

WATFORD v. LUTON.

Played at Watford on Boxing Day. Result:

Watford	1 goal.
Luton	nil.

Teams:—

Watford—Webster; Stewart and Lockett; Beaumont, Kent, and Davies; Tattersall, Mac-laine, Flint, White, and Wheeler.

Luton—Jarvis; Wightman and Potts; F. Hawkes, Bushell, and Johnson; Brown, Quinn, Moody, Lashbrooke, and Stansfield.

The meeting of Luton and Watford on Boxing Day was marked by all the old-time excitement, and the only regret of the large number of excursionists from Luton was that the Blues lost when they really deserved to win. The match afforded the opportunity for a pleasant outing, and was almost as popular as it would have been on a Good Friday, as was the case for several consecutive years.

The G.N. Station at Luton was simply besieged between twelve and half-past. There was a rush for cheap tickets, and those who arrived early went on by the ordinary train at 12.20, but had to change at Dunstable. The real excursion train started ten minutes later, and every compartment was packed, while many were glad to obtain standing room in the guard's van. Even then many were left behind, and a good number went via St. Albans. The number of cheap tickets issued on the Northern was about a thousand.

Although the excursionists had had a quick lunch instead of the usual leisurely Boxing Day dinner, they were a happy lot. There were as many as sixteen in a compartment, but it seemed to be a matter of the more the merrier. Despite the discomforts, everyone seemed determined to be merry and bright, and the choruses of popular songs were sung with gusto.

Upon arrival at Watford, the Lutonians at once wended their way to the football ground, and for a time there seemed to be more visitors than supporters of the home team. When the game started, however, there was an attendance of over seven thousand, and the gate realised £226, of which Luton received half, the clubs having arranged to pool the proceeds of the match and that on the following day.

Unfortunately, Luton were forced to make some changes in their team. Smith was suffering from the injury to his shoulder sustained at Leyton on Saturday, and so Moody was transferred to the centre, Lashbrooke being introduced at inside-left. Naisby was out of the team because of a bad hand, R. Hawkes was having a rest, and at back Potts reappeared after an interval of some weeks.

The weather was fine and not at all cold for the time of year. The ground was rather heavy, and to this was partly due the fact that the players did not really settle down during the first half-hour. Most of the exciting play took place in the second half, but right up to the last minute it seemed that the result would be a pointless draw. Some loose play in front of the Luton goal, however, resulted in White getting in a shot which beat Jarvis. Then the Watford supporters cheered, and the applause had hardly died away when time was called.

F. Hawkes, who was captain of the Luton team, won the toes, but very little advantage was gained from this, as there was practically no wind. Luton had the better of the opening play, but after a time Watford improved, and to the interval the exchanges were fairly even, with most of the chances falling to Luton. Early in the game Lashbrooke had a nasty shaking-up, and for a time he was somewhat dazed. He changed places with Stansfield, and just before the interval sent across a swift shot which caused Webster to punch three times before he was able to clear.

The first real attempt of the match came from White, who met a centre from the right. His shot was a high one, and Jarvis touched it over. White again got dangerous, and Johnson cleared in front of goal. A run on the Luton right resulted in Lashbrooke putting in a shot, but one of the Watford backs intercepted it. Watford were the next to attack,

and Wightman eventually cleared after some exciting play.

Flint looked like getting through when he met a centre from the left, but he was hampered by Potts and shot wide. At the other end Brown put across a splendid centre, but Stansfield just failed to reach it. The Watford right wing then made the running, and White dashed in, but Wightman headed down and then cleared. A free kick for a foul on Moody was taken by Fred Hawkes. He shot straight at Webster, who dropped the ball, but recovered it quickly.

A shot from the Watford left seemed to cause a misunderstanding between Jarvis and Potts, but the goalkeeper pounced on the ball in time. Good play on the Luton right ended in the ball being sent across. Stansfield headed whilst on the run, and Webster could only punch over the bar. Stansfield took the flag kick, and Webster ran almost to the opposite corner before he finally cleared.

At half-time there was no score. The Watford forwards were not a very smart set, and generally found the Luton backs too good for them. Wightman never hesitated and kicked with fine strength, while his partner was in good form. The Luton front rank, on the other hand, missed Smith, for Moody was not thoroughly at home in the centre, and Lashbrooke felt rather strange on the left.

After the interval Stansfield again went to outside-left, but he did not receive much support from Lashbrooke, who was not quick and energetic enough. A few minutes from the finish the reserve man had a splendid chance of scoring, and was not exactly pleased with himself when he found he had missed. The ball came across squarely from Brown, and Lashbrooke seemed a certain scorer. It was an easy chance—too easy, in fact, for the inside-left shot wide when that seemed next to impossible. It was the worst miss of the match.

With the exception of Watford's goal, that was the outstanding incident of the second half. During one warm attack by Luton, one of the Watford halves knocked the ball with his hand and cleared. There were shouts of "Penalty," but the referee took no notice, and Watford were quickly at the other end. Earlier in this half Watford supporters appealed for a penalty when one of the home forwards fell with Potts, but the back's charge was a perfectly fair one.

The greasy ball gave Jarvis some trouble in the early stages of the second half, but he recovered the sphere in time to prevent anything untoward happening. Following a free kick for Luton, Lashbrooke sent across a good centre, but the other forwards were in front of it. Watford forwards tried one or two long shots, and then attacked in style, only to be repulsed.

A cross shot from Lashbrooke caused Webster to punt out, and Quinn shot over. Then Moody got his head to a centre from Brown, but the ball went out of play; still, it was a near thing. And so the game went on. As the minutes slowly passed, the excitement increased. Luton looked more like scoring than Watford, but good fortune favoured the Hertfordshire men in the last minute. The Luton backs failed to clear in some scrambling play, and White put in a low shot well out of the reach of Jarvis.

Watford did not deserve to win on the run of the play, and they certainly would not have done had Luton been at full strength. But there was no time for vain regrets. Directly the game was over there was a rush for the gates, and the Lutonians eagerly sought places where they could obtain tea. Most of the usual places were shut up, and nearly all the visitors had to make shift with what they could get. Afterwards they returned to the station, and the first train arrived in Luton shortly before eight o'clock. It was then raining. So ended a pleasant outing.