

FOOTBALL NOTES.

Southern League.

LUTON v. WATFORD.

Result:—

Watford	2 goals.
Luton	nil.

Pate knocked loudly at Watford's door at Luton on Easter Monday. Three days previously the Town had caused the leaders uneasiness by romping round them at Watford, and as they again failed against West Ham, their rivals, on Saturday, much depended on the result of their game at Luton on Monday. If Luton did the trick again it meant that Watford were very shaky leaders indeed.

Neither side was at full strength. Bob Hawkes was down with a bad side, which he had brought from Millwall, and Ree was also out of the team with a similar injury in the Watford game on Good Friday. In the Watford eleven was McMorran, who played in the Reserves match at Luton on Good Friday.

Mr. E. E. Small, of Bristol, smartly refereed the game, and the happy way in which he smoothed over a difficulty near the close was much to the liking of both players and spectators. The teams lined up as follow after Luton Red Cross Band had entertained the crowd to enlivening selections:—

Luton—Mitchell; Elvey and Dunn; F. Hawkes, Frith, and Heath; Roberts, Wileman, Simms, Rollinson, and Hoar.

Watford—Williams; Bulling and Stewart; Val Gregory, Barnshaw, and McMorran; Green, Ronald, Edmonds, Fred Gregory, and Waterall.

The game, which was witnessed by nearly 10,000 people, including many ladies, was Watford's nearly all the first half, and often in the second. Early on the Luton defence was severely tried by the nippy Watford forwards, who seemed to be all over the field. In the second half, however, the pace was not half such a cracker, and Luton were seen to greater advantage, though taking play from beginning to end Luton seldom featured in comparison with Watford. However, they were unlucky on at least two occasions—in the first half, when Simms shot into the goalkeeper's hands (this was less Simms' muddle and more the goalkeeper's cleverness), and in the second half when Simms headed for a corner of the net and struck the upright with the Watford custodian beaten. That was the only occasion, by the way, on which Williams was at sea; always before and after he was at his post, and the brilliance of his display between the sticks is something to remember. However, there was no mistaking the superiority of Watford in all departments, excepting at half-back, and if they had won by another goal it would not have overrated them on the run of the play.

The ground seemed crowded when the teams came out close upon time, Watford evidently having a numerous following, as they were given a popular reception as they passed the grand stand. There was another outburst from this quarter when Val Gregory won the toss.

The pace was a stunner from the start, Waterall kicking wide in the first minute. This was followed by a miskick on the part of Elvey, but Dunn was on the spot, and from his clearance play became active in the Watford quarter. Bulling, however, beat Rollinson when the latter could have placed Hoar favourably had he been fortunate enough. Still, play ran in the visitors' area, thanks to fine work in the Luton middle division. Simms tipped nicely

to Wileman with the Watford halves pointed, but one of their backs came up in the nick of time. Over on the other wing Roberts was set going by Simms, and following upon Roberts' excellent centre Williams had an anxious time.

Quickly there was a sensation at the other end. Elvey was called upon to deal with the Watford left wing with the ball running in their favour. They were too good for him, and as the ball lay halfway between Elvey and the Luton goal Mitchell came out at the right moment and charged the ball away as Fred Gregory was in the act of booting it for the net.

After five minutes Watford scored unexpectedly, Green centring low and Fred Gregory completely beating Mitchell.

Luton were sharply away on the restart, and Hear tried hard from the flag, but his centre was not improved. Then the Watford left wing again tricked Elvey, and their centre was on the point of driving hard and low for the Luton sticks when Heath nipped in and saved the situation. From a free kick close in the Luton goal had a narrow escape, and a similar advantage to Luton caused a flutter among the Watford spectators, though nothing came of it. The Fred Gregory outwitted Hawkes, and Mitchell had to be resourceful to get Gregory's drive away.

Watford were going great guns now, and a misunderstanding between the Luton backs let in Green, whose shot Mitchell meant to fist out but only forced a corner over the bar. From the flag kick Mitchell came to the floor to save, and the danger was averted when he was fouled by three Watford forwards.

Everybody thought Luton's equaliser was coming next minute, Simms having worked nicely in and having only the goalkeeper to beat. His final shot was good, and it would have done the trick if Williams' judgment had been at fault, but it was not, and he caught the ball like a cricketer, and cleared. Waterall was away on his own again, but Elvey smartly turned the tables on him, and Heath robbed Ronald. It was in this way that Wileman got possession, but he was slow, and in a second the ball was again at the foot of Ronald, now strong on the right wing, and from his pass Edmonds brought Mitchell on to all fours with the best shot of the match so far. Mitchell managed to strike the ball wide of the upright, and in turn it was speeded towards the corner flag, from where Waterall banged it to the foot of Edmonds twenty yards out. The Watford centre was well alive to the opportunity, and he flashed the ball out of Mitchell's reach into the further corner of the net.

After this Luton took a hand in the game, but the shooting of their forwards was generally weak, Roberts especially doing badly with good centring opportunities. Once he had a grand chance after Rollinson had dribbled round to the right wing, but he was too high again. Then Simms began to fall away after Barnshaw cleverly beat him, but Wileman brightened things up with a stiff proposition that set Williams racing across his charge. The shot landed just outside the post, however.

By this time Elvey and Dunn had recovered their old form, and it was often because of their solid tackling and strong kicking that the Luton certificate was not marked again before the interval.

Half-time:—

Watford 2 goals

Luton nil

The second half opened almost sensationally, Fred Gregory describing a semi-circle 25 yards out and firing for the left of the net. Mitchell did not think the shot would be troublesome, but the degree to which it broke surprised everybody, and it glanced behind off the post. Watford continued to play with all the resource and dash of which they are capable, but at close range their shooting had rather gone off. Gradually, however, they got their shooting boots on again, and Edmonds weighed in with two fine shots that were just too high on the target.

From a corner that was quickly spun out of the Luton goal, Hear banged up the field to Simms, but with the backs momentarily at a loss Simms disappointed by doing feebly. Then Roberts tricked Stewart and shot low for the inside of the right post, but Williams was on the top of his form and he got across to the ball in time.

Luton were having hard lines, and when from a grand centre by Roberts Simms headed against the post, Luton's luck seemed to be out. Still, they remained dogged, and Rollinson promised great things when he passed the backs. He only put past, however. At the other end Ronald did even more feebly when better placed; in fact, he had the goal at his mercy from a likely angle, but he was very wide of the mark. From a free kick on the line Williams saved wonderfully from Roberts, and Hear, who got possession, was fouled by Val Gregory. There was a popular demand for a penalty, but the referee ignored it. Presently Hear was fetched down by Bulling. He instantly popped up to him, and as Bulling was just as spirited, the referee intervened, put his arms round the two players, and got them to shake hands.

Luton tried harder than ever, if it were possible, to change the register, but they were unable to do anything tangible, and the game ended as at the interval:—

Watford 2 goals

Luton nil