

LUTONIANS AT TOTTENHAM.

THE 'SPURS' REVENGE.

A CLOSE CONTEST.

For some years past there has been a strong rivalry between the Luton and Tottenham Clubs, this having been increased by the memorable cup-tie performance of the 'Spurs three years or so ago. The encounters between the sides are invariably productive of keen excitement, and just as certainly full of vigorous if not ultra-scientific play. The United League match between the clubs which was set down for decision on Monday was rendered additionally interesting by the great changes which had been made in the constitution of the sides. On the one hand the 'Spurs had gone a-hunting for footballers with well-known names, and they had found the undertaking a costly one. The card on Monday contained the names of a team which on paper was good enough for anybody, and it was frankly conceded by Luton visitors to Northumberland Park that the chances of success for the "stripes" were not very rosy. It was amusing to listen to the varying ideas as to what the score was likely to be, the guesses as to the Hotspur total ranging from three to close upon a dozen. Nobody, it is as well to add, anticipated that the boot would on this occasion be upon the other leg and Luton would maintain the prestige of their club. The Tottenham "team of all the talents" was regarded as too formidable for that to happen. The confidence in the homesters proved well founded, though the match was so closely contested that there was but a single goal difference at the finish. Still, that was enough to win by and the admirers of the 'Spurs were jubilant in the extreme. There was a grand "gate," some 5,000 spectators being present. The behaviour of these, by the way, was better than on the occasion of the previous visit to the Park. The weather was warm, and the wonder was that the game was not of a more scrambling nature than it proved to be.

The start had been fixed for 5.15, and at that time the following elevens lined up:—

Tottenham: Goal, Ambler; backs, Melia and Cain; half-backs, Jones, McNaught, and Stormont; forwards, Smith and McKay (right), Joyce (centre), Cameron and Bradshaw (left).

Luton: Goal, Perkins; backs, Williams and Clarke; half-backs, C. Ford, Sharp, and Crump; forwards, Durrant and Hewitt (right), W. Ford (centre), McInnes and Brook (left).

Referee, Mr. F. W. Beardsley; Luton linesman, Mr. F. G. Ekins.

It will be perceived that there were a couple of changes in the Luton side as compared with that of Saturday. Moore had been injured in the Arsenal match and stood down, Clarke going to left back and Sharp to centre half. McInnes was again captain and on this occasion also he managed to win the toss. The start was somewhat remarkable, for in the first minute the homesters succeeded in forcing a corner. Joyce had sent out to Bradshaw from the kick-off and so accurate was the centre by the outside left that Perkins could do nothing but tip the leather over the bar at the expense of a corner, which passed without result. The home right-wingers got away well and Clarke was stopped for fouling, while Brock was just afterwards pulled up for getting off-side. McInnes tricked Melia cleverly and transferred to Brock, who tried hard to score with a long one. Perkins in endeavouring to punch the ball out missed it altogether; but he recovered himself in time and cleared well. The "whites" again swarmed to the attack and so effectually that Perkins experienced difficulty in clearing. C. Ford presented them with a corner just after, following which McNaught robbed Hewitt cleverly. Sharp gave away a corner from a free-kick, while at the other end W. Ford got away well and obtained a flag-kick. The game, though fast and exciting, was not remarkable for scientific excellence. For the most part the men indulged in scrambling tactics and a good sample of combination was rare indeed. When Joyce had been checked for lying off-side, the brothers Ford distinguished themselves in turn. McInnes was somewhat nastily fouled, as was Williams also. When in a fairly good position for shooting McKay sent very high over. Cain sent up well, the ball bouncing over the bar. Melia was punished for a foul, and then Luton had two or three tries, McInnes (who had been playing a fine game) failing to score. Perkins effected a magnificent save when the 'Spurs attacked hotly, and just after a corner was secured by the Londoners. One of the Hotspur men was punished for jumping on the back of an opponent, following which Brock dispatched a magnificent shot which was just saved at the expense of a corner. This was well placed; but Crump sent behind. Luton had now regained their confidence and were playing quite as good a game as their opponents. Williams was deservedly applauded for some first-rate efforts; but when W. Ford fouled an adversary there was the accustomed "whisper" from the crowd. When the game had been in progress something like 40 minutes Smith pounced upon the ball smartly and sent through; but the jubilation of the crowd was lessened a good deal by the discovery that off-side had been given. The 'Spurs next secured a corner off Sharp. This was not turned to account, and shortly afterwards hands near goal gave the Luton forwards a chance. Crump wound up by handling the leather. When McInnes had been badly fouled W. Ford became responsible for a beautiful shot, this leading to a corner. Brock caused amusement by stopping the ball with his hands extended over his head. This did not long postpone the advance of the "stripes," who were now playing in first-rate style. Shortly after a clever centre was made by Durrant, and in the struggle that ensued Brock charged the custodian into the net. For some reason which nobody could understand the referee declined to allow the goal and merely gave a free-kick to the 'Spurs, so that it was obvious Mr. Beardsley was of opinion that an offence had been committed by the attacking force. The decision appeared to many to be utterly wrong. A grand save was effected by Perkins who, although he was on the ground, managed to steer the ball round the post. The resultant corner was not productive, and the crowd deservedly cheered the goal-keeper. Williams gave away another flag-kick and shortly afterwards the whistle sounded for the interval. The 'Spurs had had a trifle the best of matters; but they found it impossible to score. The positions at half-time were:

