

# FOOTBALL.

## THE ENGLISH CUP COMPETITION.

### LUTON SUCCUMB TO BOLTON.

#### GRAND FIGHT AND LUCKY VICTORY.

A RECORD "GATE."

On Saturday the Lutonians once more figured in the first round of the English Cup competition proper, and history repeated itself in that they were eliminated at this early stage. Their record as champions of the ninth division in the qualifying contest will be familiar. Marlow scratched rather than undergo certain defeat in Strawopolis; in the next round the 'Spurs were vanquished on their own pitch, while in the final the amateurs of Clapton were similarly dealt with. Thus for the second season in succession the "stripes" gained the honour of inclusion in the list of the gallant ten clubs representing the divisions—a success, let it be added, that the club has been able to boast of on several occasions, the only exception for some years being when the 'Spurs managed to defeat the locals at Luton a couple of years ago. In the matter of luck the Luton players had a repetition of that of last season. They were drawn at home against a First League team and were presented with the hardest task of any Southern combination. The game produced an exactly corresponding outcome, the visitors snatching a lucky victory by a goal when the homesters had had the best of the play and most of the chances. But of that more anon. Let it be said that the prospect of meeting so formidable a combination as the Bolton Wanderers was not calculated to inspire very confident feelings, even though it was well-known that the "Trotters" had not been performing any too satisfactorily in the League tourney recently. It was recognised that between First and Second League sides there is considerable disparity in point of skill, and it was this reflection that gave pause to much of the enthusiasm which would otherwise have been exuberant. For be it remembered that the "stripes" have been playing brilliantly of late, and it was able to be said that they had only tasted the bitterness of defeat once this season on their own ground. The Lutonians had been undergoing special training at Wheathampstead and the latest reports concerning them were that they were not only fit and well but that they were confident of winning. The "Trotters," who had trained at home, travelled South on Friday and put up for the night at the Midland Hotel. They also looked fit; but they were by no means so sure in their own minds as to what the outcome of the encounter was to be, and it was conceded that a draw would be eminently satisfactory to the authorities. The Wanderers were taken for a drive on Saturday morning, while the "stripes" were conveyed by road from their training ground.

The interest taken by the public in the match was extraordinary, and it was significant to note that this was in the surrounding district as well as in the town. The directors, anticipating a bumper "gate," had reserved about half the seats on the grand-stand and these were readily disposed of at half a crown each. The remainder of the seats here were let for a shilling each and these were packed long before the hour for commencing play. Even rows of forms in the open air found an equally eager array of patrons. In the matter of a great crowd the ideas of the authorities were amply borne out. The gates were opened at 1 o'clock, and an hour later several thousands were present. These were drawn not only from the town but from London, Hitchin, Dunstable, St. Albans and the villages, the trains coming into the town bearing large numbers. Half-an-hour before the time fixed for beginning the game the Red Cross Band marched down, and still spectators continued to flock in. The weather was fine though cold and so the closely-packed occupants of the terraces were not incommoded. It was computed that the number present when play started must have been about 7,000, and during the progress of the game the total was increased by two or three thousands more.

A few minutes prior to the time fixed for the kick-off the "Trotters," who were in white, made their appearance and they were received with a great cheer; but the enthusiasm was redoubled when the Lutonians stepped over the ropes. With due regard to the merits of punctuality the sides took up their stations thus:—

*Luton Town:* Goal, Williams; backs, McCartney and McEwen; half-backs, Davies, Stewart (capt.) and Docherty; forwards, Gallacher and Coupar (right), Donaldson (centre), Little and McInnes (left).

*Bolton:* Goal, Sutcliffe; backs, Somerville (capt.) and Davies; half-backs, Paton, Brown and Freebairn; forwards, Cassidy and Gilligan (right), Miller (centre), Wright and Jack (left).

It ought, perhaps, to be explained that the Bolton men were deprived of the services of Jones (the Welsh international back) owing to injuries, while others of the side were stated to be in a bruised and battered condition. The only absentee of note from the Luton ranks was Ekins, whose presence on the left wing might have had the effect of strengthening that department of the team.

