

HEAVY DEFEAT AT WATFORD.

Only exaggerated enthusiasm would allow any one of the numerous band of supporters that went to Watford last Saturday to give the Town credit for deserving to do other than lose. Only a blind partisan of the Herts club would say that the Town deserved to have four goals chalked against them. They were by no means a good side, and for pace and general smartness as a team they did not compare at all well with Watford.

The Herts team, it was generally admitted, played one of their best games of the season, and even allowing for the element of luck that entered into the game and appeared to fall all on their side, they were unquestionably the better side—more finished in every department.

Watford's display convinced me of this—that if they can keep these players together for next season, then they will have a bigger voice in settling the question of promotion than Luton Town have had this season, for they will be very near the top. Considering the troubles the Herts club had to face at the beginning of the season, they have made a magnificent recovery, and if this is the result of the engagement of a manager, then it would be a good thing for Luton. A manager of players, I mean—not a secretary or a trainer, for we should find it very difficult to improve on the two latter at Luton. I believe I am correct in saying that Watford owe to Manager Kent their possession of all the half-backs, their right wing and their extreme left, of Saturday's team. He is an asset to the club.

Youth and experience are judiciously blended in Watford's side, and there is not a little or unskilful player in the team. Only for the first quarter-of-an-hour were the Luton players equal. Thereafter they took a second place—as a team. It was to be expected that Watford would give of their best. They usually do against the Town, but their performance in this instance was as good as anything the Town have run up against this season. They were fortunate in taking the lead, for LENNON put through his own goal in an attempt to clear an awkward ball that came as a flag-kick from Wilkinson. And, be it noted, the award of a corner-kick was disputed by the Town team. SMITH's goal immediately afterwards was from Wilkinson's centre, a beautiful first-time shot by SMITH beating Bailey's gallant effort to save. Then Hoar failed to beat Williams with a penalty kick, the goalkeeper tipping over the top a ball that was perfectly straight, although fast. The third goal was credited to PAGNAM, who headed a centre by Wilkinson, but it should never have been allowed because the ball did not cross the goal-line. Of that I am quite as convinced as Bailey and his colleagues. With such a deficit at the interval the Town were in a hopeless position, yet they restarted well, and with a little good luck might have reduced the arrears. The fourth goal fell to Watford, Strain dribbling well before giving PAGNAM an easy chance almost under the bar. Then came Luton's solitary goal. Hoar did the greater part of the work and hit the post with a splendid drive. Bookman seized the rebound and shot hard for Williams to save, and then REID got hold and shot hard into the net.

Bailey kept goal magnificently, and luck was dead against him. On half-a-dozen occasions he made superb saves, notably from Pagnam and Smith. Tirrell was the big man in defence, and did capital work all through. Lennon suffered because Wilkinson was left to himself too much. The halves were not on their best form, not one reaching that state, although Roe was successful as a spoiler. Of the forwards Hoar was easily the best, and Bookman did good work when he got the chance. Reid found the opposition too big. Bassett that they know him too well, although he did better than in the match at Luton, and Mathieson, although a trier, deteriorated after a promising start.

Of Watford's team Gregory was the better back, Toone the pick of a strong middle line, and Wilkinson, Pagnam and Smith showed up most in the forward line.

WATFORD 4 Goals

LUTON TOWN 1 ..

WATFORD.—Williams; Horrman, Gregory; Toone, Strain, Carter; Wallington, Smith, Pagnam, White, Wilkinson.

LUTON TOWN.—Bailey; Lennon, Tirrell; Foster, Walker, Roe; Bassett, Hoar, Reid, Mathieson, Bookman.