

Football Features.

BY "OLD CROCK."

WATFORD TAKE A POINT FROM LUTON.

For Saturday's match with Watford the Town Club directors considered it desirable to make provision for six rows of seating accommodation on the site of the old grandstand enclosure, but although the morning's threats of snow gave place to genial sunshine, there was a chilly north-easter in evidence, and the attendance cannot have gone much over the 7,000 mark. It was not exactly the crowd we have been accustomed to for Luton-Watford encounters, but if the old-time rivalry of the near neighbours was not reflected in the size of the attendance, it was in the bustling character of the exchanges—robust to a degree and yet permeated by real good spirit.

Watford made no changes and Luton only one, Walsh getting a run in place of Stephenson. Teams:—

Luton Town.—Bailey; Lennon, Tirrell; Walsh, Walker, Millar; Bassett, Higginbotham, Reid, Butcher, Hoar.

Watford.—Williams; Horsman, Gregory; Toone, Strain, Carter; Wallington, Smith, Pagnam, White, Savage.

Referee, Mr. J. G. A. Sharpe, Lichfield.

Although the exchanges favoured the Town there was from the start much more life in the Watford attack, and all the early scoring chances came their way. Seven minutes after the start White was gloriously placed from Wallington's centre and shot wide. Two minutes later Pagnam slipped Lennon and sent Smith through. Bailey started out, then appeared to think he might muddle the backs and stopped, giving himself no chance to prevent Smith scoring. Watford were shooting at every opportunity. Bailey had to push a centre from Savage round the post, and from the corner Carter slashed just outside the upright a shot that Bailey probably never saw. An even luckier escape came when White sent Smith through, and the latter shot from close in as Bailey prepared to spring and missed the mark when he seemed a certain scorer.

The rest of the half was not quite so exciting. Territorially the play ran strongly in Luton's favour, but big kicking by the backs effectually checked them from getting to close quarters. Finishing qualities were sadly wanting, and although Williams was kept pretty busy, it was mostly getting his two fists to centre high up over the 'forwards' heads. His charge was in nothing like the danger Bailey's was when a faulty clearance by Tirrell let Pagnam in. Beating Lennon the centre seemed a certain scorer, but Lennon recovered magnificently and using his weight shot Pagnam off the ball and cleared. Bailey also made a really fine save from Savage, in which his anticipation was praise-

Luton's first chance fell to Higginbotham from a forceful rush by the inside throw, but he was wide with a first time left footer. Six minutes before the interval he rushed through a crowd of players with the ball following a stoppage for injuries to Reid, opened up the game to the centre, and a delightful piece of repassing ended in Reid shooting just inside the post well out of Williams' reach.

Higginbotham continued in the limelight up to the change of ends, and was unlucky not to get the lead for his side. Remarkably clever in his dribbling he was once robbed just as he was in the act of shooting, and then he challenged three opponents and gave Williams an anxious time with a ground shot. Finally he dropped the ball into the goal-mouth from the wing, and Horsman, deceived by the bounce, had to handle to divert it for a corner. There was an instant appeal, and the referee's whistle was heard, but his hand pointed to the centre. He had whistled as the ball was in flight, and half-time robbed Luton of a penalty.

Watford had another lucky let off in the first three minutes of the second half. Hoar was fouled almost on the goal line just outside the penalty area, and from the free kick there were fully half a dozen shots rained in. Only one got by the barrier of defenders, and this one from Walker would probably have beaten Williams if Horsman had not been doing the Tirrell touch at the other end of the goal.

The Town were showing up vastly better against the Watford defenders, but were not so fast or thrustful as the opposing line, and Bailey must have breathed hard when White flashed a lovely shot inches wide, and Pagnam wound up a delightful piece of work by the right-wingers by shooting over the heads of the occupants of "Spion Kop." Just fifteen minutes had gone when Tirrell mis-kicked and gave Wallington a glorious chance. His shot looked a scorer, but Bailey with a magnificent leap turned it by the post. Savage's corner kick came across the goal through Bailey missing it. Tirrell at his post at the other end gathered the ball as if taken by surprise, and of course a penalty kick resulted. Pagnam took the kick, and his shot was the best he made during the game, but Bailey managed to hit it down, and following up effected a brilliant clearance.

The remainder of the game was of a ding-dong character. The Town did most of the attacking, but rarely did their shots find their way to Williams. Reid had the best chance from a centre by Bassett which dropped right in front and headed over. Right at the end Watford were mostly in the picture, and the home goal had narrow escapes from Pagnam and Savage. Result:

Luton 1, Watford 1.

Neither side were entitled to more or less than a draw. While the Luton forwards had most of the play, they were nothing like so well together or so dangerous as Watford's quintette. The visitors were quicker on the ball, and shot to much greater advantage, and if Williams had the most goal-keeping work, it was generally speaking not of such a testing character as Bailey's.

Higginbotham was both the bustle and brains of the Town attack. His skill in manoeuvring was outstanding, and his dash delightful. Bassett was not so effective as Hoor—Gregory had him weighed up and usually made him centre under difficulties. Reid has not played a better game this year, but was not so well supported by Bailey as usual. Reid distributed the ball with nice judgment, but was obviously over-weighted, and did not shine in shooting, apart from his goal.

Walker once more demonstrated how to reduce a centre forward with a name to the

point of ineffectiveness. Pagnam rarely got a look in, and yet the centre found ample time to give more support to his forwards than the other halves. Millar got through a difficult afternoon's work with credit, for Wallington could give him a start in speed. Walsh worked hard but was of little use to his forwards. The backs did not always kick to advantage, but their tackling was strong. Bailey's many fine saves counteracted any lack of judgment he showed in the emergency which gave Watford their only score.

Williams was characteristically safe and specacular, and received fine support from both his backs, Horsman's strong kicking being a notable feature. Toole and Strain were also splendid halves. Wallington's great speed made him a dangerous forward, and White and Smith were also great assets.