

WATFORD v. LUTON.

Played at Watford on Boxing Day. Result:

Luton	1 goal.
Watford	nil.

The teams were as follow:—

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

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

The ground was in a terribly treacherous state owing to the heavy rains; indeed, it rained the whole time the match was in progress. Another experiment was made in the Luton forward line, where Streeton was introduced, on account of the injury to Shepherd in the match at Luton on Christmas Day. Watford had the same team on the field as the day previously.

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The experiment with Streeton proved very successful, he playing a great game in the centre position. Indeed, the whole team played remarkably well, and in the second half had matters all their own way. But for the brilliant display of Webster in goal, they would have won by a good margin. On the run of the play, Luton thoroughly deserved to win by at least three goals. The crowd numbered only about six thousand, many of whom were from Luton, who, needless to say, gave the visitors encouragement so far as shouting was concerned.

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Watford won the toss, but gained little or no advantage. In the first minute of the game a nice run on the wing by Stansfield ended in Streeton touching the ball almost into the top corner of the net. Webster managed just to keep it out, however, and the ball travelling to Brown, was kicked weakly behind. By way of retaliation, the Watford right wing got away and centred, but the effort was spoiled by Grimsdell handling. A few minutes later their right wing again broke through the Luton defence, but this time their effort was frustrated by the centre-forward being ruled off-side. Play quickly being transferred to the other end of the field, Bob Hawkes missed by inches only with a beautiful low shot. Watford from the goal kick gained considerable advantage and some nice work on the left wing by Squires ended in his centreing, and Gregory sent in a first-time shot, in the saving of which Naisby measured his length, and then only succeeded in turning the ball behind. From the corner, Grimsdell got in a shot which Naisby just saved, the ball afterwards bouncing on the bar and over. The corner, however, proved fruitless. At the other end some clever play by Brown led to Webster being tested with several good shots, but he showed remarkable ability and brought off some very clever saves. Luton continued to press, and Walker gave a fine display of dribbling, he beating several men. His centre, however, was not taken advantage of, and the Watford forwards again took matters in their hands and quickly carried the ball towards the Luton goal, where Grimsdell had hard luck with a good shot. Watford did not long maintain the advantage, and following some really brilliant wing work by Brown, Bob Hawkes scored with a fine low shot, Webster being beaten after falling full length. Luton were thus leading after half an hour's play.

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Watford from the kick-off went away for all they were worth, and the Luton goal had a very narrow escape. Naisby, in saving from Dixon, failed to hold the ball, but Wightman kicked clear just as Dixon was about to shoot again. Watford continued to harass the Luton defence, and forced three corners in quick succession, and it was only owing to the clever head work of Wightman that they were prevented from scoring. Immediately afterwards Naisby had considerable difficulty in saving a long shot from the Watford inside-right. The next thing of note was a nice run down the wing by Tattersall, but he slipped as he was about to centre, and only partially getting in his kick, the ball was sent behind.

Some clever combination by the Luton forwards forced play towards the Watford goal, where Streeton was badly fouled just outside the penalty area as he was about to take a neat pass from Moody. The free kick proved of no avail, and the Watford forwards again became prominent on the left wing. Squires beat Wightman and ran the ball down the field. He was about to centre when Potts dashed across and saved the situation. Just before the interval Watford forced a corner, but failed to turn the kick to account, and half-time came with Luton still leading by the only goal of the half.

Resuming, the Watford forwards combined together prettily, and with some clever play immediately took the ball into the Luton half, but Wightman neatly intercepted a pass from Gregory to Tattersall and quickly cleared. After the game had been resumed but a few minutes Gregory went outside-right owing to injury, and Tattersall took the inside position. Following some interesting midfield play, Streeton made a fine individual effort and beating the half and full backs, he sent in a shot which Webster only just reached. The goalkeeper, however, succeeded in clearing, but Luton came down again, and Lockett could only save a dangerous move by Stansfield by fouling the Luton winger. From the free kick nothing materialised. Brown on the right wing was showing fine form, and he made several clever runs down the wing, and on two occasions he forced corners, but the Luton forwards failed to turn them to account. Luton were now more than holding their own, but the slippery nature of the ground was not conducive to accurate shooting, and Webster was only troubled occasionally.

Streeton was playing particularly well, and his individual efforts were pretty to watch. On one occasion he ended a brilliant effort by sending in a shot from which Webster made a grand save. The goalkeeper again came into prominence but a minute or so later, when he kept the ball out of the top corner of the net from a shot by Walker. Brown next came along with a good centre, from which Moody sent in a good header. Webster, however, was all there, and had no difficulty in saving. A minute later a good shot from Brown travelled right across the goal-mouth and missed the far post by inches only. The Watford forwards had fallen off wonderfully, and they rarely took the ball over the half-way line into the Luton half. When they did succeed in forcing play towards Naisby, so weak were their attacks that the Luton backs had no difficulty in clearing. Luton absolutely had matters as they willed, except for Webster, who brought off some magnificent saves. In saving a shot from Moody, in particular, he practically threw himself the length of the goal, and just turned the ball round the post for a fruitless corner. Towards the close of the game the Watford forwards played up with increased vigour, and made one or two spirited runs down the field, but their efforts always lacked finish, and the game ended in a win for Luton by one goal to nil.