

BAD BREAKDOWN AT WATFORD.

It seemed quite like old times along the road between Luton and Watford on Good Friday, and the inhabitants of Harpenden and St. Albans were kept alive to the fact that the "Strawbatters" were engaged with their nearest rivals by the numerous bands of bedecked Lutonians making the journey from quite early morning. A couple of special trains were commissioned to accommodate those who desired to make the journey in style, and the actual attendance was a record in numbers and cash. There were over 13,000 present, and the takings amounted to £704.

The Luton team was doubtful up to the last minute, but finally was constituted as under for the start of the game:—Summers; Elvey and Dunn; Urwin Rutherford, and Parker; Hoar, Hill, Higginbotham, Dodd, and Bookman. Watford had a couple of changes from their regular team in H. F. Grimsdell at full back in place of F. Gregory, and Hoddinnott vice Ronald at inside-right, their side realising Williams; Horsman and Grimsdell; V. Gregory, Barnshaw, and Wilkinson; Bassett, Hoddinnott, Edmonds, White, and Waterall. Referee, Mr. G. A. Sharpe, Lichfield.

For a start the Luton defence was kept busy and Summers fielded the ball in good style on two or three occasions, but when the Luton right-wing got going they very soon had the home backs rattled, and with Dodd working finely on the opposite side of the field it was no great surprise to find the ball resting in the Watford net about twenty minutes from the start. Dodd had the honour of netting the first goal and although the donkey work was put in on the right-wing the goal was neatly scored, and the opening made was taken full advantage of by Luton's inside-left, who was making his first appearance since his failure in the Liverpool cup-tie. Within another ten minutes the 2,000 Lutonians present had cause to cheer when Higginbotham planted the ball well out of the reach of Williams after securing his opportunity through a slip between Grimsdell and Barnshaw. Before half-time a mere shade of good luck would have given Hill a further couple of goals, but he headed the first on the cross-bar with Williams out of goal and later headed over a fine centre from Hoar.

It was quite another story in the second half, for the Luton defence broke down badly, partly on account of Rutherford being unable to get about with his old injury reasserting itself. For a time he remained at centre-half, but the home attack was continually coming through. The score was equalised as a result of a couple of corners taken by Waterall, and in both cases Summers appeared at fault. Indeed, he seemed to pull the first one into the net himself. The hopes of Luton were raised a few minutes later when Higginbotham got the ball in the net at the opposite goal. The referee at first pointed for a goal, but was induced to consult his linesman and eventually penalised the Luton centre for handling. This was about the last occasion the visiting spectators had of a chance to cheer, for it was only a question as to whether the Luton backs could hold out. Rutherford took up the position of outside-right, and Hill dropped to right-half. Urwin and Hoar taking the position of the regular players. In the last ten minutes, however, Hoddinnott got through twice and Luton were well beaten, the final score being:—

Watford 4, Luton 2.

It was very disappointing after the half-time score, but the game was literally thrown away by mistakes in play and method. The successes for Luton were practically confined to Hill and Hoar, for Dodd went off in his play after the interval, and Bookman was practically starved. Parker was the pick of the Luton defence. Watford were well served in attack in the second half, and as a line their forwards were much better than Luton.