

Played.	Won.	Lost.	Drawn.	For.	Against.
39	29	5	5	148	38

THE ENGLISH CUP.

LUTON TOWN v. TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR.

Played at Luton on Saturday. Result:—

Luton Town	3 goals.
Tottenham Hotspur.....	nil.

The teams were as follow:—

RIGHT. LUTON TOWN LEFT.
Williams (goal).

McCartney McEwen.

Davies. Stewart. Docherty.

Gallacher. Couper. Galbraith. McInnes. Ekins.



Payne. Clement. Newbigging. Milliken. McElhaney
Crump. Almond. Devlin.

Mon'gomery. Burrows.

Adler (goal).

LEFT. TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR. RIGHT.

Referee, Mr. T. W. Saywell; linesmen, Messrs.
O. Knight (Luton), and A. Trotter.

Never, I think, has there been so much interest evinced in a match at Luton as in that which took place on Saturday between Luton and Tottenham Hotspur. For days before it came off, it formed the sole topic of conversation, and the chances for and against were discussed with an eagerness which was in striking contrast to the apathy which had been too often displayed in regard to Luton's engagements.

At Tottenham, too, there was a similar fever, though possibly it did not reach so acute a form. The fact that the Spurs last year succeeded in giving Luton the order of the knock added much to the attractiveness of the meeting this season, and while in the one place it produced an overwhelming desire for revenge, in the other it was the means of inspiring hopes of another victory.

But at home here, over and above the importance usually attaching to a Cup-match, there was a feeling, which gradually became recognised as a fact, that upon the result of Saturday's game depended the very existence of the Luton Club. Why it should be so, I cannot say, unless it be that the Luton people are in the habit of taking these things too much to heart.

One never heard the same thing in regard to the Arsenal and Millwall fight, and I don't suppose the result to the Arsenal will mean any serious loss in gates. The conclusion naturally follows that the Luton people are rather fonder of the privilege of crowing over their rivals than of the game of football itself.

For about the first time this season we had everything that could be wished in the way of weather. Instead of the rain, and mud and slush with which we were all too familiar up to the very day before the important event, we were favoured with a frost which got hold of the ground, and made it possible for us poor mortals to walk about in comparative comfort, though that self-same frost made it very awkward indeed for the players.

It was all that was wanted to make a big gate a certainty. By two o'clock the people were pouring through the turnstiles in one continuous stream, and that stream continued to flow until the battle commenced, the crowd ultimately numbering some four or five thousand. It was not quite the biggest in the local record, the receipts altogether amounting to £107.

People came not only from Luton, but from all the surrounding neighbourhood, while special and ordinary trains from London brought Tottenham supporters to the number of six or seven hundred. St. Albans contributed 150, the people turning up at the station there in such numbers that though there had been no arrangements for cheap tickets, the railway company felt compelled to issue them. Between thirty and forty persons, however, had the privilege of paying full fare.

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Both teams were at full strength, and when the Luton men stepped into the arena about a quarter of an hour before the advertised time, they were enthusiastically cheered. The visitors did not turn out until seven or eight minutes after the advertised time, and as the referee came on at the same moment, it did not take long to get to business. Stewart won the toss, and elected to kick up-hill and against the wind.

The teams lined up, the whistle blew, and away went the players. Every kick was followed with almost breathless interest, but I am bound to say that that superiority on the part of Luton which we had all so confidently counted upon took a long, long time to develop.

When I expressed the hope last week that the Luton committee would not have reason to deplore the mistake they made in breaking up the front string against the Caledonians, I did not think that the event would so nearly justify the doubt. The fact is, the victory of the home team was anything but decisive except in the matter of the goals obtained, and a little luck might have turned the result the other way about.

During the first half-hour the Luton men were labouring under an excitement which greatly militated against their play, and several of them were chiefly conspicuous for the anxiety they displayed to do each other's work. They frequently got mixed, frequently bumped up against each other, and through two trying to do the same job, they frequently let the other side capture the ball.

The play of the forwards was of an exceedingly ragged description, and was as unlike that usually shown by the men as chalk is unlike cheese. Of course, we never do expect men to show their best form in Cup-ties, and another point to be taken into consideration was the terribly hard state of the ground. Luton had been so used to playing in the mud that they never could accommodate themselves to the new condition of things, being unable to keep their feet to anything like the extent their opponents did, while their calculations were often upset by a very lively ball.

