

ANOTHER FALL.

WATFORD'S LUCKY VICTORY AT LUTON.

(By "CRUSADER.")

WATFORD	1 Goal
LUTON TOWN	Nil

LUTON TOWN.—Gibbon; Lennon, Tirrell; Foster, Walker, Jennings; Reader, Higginbotham, Thompson, Butcher, Clarkson.

WATFORD.—Williams; Horsman, Gregory; Toona, Strain, Carter; Stephenson, Smith, Pagnam, White, Mummery.

Referee: Mr. F. Dawson.

On Saturday afternoon I left the ground in the company of a stranger who vouchsafed the information that he was 56 years old and that he had never seen a football match in his life until that afternoon. And then he went on to pick out the men whom he thought had played well. His summary was that Watford were lucky to win, but that they had a good goalkeeper, a fine right back, a clever and clean bald-headed player (Carter, at half-back), but he did not think much of their forwards. Luton had two good backs and three strong half-backs, but they had only one good forward, and that was "the little man who kept running round the others." He could not understand the penalty kick, and he did not know why some of the "black and whites" could use their hands and Luton men could not.

For one who had never seen a football match before, that was a pretty good summary. I do not know that I can improve on it very much, and I have been watching football for half my life-time. Very few people with any knowledge of the laws of the game would agree with the award of the penalty, for while admitting that Pagnam was partially "sandwiched," it was a case of three men going for the ball at the same time, and I doubt if Walker or Jennings saw each other—they simply

WENT FOR THE BALL,

and Pagnam went down between them. The decision, however, was on a par with the general quality of the official control. Anyway, it was a most unsatisfactory end to a game that had been very much in favour of Luton on the balance of play, and which they would have won comfortably had the forwards risen to the occasion. Even the most enthusiastic of Watford's supporters

would agree with that. We found that Watford's vanguard was very moderate when Pagnam was held in subjection, and he was so cleverly thwarted by Walker and the Town backs that he only had one really good chance, and on that occasion Gibbon brought off a smart save. What the Watford centre-for-



R. Reader

ward would have done with the chance that fell to Smith, the best chance of the match. It was, Gibbon must tremble to think. Smith was dead in front with only the keeper to beat, but he sent high over. Luton had chances more frequently and almost as good, and they were unable to beat Williams, who gave his usual daring display, and it was his work in the first place that gave Watford victory, for he prevented three goals at least when the Town seemed certain to score. It was a funny sort of game. There was little to complain about in the first half, but afterwards there were

HECTIC MOMENTS.

when limbs were the mark rather than the ball, but, curiously enough, the hacking and ankle-tapping would suddenly be dropped and the players would get at it fairly and squarely for five minutes before there was another scene.

Luton had much more of the ball, and they made ground faster and so kept the visiting defenders more on the run, but they lacked finishing power, and it was exasperating to see them advance successfully into the Watford goal area and then come unstuck. Too much praise cannot be lavished on the Watford defence for their great struggle. They did not always do the right thing, but someone was seen to slip into the breach at the right moment and frustrate the designs of the home forwards. Williams, of whom there was some talk of retirement last season, can keep goal with the best, and in courage, agility, and judgment, he was very fine. Horsman will never be a polished back, but he was the purser of the pair, and got through a lot more work. He is

NOT ALWAYS FAIR

In his methods, but he gets there. Gregory has lost speed, but is still a judicious defender. Carter was the cleverest half-back, and his feeding was splendid. Strain and Toone also did well. The forwards did not shine a lot. Smith was the most active, but the line was not as good as in the previous game.

Gibbon had a soft time, and both his backs were on good behaviour. Some doubt was expressed regarding Leeson's knee, but it stood the strain all right, and he came out with colours flying. So did Tirrell, and his judgment was superb.

The halves played strong forcing football, and a better defensive trio it would be hard to find. They broke up Watford's combina-

ation by sheer speed and dash, and the crack men, Pagnam and Stephenson, got few chances to shine. The old fault of keeping the ball up in the air was manifest, however, and that will have to be eradicated before our forwards do well.

The front rank seldom got moving as a body. Butcher showed capital footwork, and was the chief source of trouble to the Watford defence, and he also came nearest to scoring, for although Williams twice saved from him when Butcher should have scored, one shot in the second half grazed the upright when Williams was well beaten. He fed Clarkson well, too, but the latter hung on too long, and did not get the ball over so nicely as usual. On the other flank, Reader and Higginbotham started well, and raised our hopes, but they were not nearly so good in the second half. Thompson seemed to be dead off form, but had hard luck when he burst through once and seemed certain to score, but Williams made a great save. As a line, there was a lack of understanding, and this is the main cause of most of our defeats.