'SPURS, 0; LUTON, 0.

'SPURS, 0 ; LUTON, 0.

The rival sides started the second portion with considerably more dash than had been infused into the opening half, the Lutonians being especially praiseworthy ; indeed, just now the team appeared to better advantage than at any time during the season. The 'Spurs seemed determined to prevent their foemen from breaking through, and they resorted to illegal tactics at times in endeavouring to secure their end. W. Ford obtained possession after a good clearance by Williams, while McInnes struck the post with a very hard drive. Brock caused some laughter by kicking the ball over the goal-line and then appealing with all the confidence imaginable for a corner. Another foul against the 'Spurs was given, and then a glorious chance of scoring was allowed to pass owing to bad passing. The Luton forwards later on got well under weigh and were beginning to look dangerous when Cain dashed across and cleared brilliantly. Bradshaw tried his hand at shooting with some success, the effort being a good one though the ball went over the cross-bar. The Luton left wingers passed splendidly down the field and transferred to the centre ; but unfortunately Ford was at the moment standing in an off-side position and he was duly stopped. Smith wound up a good run by steering over the bar, following which C. Ford gave away a corner, a mistake for which he atoned a little later on by giving a tricky exhibition. The respective sides were now playing extremely well and there was little to choose between them, the Lutonians performing admirably against their sturdy rivals. The Hetspur obtained a corner as the result of some very smart play and immediately afterwards they experienced a very narrow escape of scoring. Yet another corner was given, the pressure being subsequently relieved by a foul throw being awarded against Jones. More pressing by the 'Spurs was witnessed, a big kick by Melia being headed out by Clarke, who was showing far better form in this half than he had hitherto done. Sharp was conspicuous at centre half. A couple of capital saves by Perkins were noticed, one from Stormont being particularly smart. A lovely centre by Brock was noticed, from which Hewitt sent behind. Luton advanced again in first-rate style, a foul eventually relieving. Joyce neglected a rare chance just afterwards ; he could have dribbled right through the goal, but instead of doing so he ran across and sent in an oblique shot. Immediately after came the downfall. Parkins rushed out in an effort to clear and missed the ball, which went through off Bradshaw. There was a great shout of delight from the spectators at this success, which came to the homesters half an hour from the start. In the minutes which remained for play there was a magnificent struggle. The "stripes" tried hard to get on terms, and the 'Spurs endeavoured just as manfully to maintain their advantage. The only point of more than ordinary interest was that Smith beat Perkins, the goal being disallowed on the ground that the keeper had been impeded. When the end came the Lutonians had been beaten, though by no means ignominiously, especially seeing that Crump was limping during most of the second half. The final score was as follows :

HOTSPUR, 1 ; LUTON, 0.

FOOTBALL FACTS AND FANCIES.

Though the Arsenal and Hotspur games ended in the defeat of Luton I am still impelled to the conclusion that the "stripes" performed well. Their play was streets in front of that of the previous Thursday, when the contest was not worth walking far to see.



It may savour of staleness to observe that the victory of the Arsenal was lucky; but such was the plain, unvarnished fact. The only goal that was scored was obtained from a free-kick for a foul throw by Hewitt in the absence through injury of Charley Ford.



