

LUTON V. TOTTENHAM HOTSPURS.

THE LOCALS LOSE BY 1-0.

After Saturday's game with the Arsenal, it was rather a severe task to set the new Lutonians to face the famous Hotspurs—the team that is known in the South now as “the team of all the talents.” The composition of the Luton team was altered slightly from Saturday's. Moore stood down with a bruised ankle, and Clarke dropped back from centre-half to left back, letting in Sharp to fill the vacancy. The only alteration in the Spurs team was the appearance of Ambler between the sticks instead of Cullen, who is on the injured list. Therefore the following teams lined up in front of fully 5,000 spectators, in most sultry weather:

Luton: Perkins; Williams, Clarke; C. Ford, Sharp, Crump; Durrant, Hewitt, W. Ford, McInnes, Brock.

Spurs: Ambler; Cain, Melia; Jones, McNaught, Stormont; Smith, McKay, Joyce, Cameron, Bradshaw.

Referee: Mr. Beardsley.

McInnes won the toss, and set his opponents to face the sun. Joyce kicked off, and passed over to Cameron, the latter in turn put out to Bradshaw, and the old Liverpool man got in a smart run, causing Perkins to concede a corner in his final effort from a capital attempt. This was cleared, but the Spurs could not be beaten back; in fact, during the first ten minutes it looked as if they would score once or twice. Clarke nearly gave a goal away through fouling Tom Smith, for Perkins did not get the ball away well at the first attempt.

The scene was changed through a smart run by Luton's left, and Brock caused Ambler to handle, but it was easily cleared, and C. Ford gave a corner at the other end; another followed off Sharp, caused by a foul by Durrant, but both were easily cleared.

Headed by McInnes, Luton attacked, and from a centre by Brock, Billy Ford forced a corner off Cain, but this was negotiated. After a spell of good play, in which McNaught for the Spurs was most conspicuous, Luton shot by Ambler's posts three times. The Spurs next missed a grand chance of opening the score, for Smith had an open goal but failed.

Aided by a foul, Luton got in a smart attack, but the homesters' backs were equal to the demands, and a good combined run by Bradshaw and Cameron was the means of testing Perkins' abilities, for he brought off a grand save at close quarters.

Brock next forced a corner at the other end with a grand shot, after Melia had miskicked, but although well placed it was got rid of, and two minutes later Smith netted the ball past Perkins, but offside nullified the point. Each side forced a couple of corners, but to no purpose.

Just before the interval Luton got down smartly, and from a centre by Durrant, Brock put through just as Ambler was attempting to clear, but the point was disallowed on the ground that Brock handled. There was, however, grave doubts about it, and it was decidedly hard lines on Luton. With no legitimate scoring, the interval arrived:

LUTON No GOALS

TOTTENHAM HOTSPURS, No GOALS

On the resumption of the second half it looked as though Luton were simply going to walk round their opponents. For the first ten minutes they did grandly, and were continually hovering around the Spurs' citadel. Ambler and his backs were all busy repelling shots. Encouraged by their supporters to “wake up,” the North Londoners broke away, and aided by a little weakness by Sharp—who, by-the-bye, had been playing a most useful game—Joyce had a shot at Perkins, but the latter was on the alert and cleared. Bradshaw and Smith both had shots at the goal, but to no avail.

Crump was hereabouts limping painfully, having received a nasty kick on the ankle, and was almost useless for a time. The excitement grew great when the “Klondike” team forced a couple of corners, and from a *melee* close to goal, Perkins came out with flying colours. Twice in as many minutes was the latter conspicuous with clever saves, but directly afterwards a good run by McInnes and Brock saw the latter put across a fine centre to Hewitt, who missed a beautiful chance.

A mistake of a similar character occurred at the other end through a misunderstanding with the Luton backs; but two minutes later Cameron put in a tame sort of shot which found the net, Perkins running out to fist away and not getting well hold of the ball. After such grand saves as Perkins had given beforehand it was hard lines to be beaten in that way; but whereas it was ill-luck for Luton, it was good fortune for the Spurs, for this proved the only goal of the match.

A little later Smith found the net, but the point was disallowed, as Perkins appeared to have been held by about half-a-dozen of his opponents. Towards the close Luton mustered up considerably, and looked like equalising, but it failed to come off, and when the final whistle blew the score stood:

TOTTENHAM HOTSPURS 1 goal

LUTON Nil

NOTES.

