

FOOTBALL.

LUTON AND THE CUP.

A SAD BLOW.

BEATEN BY TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR.

Prior to Saturday there was a consensus of opinion regarding the forthcoming cup-tie between Luton Town and Tottenham Hotspur—that, though the game might be well-fought, the outcome would inevitably be a win for Luton. Alas for the prescience of those who pass as judges of future prospects! The Lutonians failed to come up to expectations and they received the worst blow that has ever been their share in the Cup competition. It is remembered that some years since the Town Club were eliminated by the 93rd Highlanders in an early round; but since the team has become professional nothing so disastrous has happened. There was certainly the laughable fiasco at Wimbledon a couple of years or so ago; but that was at a later stage, and when the Lutonians had done something decent. Saturday's failure was not able to be apologised for on that score, and it is conceded on all hands that there can be little or no excuse for the miserable failure. Last season the "reds" had to fight hard to beat the "Spurs"; but this year lavish expense has been gone to in the endeavour to strengthen the ranks of the "reds," and yet they are ousted from the Cup contest—a most important one for the club—at the first time of asking. In face of this failure and that at Millwall it is scarcely able to be determined what to say in defence of the homestera. It is probable, though, that the enthusiasts who witnessed the game will prefer to frame their own excuses.

There was a good deal of interest taken in the encounter in this locality, despite the fact that the result was regarded as a foregone conclusion. A good number of onlookers journeyed with the Hotspur team, and there was a large attendance of local sympathisers; the stand was full and the ropes were well lined. It was somewhere about advertised time when the sides appeared on the line in the following order:—

Luton Town: Goal, Jack; backs, Nicholson and McEwen; half-backs, Birch, Stewart, and Docherty (capt.); forwards, Gallacher and Coupar (right), Galbraith (centre), Parkinson and Ekins (left).

Tottenham Hotspur: Goal, Ambler; backs, Burrows and Briggs; half-backs, Shepherd, Collins and Mackenzie; forwards, Pryor and Owen (right), Hunter (centre), Clement and Payne (left).