The Arsenalites did not seem to me anything like so strong a side as last season, despite the fact that eight of last year's team were figuring in the ranks. Their combination was far from good and they certainly did not flatter their supporters on the day's play.

Many have been saying that had it not been for rough play the "reds" would not have won. I am inclined to agree. Whenever a Lutonian looked dangerous he was brought down by foul means if that end could not be attained by fair methods. Anderson and Fyfe were guilty of some very shady tricks.

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Brock was a sufferer by these tactics. He was kicked off his feet time after time, and had the referee been a bit more stern the "reds" would have suffered as they fully deserved to do. It was a very bad exhibition.

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So far as the goal which was scored was concerned, Perkins was scarcely blameable. He saved once, and before he could recover, the ball was sent in at the other corner. He made a gallant attempt to save; but failed.

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By far the finest performance by an individual had to be credited to the home custodian. Moore had caused a penalty to be awarded by knocking down the ball as it was going into goal, and Perkins saved from the terrific drive of Anderson.

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Cheer! Well, the spectators were heard far from the ground. I should say that the applause lasted quite a couple of minutes. Any of my readers who witnessed the achievement will agree that Perkins deserved it all. I saw Williams save a penalty at Manchester last year; but the save of Perkins was made in far better style.

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Everybody seemed agreeably surprised at the vastly improved form of the "stripes." It is true that the forwards were not very dangerous in front of goal; but that will come with experience of the varying methods adopted by individuals.

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The centre forward had not a chance, for he was not at all well fed by the centre half. If he wanted the ball he had to fetch it, and that is not the function of a centre forward. Nor did the inside men succeed in accurately timing their passes to the centre.

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The most pleasing feature of the display by the home side was the proof that the front rankers possess plenty of pace and pluck. The introduction of Brock at outside left greatly improved that wing, while Hewitt and Durrant worked together splendidly.

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The half-back line was not so reliable as it might be. What with Ford's foul throws and Clarke's erratic kicks there was much to be desired; but considering the excitement that prevailed and the nature of the weather one must not be too harsh.

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As to the backs, Moore and Williams changed places, and the result was a big improvement over Thursday. Williams played a very good game indeed, his kicking being as a rule well timed and effective. He only wants an experienced man to give him a few hints to shape into a good back.

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With regard to Moore let me commence by observing that he sustained a nasty kick early in the game. This doubtless affected his play subsequently. I am assured that he is a really good man, and so I shall not condemn him until he has had further trial.

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The Arsenal defence was vigorous and the forwards were fleet, but I am convinced that the Luton team of last year would have made short work with them. Save for the roughness there was nothing very remarkable about the show.

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I wonder what the 'Spurs' executive think of Monday's performance. The Tottonians were to give the Lutonians an awful grueling and, inasmuch as the team has been procured at tremendous expense, there was every reason to think the North Londoners would succeed in taking their revenge. But it did not come off—for a goal to nothing victory cannot be considered as a great performance.

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The confession must be made that one went to Northumberland Park with the idea of witnessing goal scoring by the 'Spurs rather than of seeing the visitors make a bold bid. It was all cut and dried, and the only question seemed to be by how many goals were the ancient foemen of Luton to win.

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Do not let readers imagine that in thus alluding to the team I intend any disrespect to the players on account of their not being very youthful. True, there are some amongst them who are not juvenile; but they have all won good reputations.

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Fancy this aggregation of the great lights of the football firmament finding it impossible to thrash poor little Luton with its modest team! But football is a game of surprises, and this was one of them.

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Fluke? No, the visitors played a rattling good game, and with a little luck they would have won. Clever the 'Spurs may be, but they are not overburdened with excellence. In fact, I do not think they are very much stronger than last season—at least they were not on Monday.

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The predominant feeling with the spectators on Saturday was that the Lutonians did well; and it was the same on Monday. I have hopes that they will perform well at other places than Tottenham, and in this case the wish is certainly the father to the thought.

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Would that the men had played in the first half as they did after the interval. I am afraid that they were a bit overawed by the names of their foemen. They need not have been, for they were well able to cope with them.

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with them.

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It goes without saying that the game was not remarkable for scientific football. Somehow or other the meetings between these clubs never are. But there was more of it than on the occasion when I was last at Tottenham, when a rough and tumble game wound up with a fight.

