

# LUTON v. WATFORD.

Played at Luton on Christmas Day. Result:

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|---------------|---------|
| Luton .....   | 1 goal. |
| Watford ..... | 1 goal. |

The local rivalry that exists between Luton and Watford, and furthermore the fact that the match has for the last two years been arranged to take place between these teams at Luton on Christmas Day, has always ensured a good gate, and this year was no exception to the rule, there being about eight thousand spectators present to witness the contest.

The teams were as follow:—

Luton—Naisby; Wightman and Potts; F. Hawkes, Bushell, and R. Hawkes; Stephenson, Walker, Shepherd, Moody, and Stansfield.

Watford—Webster; Lockett and Stewart; Gregory, Grimsdell, and Blythe; Tattersall, Gregory, Dixon, White, and Squires.

Owing to the unfortunate accident to Johnson in the match with Northampton on Saturday, Shepherd was again introduced in the centre-forward position, and singularly enough, he too was injured in the second half and had to be carried off the field. The injury, however, is not, it is believed, of a very serious nature. He was injured in the first half, and on two subsequent occasions the knee that was injured gave way, until he had to be carried off as stated. He played a fairly good game in the centre, but he lacks judgment. An additional change was made in the forward line, Stephenson being played at outside-right instead of Brown. The change, however, was disappointing. Stephenson has played some brilliant games in the reserve team lately in this position, but on Monday he seemed to have no confidence in himself. He occasionally put in some good work, but on the whole he was weak. In the reserve team he has shown wonderful speed and cleverness in taking the ball down the field, but in this match he rarely showed any inclination to do this. The first half of the game was very fast and interesting, but in the second Luton were somewhat handicapped with only four forwards, whilst the Watford team fell away considerably. Nevertheless, Luton had more than their share of the game in the second half, and had it not been for the brilliant display of Webster in goal, they would have undoubtedly won by a large margin.

To deal with the game in detail. Watford won the toss, and gained the advantage of the wind. The visitors were soon prominent, and some pretty combination amongst their forwards ended in Tattersall sending in a shot which gave Naisby considerable difficulty in saving. A few minutes later the right wing was presented with another fine opportunity, but Tattersall shot hastily, with the result that the ball went yards wide.

Luton eventually got away, and it was curious that the first time they got within shooting distance they should have scored, and that within about five minutes from the commencement of the game. The goal kick consequent upon Tattersall's weak effort, set Stansfield going on the wing, and cleverly beating the back, he neatly passed to Moody, who beat Webster with a magnificent cross shot, thus registering the first goal of the match for Luton. The ball had scarcely been centred when Luton were away again, and a good shot from Bob Hawkes was saved in capital fashion by Webster. Stansfield, however, came down the wing again, and following his centre, Moody got in a shot which missed by inches only. From the goal kick Watford gained little advantage, and Stansfield obtaining possession, once more took the ball down the wing and centred. This time however, Moody, who received the ball, missed badly, shooting yards wide.

Watford, however, eventually succeeded in forcing play in the Luton half, where some clever combination amongst their forwards ended in Squires sending in a fine shot almost from the touch-line. Naisby only just managed to tip the ball over the bar. The consequent corner proved of no avail, and Stephenson getting away on the Luton right wing, finished a fine run by sending in a good centre which travelled right across the goal-mouth to Stansfield, who took a first-time shot. Unfortunately, however, the ball struck a back and glanced behind for a corner. But for the ball hitting the back, a goal would have been certain, as the ball was travelling towards the net at the end farthest away from the goalkeeper. From the corner kick, which was well placed, Bushell sent in a shot. Webster was, however, all there, and had no difficulty in effectively clearing. From this clearance the Watford left wing was given an opportunity, and with Wightman well beaten, there was no alternative for Naisby but to run out. The venture proved most successful, and he practically took the ball off the toe of the inside-left, White.

The next thing of note was a clever piece of combination on the right wing between Stephenson and Walker, which ended in Shepherd getting in a good shot after he had beaten the back. Webster was prepared for the shot, however, and brought off a fine save. It was in this attempt to score that Shepherd injured his knee and had to be attended by the trainer. After a few minutes, however, he was able to take his place again. He never really played the same, the knee giving way occasionally.

About this time Watford brightened up wonderfully, and after some minutes' pressing, during which time Naisby made some brilliant saves, White scored with a fine shot from a centre by Tattersall. There was no possible chance for Naisby to save the shot, as White was standing right in when he shot. The Luton players appealed for offside, but the referee would not listen to their arguments and awarded Watford a goal.

Shortly after this another stoppage was occasioned by Shepherd's knee giving way again. He was quickly able to resume, however, and the Luton forwards pressed hard. Following a centre by Stansfield, Walker got his head to the ball. A goal seemed almost certain, but the custodian very luckily saved. At the other end a smart attack on the part of the Watford forwards necessitated Naisby leaving his charge. After beating several men by bouncing the ball, he succeeded in clearing. The interval came with both teams having scored one goal.

The second half opened somewhat sensationally. Stephenson got away on the Luton right wing and sent in a good centre, which was taken by Walker, who lost no time in shooting. In attempting to save, Webster fell, and before he could recover he was surrounded by Luton forwards. The custodian maintained his hold of the ball, and a general "mix-up" ensued. In the meantime the crowd at the back of the goal, in their eagerness to see what was happening, pressed so heavily on the fence that the portion immediately behind the goal gave way and let a considerable number of spectators into the field. Many of them fell into the goal-net and had some difficulty in disentangling themselves. To return to the play, however. The referee eventually awarded Watford a free kick, and the situation was thus saved. Luton continued to have the better of the exchanges, and a good shot from Stansfield was cleverly saved by Webster. Play, however, soon settled down in midfield, and the Watford forwards making no headway, the Luton front string once more became prominent. Stansfield neatly passed back to Bob Hawkes upon being tackled by two men, and Bob lost no time in shooting. The shot was a good one, and thoroughly deserved to score, but it was a trifle too high and just sailed over the bar. Immediately afterwards Webster only just managed to get to a shot from Stephenson, which he saved at the expense of a corner, from which, however, nothing materialised. Not to be outdone, Luton again came along, and the Watford goal had an almost miraculous escape. Luton were pressing severely when Walker shot hard, and the back, in attempting to return the ball at a volley, only



partially got in his kick, and the ball flew off his foot straight into the hands of Webster. Another attack on the Watford goal ended in Shepherd again getting injured, this time so badly that he had to be carried off the field. His absence naturally handicapped the remaining Luton forwards, but the home side more than held their own and subjected the Watford goal to many sharp attacks.

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Towards the close, however, the Watford forwards, with some clever combination, succeeded in forcing play into the Luton half, where they gained a corner. The kick, however, was badly placed, and Luton easily cleared. Although from now until the end of the game Luton were on the aggressive, they failed to score, and the game ended in a draw of one goal each.