The homesters were the first to get away, but hands against Coupar relieved, and this was followed by a foul against the Spurs. Then the Luton right wing got going again, and just as they were getting dangerous, Gallacher had the misfortune to kick Montgomery on the forehead. It was nothing serious, but it sufficed to stop the play for a moment.

The Spurs responded, but Ekins turned the tables, and got in a splendid centre, while directly afterwards, Davies handed on to Gallacher, who sent wide. The visitors replied on the right, and McCartney, in rushing across to clear, gave a corner, which was well placed, but Docherty headed away, and cleared again from another assault.

Luton then attacked more vigorously, and the ball was kept hovering in the vicinity of the Tottenham goal for some few moments, but once Ekins fell down at a critical moment, and eventually a foul against Galbraith (for pushing) relieved. The ball was returned again, however, and twice Gallacher got in capital centres, while Davies also put in a beauty, but another foul against the Luton centre-forward put a period to the assault.

For a time, the play was transferred to mid-field, but McElheney jumping at Docherty, McEwen placed nicely from the free kick, and McInnes headed in. The visitors cleared, and went to the other end, where McEwen did excellent service for Luton, but ultimately a mistake by McInnes let the Spurs in, and McCartney was obliged to give another corner. This was beautifully placed, but Davies effected a clearance in gallant style.

A grand run by Ekins was the next feature, and Galbraith was presented with a very fair opportunity of scoring, but apparently he could not get the ball in the right position, and the chance was lost. Then a singular series of mistakes on the part of Luton gave the visitors an opening, and there is no knowing what might have happened had not McEwen cleared at the nick of time. A moment later Williams saved very finely from Newbigging.

A really pretty piece of play by Coupar and Gallacher next called for attention, and Ekins got in a glancing shot, which was well negotiated by Ambler. A period of give-and-take play followed, then both goals were attacked in turn, and McEwen, after clearing from an assault by the Spurs, was seen to be receiving undesirable attention from Newbigging. Play was stopped, but after a few words from the referee, the two men shook hands.

When the game was resumed, a lot of indiscriminate

kicking on both sides took place, until Coupar cleverly headed on to Gallacher, who sent in a good centre, and McInnes headed in. Burrows cleared for a moment, but Gallacher was quickly in evidence again, and a fine bounding shot from him gave Ambler a very anxious time. The Spurs then went down the field at a rattling pace, and McElhaney took a long flying shot, the ball passing just over the opposite corner of the goal.

A centre by Gallacher, which Galbraith and McInnes both tried hard to convert, was the only thing of note before the interval, and when the teams crossed over there had been no score. Luton perhaps had shown to a trifle more advantage than their adversaries, but up to the present there was not much in it. But the brief rest did not come a moment too soon for some of the visitors, who showed signs of not being in as good condition as when they started.

Still, at this juncture, it was impossible to prophesy the result with any degree of certainty, and I question very much whether the Luton supporters felt as confident as they did before the fight began. When there is no great disparity between the teams, the element of luck may always come in, and decide the issue, and if this luck had favoured the visitors the result might have been one that Luton would have failed to appreciate.

Last year the Spurs had extraordinary luck. This year it was to be the other way. A foul throw-in by Devlin was first of all the means of placing the Tottenham citadel in danger, and after the Spurs had beaten off that attack, Luton secured another opening, and McInnes sending in a long, easy shot, Ambler made an unexpected mess of it, and let the ball slip through his hands into the net.

Ambler had always proved himself such a reliable man in goal that no one dreamed he would be found giving a point away in so inexplicable a fashion, but the fact that Luton's success was due to his shortcoming did not in any way minimise the enthusiasm of the spectators. They cheered—the Luton portion of them—and cheered, and as for the players, McEwen showed his satisfaction by turning a Katherine wheel, while others eagerly competed for the honour of shaking hands with McInnes. That was absurd. They ought, of course, to have shaken hands with Ambler, and honoured McInnes' foot.

After the return to the half-way line, Luton, encouraged by their success, immediately went down the field again, and Gallacher putting in a good middle, McInnes slipped through the defence in capital style, and registered a second goal with a shot which he took care to place quite out of Ambler's reach. Then there was more cheering, more handshaking, and McEwen had two or three companions in turning Katherine wheels.

Again Luton attacked, and Docherty dropping the ball beautifully in the mouth of goal, Coupar and Galbraith made a desperate rush for it, but were circumvented, and McInnes then sent wide. The visitors next took a turn, and a miss by McCartney let in the left wing, but fortunately Davies was able to run and clear by kicking out.

