

PICKING UP POINTS.

LUTON DEFEAT WATFORD AND GILLINGHAM.

By Crusader.

At Watford, on Saturday:

LUTON TOWN 4

WATFORD 0

LUTON.—Harford: Kingham, Richards;

Black, Fulton, Fraser; Daly, Yardley,

Rennie, Woods, Bedford.

WATFORD.—Smith; Prior, Paton; War-

ner, McBain, Woodward; Holland, Barnett,

McPherson, Shepherd, Daniels.

Referee.—Mr. P. G. Reed, West Bromwich.

At Luton, on Monday:

LUTON TOWN 2

GILLINGHAM 0

LUTON.—Harford: Kingham, Richards;

Fulton, Morgan, Fraser; Daly, Yardley,

Rennie, Woods, Bedford.

GILLINGHAM.—Smith; Bartley, Wilson;

Ellis, Beaman, Bishop; Whyte, Cheesman,

Castle, Doves, Gore.

Referee.—Mr. E. C. Carnwell, Lichfield.

SOMEONE suggested a fortnight ago that

Luton Town would be an "away"

team this season, and there appears to be

some justification for that assumption.

They have played three games away and

have not been beaten, the one defeat being

that at home, when Southend did the

trick. After the disappointments over the

home games with Norwich and Southend,

the Town's remarkable success at Wat-

ford on Saturday was nothing short of

extraordinary, and while far from sug-

gesting that it was achieved in a fashion

that satisfied everybody at Luton, it was

undoubtedly a notable performance, and

did much to revive the pessimists who

had swooned after the Southend disaster.

To say that scant justice was done to

the Town in the reports broadcast from

Watford is to put it very mildly. Such

utterly absurd statements as "four shots

and four goals," and "five chances and

four goals," do not commend the writers

to the 4,000 followers of Luton who visited

Watford, and the attempts to belittle the

Town's feat especially after so many

years, would be annoying were they not

farcical. The Town merited their success

because they finished better, and because

their defence limited the chances of the

Watford team. The Town were better at

both ends of the field, and that is where

games are won.

No one at Luton pretends that the team

is playing ideal football; the players are

not well together, and much improvement

will be required at half-back and forward

if a real promotion fight is to be waged,

but they had nothing to learn from Wat-

ford in the matter of clean play, and the

fact that they produced a more effective

game than the tip-tap-toe tactics of Wat-

ford's expensive contingent does not mini-

mize the value of the achievement. Watford

have had a phenomenal run 'of luck in

their games with Luton, and it is pettish

to show pique because of an unexpected

set-back. When Watford come to Luton,

whether they win or lose, we will try to

give them some meed of praise.

Monday night's game with Gillingham

was a somewhat patchy affair after the

excitement of Saturday. The Town had

to fight hard all the time, for Gillingham

played with great persistence and pluck,

as becomes young players. At times the

game was too strenuously fought, and

the referee could seldom have whistled so

often against players for persistent elbow-

ing and pushing as against the Gillingham

players. This team, however, will do well,

and when the edge is taken off the temper

of one or two, their play will be all the

better. The Town rearoused had plenty

to do, and the work of this department in

both games has won high praise.

Harford is a real acquisition, and is a

certainly for the position on this form,

while Kingham is a really high-class de-

fender, speedy and judicious in tackling

and sure in his kicking, though he needs

to get the ball away at a better trajectory

—the skimming shot that can be collected

by the forwards without having to wait

for it to drop from the clouds. Richards

is playing right at the top of his form;

better than ever, I think, and if he is

going to show improvement when the

grounds are softer we have little need to

fear for the rear.

Black was injured early at Watford, and

unable to play on Monday. Daly did use-

ful work in his place on Saturday, and

Fulton, moved from centre-half on Mon-

day, was as whole-hearted and serviceable

as could be expected. So far, Fulton has

shared in every bonus the Town have paid

to the players, for he has never been on

the losing side, having been twelfth man

when not playing. He worked very hard

on Saturday, and on Monday I thought he

showed promise as a flank half. Fraser

played magnificently in both games, and

his tireless and relentless play has been

invaluable. Morgan returned unexpectedly

to the team on Monday night. To my

mind he is not yet as fit as he can be,

but I like his style, and if the forwards

will "fall to it," then there will be easier

times for the defence, and more goals.

No player can keep the ball down better,

and the absence of "rough stuff" is no

discount from his ability. I am content

to echo the opinion of old players: wait

till the football weather comes along.

The forwards are the most disappointing

part of the team. Rennie has certainly

advanced as a leader; his distribution is

as near perfection as that of any leader

Luton has had in my day, and none has

equalled him as a marksman. Unfortu-

nately he is not getting the response he

deserves. The line does not weld well. If

Harry Woods had his speed of ten years

ago, there would be no holding the two

of them, but Harry does not conserve his

energy, and is doing a lot of fetching and

carrying that belongs to middle men.

