

LUTON'S GREAT VICTORY

WATFORD CRUSHED IN RETURN LEAGUE ENCOUNTER.

TRIUMPH OF TEAM WORK.

(By "CRUSADER.")

LUTON TOWN 5
WATFORD 0

LUTON.—Purdy; Graham, Till; Richards, Neal, Millar; Moffat, Thomson, Thompson, Agnew, Dennis.

WATFORD.—Williams; Slade, Gregory; Smith (F.); Smith (E.); Strain; Stephenson, Bell, Pagnam, Swan, Harris.

Referee: G. T. Gould, London.

Right in the crush and good-humoured hustle of the crowd leaving the Town ground on Saturday, I was amused to hear the banter passing between the Luton and Watford partisans. The Lutonians were living again the joyful moments of the game: the visitors were manfully striving to forget it by reminders of how Watford had excelled during the last five years. Near midnight I was coming along George-street when two young men held me up and asked the way to a certain place where they could be lodged for the night. They were well dressed and as respectable as young men can be who have imbibed not wisely, but too well. I asked whence they came, and what they were doing in a strange town at that hour, and eventually gathered from their maudlin and half incoherent apologies that they wanted to stay in a town where there was a football team.

Apparently they had come from Watford, and had sought to lose touch with the match by drowning their

SORROWFUL EXPERIENCE.

Never have a Watford contingent suffered such disillusionment, and I doubt if a Watford team have been so heavily and thoroughly thrashed. The score did not fully represent the superiority of the Town. Fore and aft they were the more virile and skilful side, and to those who have not seen them of late, their play was nothing short of a revelation. Had they taken even easier chances than they accepted, they would have been one rung nearer the top of the League ladder, for the goal average would have shown at least an equality, if not a slight credit balance.

At the outset Watford had the advantage of a strong breeze which now and then swept a keen rain into the faces of the Town players, and this handicap, together with the excitement all the players seemed to feel, gave one the impression that Watford were again to make the Town look moderate or something below that state. We are getting used to the Town making

AN INDIFFERENT START

and then steadily improving until opponents are on the verge of a debacle. It was so on Saturday, and I wondered what would have happened had Jim Thompson and Moffat taken the easy openings available—a result of the good work of Thompson himself. There is usually a bigger percentage of chances missed than accepted, and I was disposed to lament the poor marksmanship of the Town forwards, but it is always wise to respect a policeman's "Don't!" An officer of the law discussing the match gave that advice, and so I leave the deficiency and dwell upon the merit of the Town's play.

Once they had a grip of the game, which came long before they scored, the Town were always potential winners. I concurred with the referee's opinion as he declined the loud appeal for a penalty when Slade's hand got in the way of a hot drive. The Watford back did not handle the ball struck him, but I thought he was in fear of a penalty, and was pleased the linesman endorsed

THE REFEREE'S VIEW.

More open to question, however, was the decision negating the appeal for a goal when Williams stepped right back behind the sawdust to take a shot from Neal, but again the linesman was just. The referee was unsighted, but the linesman was not, and rightly gave the visitors the benefit of the doubt. Just afterwards Slade had to retire for repairs, and in his absence Watford's goal fell. He returned as it came.

No more than their due was the Town's first goal. Williams had saved some teasing shots when Moffat centred from near the corner flag. The wind appeared to hold the ball for a fraction of a second ere twisting it under the bar. Williams fluted out by a big effort, but could not get the ball away, and DENNIS shot into the net. From that point the Town never looked back. The backs and halves held up the traffic splendidly, and fed the tide that was ever threatening Williams' property. When the goal came the honour of scoring belonged to Agnew, but the opening was evolved by Norrie Thomson. The latter had been doing

MUCH CLEVER WORK.

but sometimes lost the ball through deliberation. On this occasion, however, his skill was superb. He cajoled E. Smith and Gregory into false positions, and then deftly passed to AGNEW, who coolly positioned and then drove the ball low, fast and true into the net, right away from Williams. Watford strove hard to retrieve lost ground before the whistle, but were repelled and went to the wash-and-brush-up department with the score:—

LUTON TOWN 2
WATFORD 0

Watford's best came immediately after the restart. They worked very hard indeed, and with no small degree of skill, but after Purdy had cleverly saved a great shot from Stephenson, the Town soon began to entertain Williams. On the few occasions the Watford inside forwards were dangerous, Pagnam invariably found his passage blocked when he wanted to shoot, and he had to be content with one drive from a free kick outside the penalty area. A grand shot