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The Luton directors had done quite the right thing in putting Clarke at back and introducing Sharp at centre half. The newcomer gave a remarkably good account of himself; indeed, this was the first really admirable centre half game that has been played for Luton this season.

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Clarke was not sufficiently energetic at back for my taste. He would do infinitely better were he to infuse some dash into his efforts. Williams, on the other hand, was hugely admired, and he certainly got through a heap of useful work.

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Perkins was in fine form. He saved brilliantly more than once. Some think he made a mistake in leaving his goal on the occasion that he was beaten; but he must have had his colours lowered whatever he did. The wonder was that he managed to keep the scoring so low.

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Charley Ford was frequently in evidence; but Crump was unlucky enough to sustain a nasty kick on the leg in the second half which had the effect of rendering him lame thereafter. I have already alluded in commendatory terms to Sharp.

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McInnes seems to have got a greater sense of responsibility since he has been awarded the captaincy. Anyhow, he played in beautiful style on Monday, his passes being judicious always while he was constantly in evidence. There is a deal of football in "oor Tam" yet.

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The right wingers were undaunted by the very strong defence, while William Ford fared better than on Saturday. Brock was in fine form at outside left.

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The 'Spurs' team contained some familiar faces. There were Ambler, Stormont and Joyce, who are all too well known to require commenting upon beyond the utterance of the general verdict that they deserved well of their supporters.

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The backs were in fine fettle. Cain, the old Sheffield United man, was rarely beaten, while his comrade is also trustworthy. Of the halves McNaught (the ex-Newton Heath man) was by far the best.

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The forwards were clever individually; but I did not value their combination very highly. Bradshaw and Smith pleased me most. Joyce missed a first-rate chance of scoring once.

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The spectators were exceedingly well behaved. The game was so evenly contested that there was bound to be some excitement, and there was the inevitable yell when a Luton man indulged in a foul. But for Tottenham the behaviour seemed to me irreproachable.

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To sum up, I would rather face the season with the unpretentious team that Luton possesses than the highly paid lot of notables who figure in the team of the 'Spurs. There was a good gate on Monday; but then there is always a large attendance wherever the Lutonians are due. I learn that the expenses at Tottenham are enormous, and I do not envy the directors at that delectable spot.

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What about Barnsley? The "stripes" are due there to-morrow in a Second League game. This will be Luton's first match with the Yorkshiremen, and it is impossible to say how it will end. Still, last season's experience taught us not to expect to win League matches away from home.

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The Second League matches on Saturday ended thus: *h*Walsall beat Loughborough, 7-0; *h*Leicester beat Lincoln, 3-0; *h*Newton Heath defeated Gainsborough, 2-0; *h*Burslem beat Barnsley, 2-0; Small Heath beat *h*Burton, 6-2; *h*Glossop beat Blackpool, 4-1. *h*Home clubs.

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United League matches for September:—
Sept. 10.—Bristol v. Kettering, J. C. Tillotson.
" 12.—Millwall v. Wellingboro', R. Fuller.
" 14.—Reading v. Woolwich, T. Saywell.
" 19.—Kettering v. Millwall, B. M. Lockyer.
" 19.—Luton v. Tottenham, Sergt. Lockwood.
" 21.—Bristol v. Brighton, J. O. Le Grand.
" 28.—Reading v. Bristol, S. R. Carr.

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Second League games for to-morrow (Saturday):—
At New Brighton, Gainsboro' v. New Brighton, F. Townsend.
At Loughboro', Burton v. Loughboro', A. Nall.
At Small Heath, Burslem v. Small Heath, W. T. Henn.
At Lincoln, Darwen v. Lincoln, A. G. Hines.
At Blackpool, Walsall v. Blackpool, J. R. Prowse.
At Grimsby, Glossop v. Grimsby, A. G. Harvey.
At Barnsley, Barnsley v. Luton, W. G. Whitsed.
At Manchester, Newton v. Manchester, J. Lewis.
At Woolwich, Leicester v. Woolwich, J. Jeffries.

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I understand that the "gate" on Saturday realised about £120 and that the takings on the previous Thursday were £40.

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Some persons have taken umbrage at my allusion to Ekins's display of last week and have accused me of inciting the crowd to "chip" the players. The accusation is unfounded. It has never been