Yardley works with all his might, but he

also stays in the rear, and I wish he

would keep in his mind that when he

keeps on the premises with Rennie goals

come. Daly did not do so well on Monday

night as in previous games, but is all

right; on the contrary, Bedford is nothing

like the dangerous winner of last season.

The number of goals Rennie obtained by

co-operation with the wingers last season

was considerable, and they have only to

serve him the same to see the serial

continued.

AT WATFORD.

THE main feature of the Town's great

victory at Watford was the

brilliant defence of Kingham, Richards

and Harford, for although Rennie did the

hat-trick, the greater burden fell upon

the rearguard in the first half. So well

did these three defend, however, that the

home forwards did not have so many

openings as the Town. Very few good

chances came the way of the Watford

attack, and they could not be accused

of missing a lot of openings. The Town

forwards, indeed, missed far more

chances, the reason being that the Town

played the more open game in attack,

and their rearguard was so compact that

McPherson and his colleagues never got

an easy opportunity.

Woods once, Daly twice, and Rennie

might have scored in the first half-hour,

and Smith still have been blameless,

while once Bedford had the misfortune

to see a sharp first-time shot deflected

by a defender. On the other hand, when

the home forwards aimed for the target

they had to do so from fairly long

range, for when the ball hovered in the

Town goal-mouth the height of Kingham

and Richards, as well as the skilful

positioning of Harford, were supreme.

And Harford had some difficult work to

negotiate, but the protection he received

counted for a great deal, and the defence

deserved the plaudits of the crowd when

they retired with their sheet clean.

Time after time the Watford forwards,

by clever midfield play, in which the

inside forwards and McBain shone by

reason of their combination, opened a

way to the Luton end, but every inch

of the ground was sternly contested, and

with Harford making brilliant saves

when good shots by McPherson, Sheppard

and Daniels were put in, it was not sur-

prising that the home forwards lost heart

to some extent. There was a different

state of things at the other end, for while

the Town forwards did not show the same

nattiness in outwitting the home halves,

the Watford backs wobbled badly, and

the Town often got clean past them.

Rennie smartly paved the way for the

first goal, for after receiving when

ringed by opponents, he contrived to slip

the ball through for YARDLEY to take

it in his stride, dart through the gap

allowed by Prior and Paton, and Smith

was beaten by a fast shot all along the

ground. This was seven minutes before

the change of ends, and three minutes

after the hand-shaking Prior, in spite

of using his hands, failed to gather the

ball, with the result that RENNIE darted

past him and quickly beat Smith with a

perfectly placed shot. The Town thus

crossed over with a substantial lead.

LUTON 2

WATFORD 0

Another characteristic bit of oppor-

tunism placed the Town further ahead

fifteen seconds after the resumption.

Fraser originated the movement, for he

speedily tackled Barnett when that

youngster was endeavouring to pass to

Holland. He passed to Woods, the Town

skipper lifted the ball forward, Prior

was dispossessed while trying to control

it, and RENNIE dashed round him and

crashed in a fast left foot drive that

entered the net right away from the

hapless Smith. It was a crushing blow,

and, if they needed it, further spurred

the Town to the task that remained.

It was refreshing to see the methods

of the Town were such as to give the

home team the least encouragement. The

ball was kept in play well, but received

plenty of boot, and no time was lost

by halves and backs in getting it away

from the danger zone. Nevertheless,

Watford made desperate attempts, the

midfield play often being attractive, but

try as they would they could not pene-

trate. Their wingers occasionally broke

through, but the shooting element were

thwarted consistently by the stout-hearted

back. With Harford in great form, the

The spectators will not readily forget

two drives from Sheppard and one from

McBain, all of which were saved at full

length by Harford diving across goal.

They were brilliant examples of agility

and anticipation, and served to inspirit

his colleagues. With the Town forwards

always on the look-out for a burst, and

the home backs very shaky whenever

Rennie got possession, the Watford crowd

gradually lost their interest, and in the

last twenty minutes the Town had the

better of the general play, too. The

climax came when RENNIE got the fourth

goal, Fraser made a lot of ground, and

then sent the ball into the goal-mouth,

where the bounce beat Paton, and the

Town centre-forward ran round him and

coolly directed the ball into the net —

again right away from Smith.

The closing stages were not uninterest-

ing, for either goal might have fallen,

but whereas the Town goal remained

intact because of the relentless work of

the defenders, the Watford goal escaped

because the Town forwards were not

disposed to waste energy or take a lot of

risk. This was wise in view of the

engagement of Monday night, and