SKINNED THE BAR.

but Purdy was directly underneath it. The tactics of the Town forwards and halves had the visitors guessing, and even Fred Gregory had to resort to infringements to hold Norrie Thomson. Jim Thompson was keeping well up and harassing the backs, and when he stepped in

between E. Smith and Gregory and took the ball as it came from Millar, he went through in rugged fashion. Foiled of an opening, he transferred to Moffat, and the latter had an easy chance, but tried to break the net, and the ball struck the bar and rebounded. The goal was not long delayed, however, for Norrie Thomson compelled Strain to pass back to Gregory. Jim Thompson slipped in, got the ball and made a bee line for goal. He had Agnew on his left, and by clever passing they went clean through, and at close quarters THOMPSON shot past Williams. Watford were then a beaten side, and the air was still holding the joy of the Town supporters when Norrie THOMPSON began to thread a passage in and out of the way of opponents. Although

HIS HEELS WERE TAPPED

two or three times, he got almost under the bar before hitting the ball past Williams for the fourth time. Shortly afterwards another run by Jim Thompson, which appeared to be started from an offside position, took him into the goal area, but, trying to place the ball safely away from Williams, he sent it wide. The Town were winning, however, and five or six minutes before the end AGNEW took a pass from Dennis, slipped past Slade, and then shot hard into the net, Williams having not the ghost of a chance to save.

Thus ended a memorable game for the Town. They deserved all they got, and played together so well that it is difficult to praise one player more than another. Purdy had only two really difficult shots to stop, so finely did Graham and Till thwart the intentions of the visitors when they had overcome the home middle men. Both kicked strongly and tackled well and cleanly. The halves played grand football. Millar completely overshadowed Stephenson, who has seldom had such

A BAD TIME.

Neal improves with every game. He kept the ball on the ground remarkably well, and set his wings going splendidly. Richards was out of place occasionally in the first half, when he endeavoured to assist Neal, but his enthusiasm and strength, added to a wise use of his right wing, were potent factors in frustrating attack and maintaining the Town's offensive. In the second half he got a severe blow that gashed his head, but none knew it from his play, and how dazed he was may be guessed from the fact that he did not know until some time after the game how the score read or who had got the goals after the interval.

The forward work was equally good. Before the game certain critics of Norman Thomson were contending that he was not virile enough for such a game. What they thought afterwards I do not know, but if they want to see football they will assuredly agree that his intelligence and artistry are indispensable. There were occasions when he failed to realise he was in English football, and was surprised to be deprived of the ball, but for

BALL MASTERY

and precision of pass he has not been excelled by an inside forward I have seen in the Town colours, with the exception, perhaps of Mathieson at his best. Moffat and Jim Thompson will swear by him, I am sure, and time and again he initiated attacks that should have borne fruit. Moffat responded well, but was inclined now and then to shoot from awkward angles instead of passing. He gave Strain and Gregory a heap of trouble, however, and his passes found Jim Thompson well placed. I was glad to see the latter use his right foot a little more, and it is a good augury for the future. May he keep it up. Agnew was a great worker, and he and Dennis are making a splendid wing — fast, thoughtful and strong, each possessing a capital shot in his boots.

The best feature of the game, however, was

THE TEAM COMBINATION.

They were always together, working to one end, and that was achieved five times.

Reg. Williams was as good as ever. He had not the slightest chance with any goal against him. Gregory has not been so completely taken off his game in any Luton struggle, and Slade was the better back. At half Strain showed control that placed him well above his colleagues, but not one of the three could satisfactorily bar the way to the Town attack. The best work came from Pagnam, who vainly strove to open out the game, and was playing hard and well at the end. Swan was clever; and Harris looks like making a fine winger, but the right wing, though working hard, achieved little.

This report would be incomplete without tribute to the referee and the linesman. I was sorry to hear spectators howling at one of the latter, for he only did his duty. Mr. Gould was very good, keeping a strong hand on the players, but not intruding unnecessarily.

There were about 7,000 spectators, a good attendance considering the inclement weather.

LETCWORTH TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 30th.

LETCWORTH TOWN
v.
WEST HAM UNITED

RESERVES

(Full London Combination team)

KICK-OFF 3 p.m.

**ON THE TOWN GROUND, BALDOCK ROAD,
LETCWORTH.**

Admission: Adults 6d.; Boys (under 14), Half-price. Stand 6d. Extra.