ordinary way there is not much to grumble about, but when, as on Friday, there is a big attendance, the people crowd around, many of them standing on forms, and the view of more than half the field is completely shut out. If the Watford officials want the Press, the least they can do is to secure for the writers an uninterrupted view of the play.

The game opened in a very sensational way, for a couple of goals were scored in the first five minutes. Watford winning the toss, took advantage of the breeze, and put on a lot of pressure to begin with, but Foster missed a good opening and Niblo shot wide. Then Barnes and Pickering transferred the play with a pretty run to the other end, and the ball being centred to Brown, Sandy shot a capital goal.

Luton had no sooner gained the lead, however, than they lost it. Watford went away at once, the ball was centred, Hogg headed up in the air, and when it fell, Peter Turner belied his reputation by shooting without a moment's hesitation, and though Platt touched the ball he could not stop its course, and so the teams were once again on level terms. With a lively ball and a hard ground the pace was a cracker, and the play was never long at one end.

Biggar saved a grand shot from Pickering, and after a fine effort by Gittins, Warner sent a trifle wide. Then Watford took up the attack, and for a time the Luton defence was kept busy. A couple of corners were conceded, but on the whole, the shooting of the home forwards left decided room for improvement. Hogg gave away a free kick just outside the penalty line, but later on saved splendidly a shot from Hitch.

When Luton made the running again, Warner dribbled the ball to the front and just missed the upright with a beautiful shot which thoroughly deserved to score. Pickering and Barnes followed on with another fine run, and from the latter's centre Brown had an open goal, but missed badly. Right up to the interval Luton continued to have the better of the game, and a shot from Gittins only just failed to score, the ball running along the bar.

The teams crossed over with honours easy, but Luton soon showed superiority, and after Barnes had thrown away a great opportunity, Fred Hawkes obtained possession some distance out. Going away at a tangent, he ran past all opposition and finished up with a shot which beat Biggar all the way.

He was positively hugged by some of his comrades, and the Luton portion of the spectators went almost frantic with joy, while the Watford people confessed that it was the finest goal scored on the ground this season. In all probability Luton would have held their lead to the end but for the fact that Hogg had the misfortune to get hurt and had to retire.

Luton having only one back, and the Watford forwards finding themselves repeatedly offside, Brooks retaliated by going among the halves, and thus what had been a very fine game was now completely spoiled. The Lutonians maintained their advantage until five minutes from the end, when Law, who had been very conspicuous since Hogg's retirement, carried the ball well up, and putting across the mouth of goal, enabled Foster to equalise.

There was no more scoring, and the game ended in a draw, this being the same result as was arrived at in the corresponding match of last year. The Watford forwards exhibited dash and good combination, but their shooting was very poor. The Luton front string again showed great improvement, Barnes and Pickering playing together in first-rate style. The latter was really in very fine form, but Warner was not at his best on the right wing. Jones acquitted himself well at half-back, and no fault could be found with either custodian.

The gate, it appears, was a record one for the ground, £275 being taken.