For some time the battle waged with varying success, now one side appearing dangerous and then the other, but once from a centre by McElhaney, Williams brought off a remarkable save, rushing out and spoiling Newbigging's shot. He gave a corner, but this was not turned to account, nor was another which followed immediately.

Then from a throw-in, McEwen sent down, and Coupar headed on to Gallacher, who put all the powder possible behind his shot, but luckily for Tottenham, Montgomery happened to get in the way, and the ball rebounded off him. Ambler next saved from Stewart, and directly after, Docherty sent in a clinking shot, and McInnes, who was off-side, headed against the bar.

Then the ball was trundled up and down the field, and for the Spurs, McElhaney headed just over the bar, from a centre by Payne, while for Luton, Docherty got in a couple of trimming shots, both of which were well saved by Ambler. Stewart did a good thing in saving from McIlkenn, who had a rare opening, and after several other efforts by the visitors had been resisted, Ekins got away, and put in a beautiful centre, from which Gallacher scored with one of his lightning shots.

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It now wanted only a minute or two to time, and as nothing further worthy of note transpired, Luton were left the winners of a hard, if not a good game, by three goals to nil. Although they deserved the victory, the number of goals, as I have said, made it rather more decisive than the play actually warranted.

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The Spurs showed themselves to be a very good lot, and even after the things were found to be going against them, they played up very pluckily. If I were asked to pick out the best man on their side, I should award the palm to Almond, who performed prodigies of valour, tackled with infinite skill, and was as conspicuous in attack as in defence. Crump also rendered yeoman service.

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Both Montgomery and Burrows gave a good account of themselves at back, playing up vigorously from first to last, and Ambler, apart from his one blunder, did all that a man could do in goal. The forwards were the weakest part of the team, Clement being about the cleverest man of the lot.

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As regards the homesters, most praise is perhaps due to Davies, who, during the first half-hour, went about his work in a far more business-like manner than the others, and performed splendidly all the way through. Docherty, a little flurried at first, afterwards came on finely, and did any amount of good and effective work, but Stewart was apparently overweighted by the importance of the event, and scarcely ever did himself justice.

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McIlwen was in grand fettle at back, and never confessed himself beaten, while McCartney, though a trifle too rash, came off brilliantly at times. Williams, in goal, had very little to do, but he did that little in the best possible style. Gallacher and Ekins were the most prominent of the forwards, the former putting in some good all-round work, and the latter showing up with several smart runs.

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The inside men were never well together, but to some extent that may have been because the ground was too hard, and the ball too lively for close and tricky work. Mr. Saywell evidently strove to hold the balance perfectly even between the two teams, and altogether he went through the ordeal very creditably.

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By their victory over Tottenham Hotspur, Luton cleared the division, and qualified for the very much more formidable task of entertaining West Bromwich Albion on Saturday week. All being well, there should on that occasion be a record attendance, a grand game, and quite possibly, a brilliant victory for Luton. I hope no stone will be left unturned to secure all three.

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The meeting at Millwall on Saturday between the Dockers and the Arsenal, was a very sensational affair, the people flocking to the East Ferry-road ground as they had never flocked there before. The sight outside the gates was enough to satisfy hundreds of people, who went away without attempting to gain admission, but even then the pressure became so great that the barriers gave way, and the people poured in without payment. It is estimated that 18,000 people witnessed the match, which ended in a win for Millwall by four goals to two. The Arsenal were without Caldwell at back, and he was very much missed.

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Luton play three United League matches next month, on the 13th at Rushden, on the 20th at Wellingborough, and on the 27th at Luton against Kettering. The postponed match with Loughborough has been fixed to take place on the 3rd of April. It has been decided to play a match early in March for the funds of the League, between teams representing North and South. The Northern team will include men from Loughborough, Kettering, Rushden, and Wellingborough, and the Southerners will comprise representatives from Woolwich, Millwall, Tottenham, and Luton.

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It is interesting to note that this, the fourth time Luton have cleared the division in the qualifying competition for the English Cup, they have succeeded in so for the English Cup, they have succeeded in accomplishing the task without the loss of a single goal. The 1st Scots Guards were beaten by seven to nil, Marlow by five to nil, and now Tottenham Hotspur by three to nil, making a total of fifteen goals to nothing.

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