

WHACKED AT WATFORD.

Luton Town's Heaviest Defeat of the Season.

(By CRUSADER.)

WATFORD 1 Goals
LUTON TOWN 1 ..
WATFORD: Williams; Horsman, Gregory;
Toone, Strain, Carter; Wallington, Smith,
Pagnam, White, Wilkinson.
LUTON TOWN: Bailey; Lennon, Tirrell;
Foster, Walker, Roe; Bassett, Hoar, Reid,
Mathieson, Bookman.

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

Not for one moment would I deprive Watford of a tithe of the credit due to them. They were the better side, and once they had settled down and got a real grip of the game, they never looked anything but winners. They were bigger and better than the Luton team in nearly every respect, and on the run of the game the score does not unduly flatter them.

Having said so much, however, it may be freely stated that what luck there was, went their way. Their first goal was a gift from an opponent, but in the first place a corner should not have been awarded, as the ball was not over the line; their second was a really good point; their third was a gift from the referee, for the ball never went between the posts at all; their fourth was a good one; they were fortunate enough to escape a goal from a penalty kick; and one of the Watford backs admitted that he got away a shot from Bookman that was well across the line when Williams was beaten.

The opening exchanges favoured the Town, but after Watford had got a couple of goals there was no question as to the ultimate mastery. Indeed, in my opinion, it was Smith's excellent goal that

MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

to the home side. Previous thereto, the Watford halves had not shown any striking ability, but thence they were the dominating factor in the game, and Luton's trio was poor in comparison. The defences were good, but there was a higher degree of balance in the Watford side, more experience and coolness, and at times their work reached a high standard. It was not that the combination was exceptional, for the superiority lay more in the individual than in the collective sense.

The first goal came after 17 minutes' play. A corner kick that was disputed, was awarded, and Wilkinson placed the ball high close to the goal post. LENNON took a flying kick at the ball, but it skidded off his foot past the hapless Bailey.

Within five minutes, SMITH met a neat centre from Wilkinson that was just too high for Walker to head away, and, without hesitation, he hit the ball smartly past Bailey into the net. Gregory then handled in trying to clear a shot from Bassett, but Hoar, who took the kick, shot high and straight, and Williams had little difficulty in tipping the ball upwards on to the bar, whence it bounded over. The third goal was again the result of work by Wilkinson, who centred for PAGNAM to head in. Bailey stepped out and took the ball in his arms, but it bounced over his shoulder. He never turned round, but simply threw his arm back and swung the ball out. The Watford players appealed, and after a moment's hesitation, the referee pointed to the centre, much to

THE ASTONISHMENT

of the Town players. A Watford Pressman next to me agreed with my view that the ball could not have gone through, but another alleged that Bailey hit the ball on to the post and so it must have been through before he hooked it back. The "Pictorial" photographer, who was right on the spot, said that the ball never struck the post, that Bailey was well out of goal, and that the ball could not have been through. The referee was about twenty yards away, and, apparently, he did not follow the usual course of giving the defending side the doubt. The Town players were very sore about it.

The second half found Mathieson and Reid changing places, but there was no improvement, although the Town were not on the defensive for any length of time; when they had to defend it was against a strong and determined attack backed by splendid halves. It was Strain's clever work that enabled PAGNAM to score the fourth goal at close quarters, and then the Town made a gallant effort. Hoar had been the liveliest of the inside men, and it was due to him in the first instance that the goal came. After neat footwork he drove in a hard shot that hit the post and glanced out to Bookman, who hit it hard into goal. Williams fisted out in a hurry, but the ball was sent back, and REID met it on the run and crashed it into the net. Play quietened down after this, and in the closing stages was quite tame.

Watford, as I have already said, were the better team. Their defence was safer, their halves better, and their forwards cleverer and far better marksmen. If one should single out, Gregory, Toone, Strain, Smith, Pagnam, and Wilkinson were

THE BACKBONE OF THE TEAM.

The Town were a poor side on Saturday's showing, and it is not saying too much to say that they could never have reached their present position on the League table had this been an average performance. Bailey was quite blameless, and he made some brilliant saves. The outstanding player on the Town side was Tirrell, who was in his best form. He never made an error in kicking except the common fault of all the backs, and that was in overkicking the forwards. But he was always sure, and in tackling he seldom erred at close quarters. Lennon was as good as usual, until the misfortune of kicking through his own goal. After that he never seemed as sure of himself as usual. The halves were below their customary level, and the only man able to hold his opponent in check was Roe, for Wallington did not make half the show that he made at Luton the week before. Foster gave Wilkinson too much rope until the damage was done, and we never saw his best until late in the second half. Walker was not nearly so good as on the previous week, and Pagnam had a more profitable day. Of the forwards, Hoar and Bookman were the best of a moderate line. Mathieson started well, and some of his footwork was very neat, but he fell off, especially after changing places with Reid. Bassett was a trifle better than the previous week, but Reid was overweighted.

and beyond scoring the goal, did not do a lot. That goal, however, was a good one, and if he can make that an average he will settle down. Hookman contributed several nice runs, and centred well, but he got little help. Hoar was always working hard, and he certainly showed possibilities, but Higginbotham was badly missed.

The game, which was witnessed by 10,000 people, was not so pleasantly contested as the meeting at Lejon.