

WATFORD HUMBLED

LUTON MAINTAIN WINNING SEQUENCE

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN put the seal of merit upon their performances by a splendid victory at Watford. The forebodings that they would fall, because they could not expect to continue their sequence beyond expectations were nullified: the team rose to the occasion, and, by brilliant all-round team-work gradually mastered their rivals, and left the field with the honours as well as with the spoils.

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CONSIDERING the state of the going, it was a very good game, and the pace was maintained for an hour, with the Town showing the more co-operative effort, and being far more dangerous. Moreover, it was a clean game, and, though there were a few fouls due to excitement and enthusiasm, it was probable that the referee was as excited as the players, and made as many mistakes.

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CROMPTON started the Town on the way to success by a magnificent goal after six minutes. Roberts gave a beautiful pass, slanting the ball cleverly between two opponents for Crompton to cut in from the wing, steady himself, and, when everybody thought he would pass, he sent in a grand shot which had McLaren beaten all the way.

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THIS was the only score of the first half, though each goal was attacked hotly, and there were one or two narrow escapes. Generally the Town were the aggressors, and McLaren was tested many times, while his backs and Woodward were often fighting gallantly to keep out the Luton forwards, who were infinitely more dangerous in front of goal, for they did not hesitate to shoot. Coen had several calls, but usually had plenty of time in which to deal with the calls.

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SECOND HALF play was even more in favour of the Town, and they pressed for long periods, and only the skill of McLaren prevented each of the forwards scoring. The home halves could not settle on a method to hold the manoeuvres of the Town forwards, who distributed the ball well, and, with Ball leading the line better than ever, and all the forwards and the halves shooting accurately, the balance of play was with the visitors.

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RAIDS by Watford were very neatly executed, with Jones the most assertive of the five, but they rarely had an opportunity to test Coen, and nearly all the thrills were at McLaren's end. It was twenty-five minutes after the interval that Roberts had the reward for persistent shooting, and the right wing and Ball made the chance. Crompton centred for Ball to nod the ball to ROBERTS, whose first-time shot flashed hard and true past McLaren.

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WATFORD were forced to defend strenuously, and the third goal was scored six minutes from time. There had been many more menacing assaults, and it was a surprise goal. Stephenson raced on until close to the flag, and then got across a wonderful centre; McLaren, Woodward, and BALL all went for the ball, and the latter beat both opponents, and headed it over the goalkeeper's head, and it was well over the line when one of the defenders seized it with both hands, but the referee had no need to give a penalty: he had seen that the ball was through.

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WATFORD had by no means given up the ghost, and the Town paid the penalty of momentary slackness for which there was hardly any excuse. With the defenders drawn out of position, the ball was swung across, and LANE accepted and beat Coen with a very nice, low shot. There was some appeal by the Town players, but it was difficult to ascertain what it was about. In any event, they should have played to the whistle.

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SUCH a tonic was this that Watford swept through again, and, to the sheer astonishment of everybody, the referee awarded a penalty against Mackey for



J. NELSON

what was undoubtedly a very fair charge on Jones. Findlay took the kick, but sent wide, and that was the last hope of the home side. The Town took no more chances, and they were never extended again.

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FORE and aft the Town played match-winning football. Coen was safe always, and there was no flaw at all in his work. Mackey once more played a great game, and, apart from one miskick, from which he made a grand recovery, there was nothing wrong with his play. He was unlucky to have a penalty given against him for a fair charge, and another free kick for a similar charge. Smith was not so good as usual, appearing to play with less confidence, and he did not go into the tackle with his customary celerity.

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NELSON put up a wonderful game at half, his very best to date. He gave Walters no chance, and also commanded the other inside forwards when they broke through. His colleagues, Finlayson and Fellowes, were also at their best, and the work of the line was one of the biggest factors in the victory. The trio formed a connective link between attack and rear, and the work all round was excellent.

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FORWARD play was back to the high standard of last season. Ball's activities were a great trouble to the Watford rear-guard in spite of the very close attentions Woodward paid him, and it was good to see his zeal rewarded. His mates responded well; Martin's scheming and Roberts's hot shooting were valuable, while the wing play of Crompton and Stephenson was equal to anything we have seen for two or three seasons.

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WATFORD'S trouble was their lack of unity. Forwards and halves were capable of fast and clever work, and some of their passing at top speed was remarkably good, but the ball was often held too close against assertive defenders. Jones was the best of the forwards, and showed splendid control and speed. At half, Woodward played heroically, and Brown was as good as ever he has been, kicking strongly and tackling well. McLaren was the hardest taxed man of the side, and he gave a very fine exhibiton.

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LUTON TOWN 3
(Crompton, Roberts, Ball)

WATFORD 1
(Lane)

WATFORD.— McLaren; Brown, Lewis (J.); Findlay, Woodward, Davies (T.); Jones, Davies (W.) Walters, Lane, Wright.
LUTON TOWN.—Coen; Mackey, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Crompton, Martin, Ball, Roberts, Stephenson.
Referee.—L. Boulstridge, Tamworth.