Referee: Mr. T. W. Saywell; linesmen, Messrs. S. Pakes (Luton) and H. D. Casey (Tottenham).
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The above lists represent the stations of the men at the time of starting; but during the game there was a considerable amount of sorting up positions on the part of the visitors, several of the men changing places more than once. The sun shone brightly and the wind was somewhat high when a start was made, and Docherty had to face both as the result of losing the toss. Galbraith was the first of the players to show up prominently, and soon after Nicholson rendered himself conspicuous by miskicking, the result of this display being that the Hotspurs got into the neighbourhood of Jack and sent behind. Shepherd was encouraged by a good number of Tottenham supporters to tackle Ekins; but he met his match in the fleet left-winger, who beat him more than once hereabouts. Parkinson sent behind at the "Spurs" end, and Stewart gave a splendid exhibition just after as the result of which Ambler had to clear. The homesters passed very prettily and Ekins got in one of his centres, though without result. The visitors' defenders were already making it apparent that they had determined to play stubbornly and at this time the fact of two or three of the home attacking force being near goal did not seem to trouble the Hotspur men much. The Lutonians were tackled determinedly, and their adversaries were so smart on the ball that the locals did not have much of a chance. Ekins followed up some neat work by shooting well, though wide, and Gallacher followed suit with an ill-directed attempt. Ekins was responsible for another well-intentioned effort, after which the "Spurs" got down on the right wing and gave the defence some trouble, eventually striking the net. Shepherd played well, and Gallacher sent in a beauty which struck the side of the net. Payne next struck the cross-bar with a good header, the ball bouncing over, and Parkinson dispatched a fast grounder at Ambler's charge which deserved to score—but did not. Parkinson struck the net from a pass by Ekins, and Galbraith sent in a beautiful overhead effort which deserved better luck than attended it. A great struggle was witnessed a little later in the neighbourhood of the Hotspur goal and Luton pressed hotly, Coupar eventually sending over. The visitors sent over the line and another beauty from the same side struck the bar. Nicholson placed the ball admirably, though advantage was not taken of the opening by his comrades. A foul against Galbraith was followed by a free-kick for hands against the enemy. Jack cleared well from Payne, and hands against the Tottenham contingent had the effect of once more removing the fray to Ambler's end. Lovely successive shots by Gallacher were witnessed, and a determined and long-continued onslaught was initiated by the "whites"—for the Lutonians were arrayed in white for the occasion in compliment to the visitors, who wore bright red. The luck seemed to be against the homesters, however, for strive as they would they were unable to lower Ambler's colours. A corner off Burrows enabled Gallacher to get into a good position for scoring; but he failed to make use of the opportunity. Disaster came to the home side a little later. The Tottenham men broke away and beat Nicholson, who missed in execrable style. In less time than it takes to write Owen had sent the ball past Jack, the custodian copying the example set him by Nicholson. It was Jack's fault, for he had cleared from one player and allowed the ball to lie at his feet until Owen dashed up. This reverse was quite unlooked for, and should never have happened. Stewart put in some good work after the re-start, and Parkinson headed past, while a foul by the "Spurs" gave the locals another chance, Gallacher sealing ridiculously wide. Docherty was punished for fouling and hands against the strangers equalised matters somewhat. Jack left his post just a little later and it seemed that further disaster would ensue; but, by sheer good fortune McEwen happened to get to the ball in time. Payne gave an exhibition of how not to shoot, his run down the wing being well worth witnessing. A misfortune happened to the leaders hereabouts, Briggs being hurt and being compelled to retire. It seemed that he had fallen on the back of his head and partially stunned himself and though he resumed after half-time he was compelled to again retire subsequently. Despite this weakening of their ranks the Hotspur men continued to do well until half-time. When Gallacher had sent in an ill-directed effort Payne got off-side. Luton struggled hard to equalise and a big tussle took place in front of Ambler; but the opposition defence were impassable, and the beleaguering force were repelled. When the interval arrived the scores stood thus:

Hotspur, 1; Luton, none.

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Soon after the resumption Briggs came on again and he was accorded an enthusiastic reception. The "whites" went off at a good pace and in very little time Ekins was seen to shoot well, Ambler displaying his bad show in the first half, came through grandly and almost scored, his shot dropping just wide of the mark. Three free-kicks against the "Spurs" in as many minutes looked ominous, and following one of these Docherty sent through, though unfortunately without the ball touching the necessary second player. Payne raced away at a rare pace and nearly scored, the ball striking the net. Up to this time the home supporters had had little cause for jubilation, and now they were presented with occasion for lamentation. Tottenham burst through and notched another goal through the medium of Hunter. Having obtained such a capital lead the Hotspur men could afford to take matters easily and they did so, their defence being admirable. Following some minor points Jack saved well, there being a narrow escape of another downfall. Galbraith kept the ball out. The game subsequently became fast and furious, the Luton men exerting themselves strenuously. Ekins centred capably only to see the ball kicked away with tantalising coolness, and Stewart and Birch took turns at endeavouring to bring about the capture of the Hotspur fortress, both failing by very little. Another brilliant effort by Ekins was allowed to pass by Gallacher. Following a free kick against the leaders for a foul the ball was splendidly put in; but no score resulted. Jack atoned to some extent for his previous failures by saving well and subsequently Gallacher sent wide. At length the "whites" were able to break down the defence and Galbraith improved upon a centre by Ekins, thus reducing the lead. This happened when a quarter of an hour remained for play, and it may readily be imagined that no effort was left unmade by the homesters. At one time it seemed almost certain that they would draw level, for a determined onslaught on the Tottenham goal was only ended by Galbraith incurring the usual penalty by jumping. Time after time well-placed shots were tried by the home eleven; but all was without avail. The defence was not to be again beaten, and thus the final score was this:

Hotspur, two; Luton, one.

LUTON TOWN