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There was a somewhat stiff breeze sweeping down the ground from the railway end, and the locals were compelled to face this as the result of losing the toss. No sooner had the referee (Mr. J. C. Tillotson, of Birmingham, who had as neutral linesmen Messrs. N. Whittaker and W. J. Wilson, of London) given the signal for the commencement of hostilities, than the homesters went away in good style. Thus early, however, they were enabled to discover the great strength of the defence opposed to them, and they were easily repelled. At the other end the Bolton forwards looked dangerous, when McCartney dashed in and cleared capitally. Throws-in followed, with the result that Luton advanced, their progress being lavishly applauded. A tricky pass from Coupar found its way to McInnes not far from where Sutcliffe, the famous International, was on guard; but unfortunately the left winger was off-side, and Mr. Tillotson did not fail to take note of the fact. A brilliant clearance was credited to McEwen, who managed to get in one of his superb volleys. The visitors returned in the next minute and some beautiful passing was witnessed from the forwards, off-side eventually checking them. The home lot came down in good style, Davies effecting a first-rate clearance from McInnes, while a like excellent performance was set down to McEwen at the opposite extremity. The defence on both sides was magnificent, and as a matter of fact the home attack was a trifle superior just now to that of their foemen. Jack managed to steer wide when within shooting range, and when Luton got well under weigh Little was checked for an infraction of the off-side law. The players were keeping their heads wonderfully well, their coolness contrasting remarkably with the excitement which was palpably existent amongst the onlookers. It was not to be wondered at, indeed, that enthusiasm should be manifest, for both sides were playing splendidly, the football being notable for extreme neatness and effectiveness. A specially hearty plaudit was deservedly awarded to McEwen for a capable punt into touch. Again the Luton forwards pressed determinedly and again were they beaten back. To vary the monotony of these proceedings McEwen had a shy at goal with the result that Sutcliffe found it necessary to fist away for the first time in the game, and it was no easy task which was presented to him either. Davies stemmed an ugly rush of the "whites," while in the next minute McCartney presented the adversaries with a corner. This was so weakly placed that no difficulty was experienced in getting the ball away, a free-kick for a foul further assisting Luton. The relief was but momentary, however, for Williams was soon afterwards forced to kick away smartly. Cassidy and Davies had a trial of skill with the result that the ex-Glaswegian had to play second fiddle to the Lutonian. Hands was awarded against the First Leaguers and so well did McCartney place that danger was threatened; but once more the steadiness of the defence was illustrated. A foul against Little was awarded, while in endeavouring to check Gallacher, who was giving him a deal of trouble, Davies kicked hard into touch. Donaldson managed to burst through, though he was being very closely watched, and Sutcliffe was called upon by McInnes to deal with a beauty, the International effecting a wonderful save. One of the "stripes" steered over the bar and, following pretty play by the locals, Donaldson was nastily fouled. Again the home lot found themselves in front of Sutcliffe; but neither Gallacher nor Coupar found it possible to lower his colours. A beautiful attempt by Gallacher compelled Paton to concede a corner, from which Steward headed wide of the mark. The home outside right became conspicuous again immediately after, Sutcliffe experiencing some difficulty in disposing of his final effort. Shortly afterwards absolutely the best opening of the day was presented to McInnes by Gallacher with a lovely centre; the left-winger, who had nobody but the custodian to beat, failed to get hold of the ball properly, the result being that it sailed high above the cross-bar. At this failure the crowd were intensely disappointed. The home supporters had good reason for being on good terms with themselves, though, for their favourites were undoubtedly having the best of the exchanges and were playing a very smart game indeed—smart, that is, when it is considered that the match was a cup-tie. McInnes incurred the customary penalty by getting off-side, this being counter-balanced by a foul against Bolton on Coupar. From this McEwen placed beautifully and the captain once more shot erratically. Profiting by a temporary rockiness of the home defence the Wanderers forced their way through; but their progress was ultimately checked by the application of the off-side rule. Donaldson was punished for fouling. At the "whites" end the locals swarmed to the attack and a further narrow escape was experienced, the Lutonians still holding the upper hand. Both the Luton backs distinguished themselves hereabouts by accurate kicking, whilst McInnes was exceedingly unlucky in getting off-side on receiving a pass from Coupar when there appeared to be a grand chance of opening the scoring. Fouls were awarded

against either side just now, the proportion being two to one by Bolton. From one of the free-kicks the ball found its way into Williams's hands. A long range attempt by Gallacher was capably disposed of by Sutcliffe, who had had most of the luck that was going. From a foul on Donaldson the ball was so well placed that a trio of the Luton forwards found themselves close to Sutcliffe with the ball amongst them, and even then the custodian managed to clear. So the game went on, brimful of interest and productive of excellent play and abundance of excitement, and the locals heaved a sigh of relief when the interval came with the positions as follows:

LUTON, 0; BOLTON, 0.

