

QUITS!

At Luton on Monday.

LUTON TOWN 1 Goal.

WATFORD Nil.

LUTON TOWN: Bailey; Lennon, Tirrell; Molyneux, Parker, Lamb; Hoar, Higginbotham, Simms, Mathieson, Bookman.

WATFORD: Williams; Horsman, Slade; Carter, Toone, Wilkinson; Bassett, Smith, Hoddinott, White, Waterall.

Referee: Mr. F. J. Proctor, Stoke.

When we have said that Luton won and merited all they got, it is as fair a general summary of the game as we could offer. It was not a good game: not a nice game. So we cry quits. None could deny that the Town players had an equal share of misfortune in the matter of injury, for Tirrell's misfortune more than counterbalanced that of Slade, while Parker had not recovered from his accident on Friday, and only turned out because Roe was pronounced unfit. Then there was the absence of Butcher, and it is rather rough on the St. Albans lad that he should have missed the holiday games, especially the two games against Watford, in which, more than any other League matches, he desired to play. Higginbotham returned in place of Shankland, and so the side was composed as before Christmas. Watford had the team that won on Friday, and drew on Saturday at Norwich, and they felt pretty confident. They never rose to the level of their game on Good Friday, however, and they were more severely beaten on the run of the play than the score suggests. Neither in the middle line nor in the forward line was there as much ingenuity as on Friday, and the vanguard was very cold and lifeless compared with the earlier game. Luton certainly played much better than on Friday, but they quite failed to reproduce the form of Saturday.

The game was marred, too, by censurable incidents, and the referee found it incumbent to admonish several players, although, I imagine, he would have few champions on either side if he solicited the players' testimony. Luton should certainly have had more goals from the amount of pressure they waged. At times the struggle in the Watford goal area was fierce and protracted, but the defenders presented a compact and vigorous opposition to all onslaughts, and only once were beaten. That was midway through the second half, when MATHIESON, after hitting the post, scored with a great volley as the ball was on the rebound. Williams had no chance. He kept goal wonderfully well, and the defeat was no stain on his escutcheon. Once he was lucky to have a terrific drive from Simms rebound from his knee, but for the most part his work was achieved when the Town were at close quarters, and he never lost his nerve or his wit, and so he retired with only one against him.

One could not but admire the compactness of the Watford defence, and Horsman, in spite of his unpopularity with the crowd, did superlative work under difficult conditions, for after twenty minutes Slade went so lame that he had to change places with Waterall, the outside left. Apart from an occasional lack of self-command, Horsman did capital work, and the number of times he got the ball away from flag-kicks was extraordinary. Slade did quite well until hurt, and then Waterall filled the position with credit. Watford were weak at half, for while Toone was making a gallant watchdog over Simms, the Watford forwards were a very moderate attacking force—Hoddinott always excepted. He was ever a resourceful, thrustful general, and when he failed to get all he was entitled to from his colleagues, he tried single-handed dashes that nearly achieved success. Indeed, he was the most virile, if not the most successful forward on the field, and one glorious effort of his rattled the cross bar, and another just mounted that part of the framework.

He had not such wonderful control of the ball as Mathieson, who was the schemer of most of Luton's dangerous attacks. His mind and feet worked with concurrent subtlety, and Bookman was fed

delightfully, while on occasion the inside left would put Simms through with the daintiest possible touches after drawing the opposition. Mathieson has now got on the right lines, and, barring accidents, he will create an enormous amount of trouble for many defences. Bookman did not always make the best use of his opportunities, but he played better than for the last month, and got over some splendid centres. Simms was out of luck with his shooting, but paved the way for many strong attacks. Higginbotham was a long way from his old self, playing a quiet, unassertive sort of game, although he might have scored on two occasions had luck been with him. Sid Hoar was in capital form and made many sparkling runs and centres. He has come back to his best again.

The halves did fine work, Parker being the cleverer, but both his colleagues were very effective, and Molyneux continued his good form. Lamb fairly quietened Bassett and Smith, and was particularly good in defence after Tirrell got hurt. The 'Town captain's shoulder was badly damaged after ten minutes' play, and for the whole of the second half he played with his arm in a curious position. He performed like a hero, and George Lennon, as usual, gave of his very best when work was most exacting. Bailey had little to do, but did it well.