With the exception of the time I went to Millwall four years ago this month, I never remember undertaking a football journey when the heat was so terrific. To sit in the train was most unbearable, and when going down from Liverpool-street I got little consolation,

from a gentleman who said, "It is hot now, but it will be hotter still soon." From that remark I pitied myself, I pitied my friends, and, above all, the players.

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Football under such conditions seems insane, and it wasn't to be expected that the men could show their true form, although they must have been in fairly good condition to have stood the pace. I must say that more of the Hotspurs men showed signs of distress at the finish than Luton.

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From a scientific football point of view, the game was a frost. There was a decided lack of combination and proper understanding with both sets of players. It was a straggling, kick and rush sort of an affair rather than a neat exhibition of good class play that one would expect to see, particularly from such a side of talented men as the Spurs are supposed to possess, and what they ought to have, considering the high prices they pay them.

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Although Luton had never previously been beaten at Tottenham, the latter's supporters had all the confidence in the world that they were going to make a regular exhibition of the Luton team. I was assured that we were in for a six goals to nothing defeat. I said little at the time, but, like the Irishman, I thought a lot, and I found out at the end that my thoughts had not misled me much, for although the Northumberland Parkers won there was very little in it, and Dame Fortune smiled on the homesters when they scored their goal.

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I should certainly say that the Spurs were the better lot. They combined better, and they had most of the play as far as that goes, but they lacked dash and shooting ability altogether. No doubt when they get in full swing they will be a grand combination, but they want a lot of smartening up. There ought not to be a weak point among them, for everyone has a tinge of class about him.

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Although Ambler is not recognised as the first eleven custodian, I think he is quite as clever a man as Cullen. Bob Cain still keeps up his reputation as a class back, and he stopped Luton many times when they were getting dangerous ; but there was a little bit of stiffness about him that makes one think he is getting old fast. Melia is one of the dashing sort. He gets in a lot of fine kicks, but he is apt to be erratic, and more than once made mistakes that nearly cost his side a goal. The shining light of the half back line was little McNaught. He's a grand little player ; he never loses sight of the ball and it was his work more than anyone else's that kept Luton from scoring. Stormont is clever, but Jones shone very little.

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If names go for anything, the Spurs' front rank ought to be good enough for anything in the country. Bradshaw the International is a great player. He was easily first of the bunch, and he had the most work to do, for Cameron, his partner, seemed only placed on the field to feed him ; at any rate, that was all he seemed to do. Joyce was poor compared with his display when last opposing Luton. McKay is a useful inside right, and Tom Smith on the outside right is famous for his sprinting. He can sprint too, but his judgment is very limited, and he won't set the Thames on fire.

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Now to a word or two on the Lutonians. It was a capital performance on paper to only get beaten by one goal, but those who saw the game will say it was hard lines on losing at all, for they scored as fair a goal in the closing minutes of the first half as ever they will get. With this exception I thought Referee Beardsley did very well indeed but I certainly could not agree with him for disallowing the point on the ground that Brock handled. Again I say, it was hard lines.

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The two shining lights on the Luton side were Tommy McInnes and Perkins ; in fact "Tommy" was the finest forward on the field. He worked all through like a Trojan. When the forwards were attacking he was always there or thereabouts, and when any help was wanted in the defence the captain was at it again. Perkins kept goal grandly and made some brilliant saves. It was decidedly unlucky for him to lose the goal that lost the match. It was not by any means a difficult shot to stop, but a little misunderstanding and hesitancy brought about the downfall.

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Williams played a good game. He was not showy, but always useful, and in time will develop into a grand back. Clarke in the second half did some good work, but in the first part he could not get accustomed to his new position. Sharp made his debut at centre-half, and he well pleased his admirers. He gets through a lot of work and usually makes good use of his opportunities. Charlie Ford did any amount of sound work, and next to McNaught was the best half on the field. He had something to do too to look after Bradshaw. Crump was continually doing good things until he got kicked on the ankle, but I should say he would be a lot better if he hadn't quite so much flesh to carry.

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The forwards do not altogether please me yet, although there is every excuse for them, as the ground is too lively altogether for forward work. W. Ford works very hard, but he does not get quite enough support from the right wing which prevents him securing as many opportunities as he ought to have, but he would do better if he laid a little closer up to the opposing backs. Brock was smart when he had the ball, but he might work a little more for it. Durrant met more than he could successfully deal with in Cain, and Hewitt tried hard, but did not shine as well as in the opening match. I am still of opinion that we have the material for making a really good side, but I am waiting to see more combination.