It was now the turn of the homesters to have the wind at their backs; and, inasmuch as they had made so gallant a fight, it was deemed that the probability was that they would yet win. The rivals went off in a fashion that showed that no effort was to be unmade. McInnes afforded another illustration of how badly it is possible to shoot on occasion; but it ought to be said that that player went to inside left hereabouts with the result that there was a noticeable improvement in the home combination, Little having been of little service to his side. Brown was guilty of a bad foul on Donaldson not far from goal and matters looked threatening; but McInnes slipped down at the crucial moment and so the opening was lost. The visitors were more fortunate, and when the second half was about five minutes old they succeeded in obtaining the lead. McEwen had fouled an opponent and after the free-kick Gilligan called upon Williams, who only managed to get the ball away a short distance, whereupon Cassidy dashed up and registered the solitary goal of the game with a shot that gave the custodian no possible chance of recovering himself. The point was deservedly cheered. The "Trotters" appeared to be stimulated by this achievement, and in the next few minutes they played with redoubled dash and effectiveness. The locals were by no means done with, though, for they continued to exert themselves manfully and with admirable effect. Following a foul against Bolton McEwen sent on well and Gallacher headed over the line. Then Docherty placed neatly and another hot assault was indulged in. From another free-kick the ball found its way into Sutcliffe's hands, and he experienced trouble in saving, even at the expense of a corner, Stewart being the player to bring the danger. The flag-kick was followed by the awarding of a foul against the "whites", and when the homesters pressed strenuously and were within an ace of getting through another deliberate foul was indulged in. This was only half a dozen yards from goal, and the locals appealed confidently for a penalty. The referee declined to grant this, and the free-kick proved abortive against the cast-iron defence of the leaders. Later on half a dozen fouls in rapid succession were given against the Wanderers, who were now infusing undue vigour into their display, Freebairn being an offender. Luton retaliated with the result that Williams had to give away a corner. From another free-kick against Docherty for a similar offence the "whites" very nearly got through. A like kick against Somerville was splendidly placed by Docherty, and the ball fell into Sutcliffe's hands after striking the cross-bar. The Lutonians were now exhibiting better style again and even a couple of free-kicks did not long check them. More fouling was engaged in by the Leaguers, with the result that Sutcliffe was required to clear. Just afterwards Donaldson broke through and sent on to McInnes, who sent in the best shot of the day. Sutcliffe was at the opposite side of the goal but he slipped or fell across it and managed to catch the ball, though not before it appeared to pass under the bar. The save was fluky in the extreme, and had Mr. Tillotson awarded a goal nobody would have been surprised. No such luck for Luton, however. The Bolton players maintained undesirable tactics, and brilliant saves by Sutcliffe were sandwiched between the fouls. McCartney slightly injured an opponent, while Donaldson, who had been badly knocked about, floored Davies heavily. In the last few minutes the locals struggled heroically and had most of the play; but their best efforts were frustrated, and so the visitors obtained an exceedingly lucky win with the following score:—

BOLTON, 1; LUTON, 0.

STOPSLEY MONTROSE V. STRAWOPOLIS.—Played at Stopsley on Saturday, when the visitors brought a very strong team to play the villagers, who were a little too good for them and won a very well contested game by four goals to two. "Readster" scored the finest goal. Stopsley team:—Goal, Randall; backs, F. K. Cain and A. Whittemore; half-backs, Tuffnell, G. Cain and Hucklesby; forwards, Goodship, Lawrence, Gutteridge, Plummer and E. Whittemore. Referee, Mr. Dockrill (Luton).

OLD ST. MATTHEW'S V. NORTON COLLEGE.—Played on Mr. Faunch's meadow on Wednesday and ended in a draw of four goals each. The Saints' goals were scored by W. Lowe (two), S. Webb (one), and E. Kilby (one). St. Matthew's played only 10 men. Mr. Furlong was referee.



The *Athletic News* has the following gibe: "If the Bolton Wanderers had believed the many things that were said about them by some of the Southern Solons they would have been beaten before they turned out at Luton. It was a case of the spider and the fly, for the Wanderers had only to make their appearance and their destruction was certain. Special trips were actually run from London to enable enthusiasts to witness the overthrow of the 'old crocks' from the North. Luton had rattled up such a fearful lot of goals on their own ground—where only Woolwich had mastered them on October 2—that they had fully persuaded themselves they could not help winning, and it was as good as over even before the battle commenced. They have a different opinion now."



The same paper, however, makes this concession: "It was no joke for the back division to face the Luton forwards, who went at it hammer and tongs, playing in such a style that would have disconcerted many a team; but it only helped to bring out the fine defensive powers of the Lancashire club. It was a good achievement for the Wanderers to win."



The *Daily Mail* writes: "Luton were unfortunate to lose the game, and an inspection of the goal-posts after the match showed what a charmed life the Bolton citadel had had, and it must be admitted that Sutcliffe made some miraculous saves; one from McInnes indeed being one of the finest ever witnessed. . . . Four out of six fouls were given against the Wanderers, and notwithstanding the superior football played by the Bolton men, Luton were decidedly unlucky not to win the tie."

