

GOAL-MAKER PAYNE

Luton Leader Made Win Possible at Watford

By W. W. BOUCHIER

WATFORD 1 LUTON TOWN 3 (Attendance 27,461—Ground Record)

PAYNE'S value to Luton was never better illustrated than in the game at Watford, which had so vital a bearing on the promotion question.

LUTON FORM SUGGESTED PROMOTION

By FRANK BUTLER

Watford 1, Luton Town 3.

A SMASHED turnstile, broken crush-barriers, two collapsed sheds and nearly 100 minor casualties. That was the damage reported to Neil McBain, Watford manager, after this record-smashing match.

Despite this and the fact that Watford were beaten Mr. McBain could afford to smile. After all, the ground record had been eclipsed by some 4,000 and the receipts record had been passed by £400.

The scenes that preceded this match were worthy of a Cup tie. The gates had to be closed after 27,461 fans had passed through. Some of the 10,000 who journeyed from Luton were among the disappointed who had to content themselves with climbing on sheds opposite the ground and getting glimpses of the game.

What a great, clean match! Luton well deserved their victory. Watford had fifteen glorious opening minutes before fading away. Strangely Watford had two goals scored against them while they were playing at their best.

Luton looked a good promotion proposition to me. They did not reveal any of that laziness, that suggested staleness, shown at Reading some days ago. Payne is a great centre forward, because he realises the value of variety. A centre half never knows what he is going to do next.

HOW THEY SCORED

Watford were not disgraced. Fletcher began well, but later found Nelson too good for him. Left-winger Hurst had the beating of Mackey, but his partner Davies had a poor match. Armstrong and Reed were pretty good half-backs.

Payne headed the first goal after six minutes from Stephenson's corner-kick. Direct from the kick-off Fletcher equalised. Dawes scored Luton's second after fifteen minutes. Stephenson gave him the pass.

Twelve minutes of the second half and Payne made a glorious opening for Roberts to finish Watford's hopes. Referee I. H. W. Wright (Derby) blew his whistle for time seven minutes too early. Linesmen soon put him right though.

As far as actual attacking movements went, Watford had by far the greater part of the play, but there was a vast difference in the incisiveness of the forwards, due chiefly to the way Payne held the Luton line together and made it an effective striking force.

He got his usual goal from a perfectly placed corner kick by Stephenson, and had a hand in the other two. The third took Watford completely by surprise, because when defenders moved to block an expected shot he coolly flicked the ball to an unmarked Roberts, who scored.

Dawes got the other goal to finish off a brilliant move begun by Hancock, one of the big men of the match, and carried on by Payne and Stephenson, who, taking the match as a whole, was not as effective as usual. O'Brien kept a close watch on the outside left.

BARNETT'S EFFORT

The thrills came in the first half, and the biggest was when Barnett broke clear and made a goal for Fletcher, with a grand centre, within half a minute of Payne having given Luton the lead.

Up to that point the Luton defence had been shaky. Afterwards they got into their stride, and, with Nelson setting them a fine example in the way he held up the centre, they played strongly.

At the same time, Watford often had them so badly rattled that in one hectic spell they were thankful to concede six corner-kicks in succession.

The home defence was not quite so effective, and their half-backs did not give the forwards the same support as Fellowes and Finlayson afforded the Luton five.

Watford had the enthusiasm and the pace, and Luton the cooler craft and superior combination, yet, taken as a whole, it was not a good match as measured by football science. Luton well deserved their win, and in the second half were definitely superior, chiefly by reason of their better positioning.

Watford missed several possible goals because men were not up when Barnett, their most effective schemer, sent centres flashing across the goal-mouth.

Watford.—McLaren; O'Brien, Woodward; Morgan, Armstrong, Reed; Jones, Barnett, Fletcher, Davies (W.), Hurst.

Luton Town.—Dolman; Mackey, Smith; Finlayson, Nelson, Fellowes; Hancock, Dawes, Payne, Roberts, Stephenson.