

English Cup

GAINSBOROUGH TRINITY v. LUTON.

Played at Gainsborough on Saturday.
Result:—

Luton	nil
Gainsborough	nil

The teams were as under:—

Luton—Platt; Jackson and McCurdy; F. Hawkes, White, and R. Hawkes; Warner, Fitzpatrick, Brown, Gittins, and Barnes.

Gainsborough Trinity—Bagshaw; Prescott and Cartwright; Dixon, Jenkinson, and Farrow; Northey, Kitchen, Ingham, Holmes, and Foxall

Referee, Mr. A. Brigg (Blackburn).

Although by the time these notes are in the hands of readers, another and it is hoped an even more successful match will have taken place, doubtless those who were unable to take the tedious journey into Lincolnshire will be interested in a few comments upon the game at Gainsborough. Under the circumstances a detailed report is not required, but whilst no goals came along there were several interesting items connected with the match. Eleven players made the journey as far as Retford on Friday evening, Hogg being left at home because of an injured leg, and R. Hawkes delaying his journey until Saturday morning. The arrangements at Retford were thoroughly satisfactory, and Saturday morning was spent quietly there, the party leaving by the mid-day train and reaching Gainsborough after the ten miles' ride in good time.

Gainsborough are one of the struggling clubs, and their ground does not possess many of the modern improvements for accommodating a crowd. But it is ample for their modest requirements. One of their officials informed me that at the Second League fixture with Stockport County the previous Saturday the takings were just over £40, and this on a fine afternoon! It was a bit curious that both teams should be playing a reserve man at right back. Prescott, who turned out in this position for Gainsborough, is an amateur, and was in the same college team as A. Mander and A. Eling, both of whom have played for Luton Reserves for several seasons, although the former now wears Hitchin colours.

Encouraged by the crowd, which numbered just over three thousand, the home players went off with great dash, but were evidently excited and finished with many wild lunges. Just at the start Luton's defence was a bit shaky, and if the Trinity players had kept their heads better, it might have had serious consequences for Luton. Quite early in the game Jackson came into contact with Foxall, and two or three times the Gainsborough winger managed to get through, but he made little or no use of the opportunities. Less than twenty minutes from the commencement, Foxall, in making one of his wild rushes, brought Jackson down badly, and it was evident that the Lutonian had met with a somewhat serious injury. The local crowd quickly assumed that Jackson was shamming because of Foxall getting away, but as he did not rise when the attack failed, it was clear that this view was far from justifiable.

Jackson went off and White dropped back into his place, while Fitzpatrick blossomed out as a centre half-back, and, by the way, Ingham knew it before many minutes expired, for he was completely bottled up, and gave little anxiety to Platt all through the game. When Jackson came back he first took up the inside-right position, but he only spoilt the combination, being quite unable to get the ball when it meant meeting another player. Therefore Warner dropped inside, and Jackson limped up and down the line, waiting for chances instead of attempting to make them.

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The first half ended with a blank sheet, and this about represented the play, for neither side had found the goalkeepers a deal of work. But in the second half Luton had decidedly the better of the game, and with a fair share of luck would have won easily. Once or twice at least Luton suffered through the referee failing to notice infringements by a none too scrupulous defence. Brown was twice fouled inside the penalty area, but not even a free kick was given. Several really good attempts were only kept out in an extremely lucky manner. Once the ball hit a player, and he saved unconsciously, as it were, while on another occasion Warner put in a particularly fine effort, a la Fulham match, but it missed the goal just as a small crowd of Lutonians on the stand were shaping their mouths to shout "Goal."

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Gittins broke through in good style near time. This brought Bagshaw out several yards, and forcing Gittins over in the direction of the corner flag, he ultimately saved the situation, for Gittins taking the ball the merest trifle too far, it just rolled over the line before he got his centre in. Having an open goal to shoot at, Brown made no mistake and promptly placed the ball in the net. Naturally, the crowd behind the ropes at that end set up a big shout, and the referee fell in with their view of the incident and disallowed the goal. He was probably correct in doing this, but evidently it was the shout of the spectators which drew his attention to the infringement, for at the moment he was not well up with the ball.

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This was really Luton's final opportunity of winning the match, but knowing the replay would have to be at Luton, the players doubtless were content with their partial success. That, to a certain extent, was the feeling among the supporters, for it was recognised that a further match would enable matters to right themselves financially.

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It will be gathered that Platt had little to do, but he did that little well and gave confidence to the rest of the team. McCurdy played his usual steady game but for one slip which was ultimately muddled away. The surprise packet, however, was White, who tumbled to the position of right back at once and never gave the slightest cause for uneasiness. The half-backs were in good form, even when the reorganisation of this division took place, for Fitzpatrick made a most effective centre-half, and both Bob and F. Hawkes were in champion form. Foxall is looked upon as something wonderful at outside-left in local

circles, but he flattered only to deceive, for if he did manage to slip by his half and full back, he simply threw away his chances by some of the wildest shooting it has been my fortune to witness.

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As a wing Barnes and Gittins were naturally the better pair, but this cannot be blamed to Warner, who played a fine game practically single-handed. Brown worked hard to get a goal, and the fact that he got the ball in the net twice is ample proof of this.

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Gainsborough Trinity lacked method in every department, unless the vigorous attempts of Jenkinson to stop the opposing front string by some means, fair or unfair, can be put down to a studied method. Judging from Saturday, visiting teams have rather a rough time at Gainsborough, and most people will agree that it was a fine performance to keep them out.

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It is rather a curious fact that although Gainsborough were members of the English League when Luton performed in that competition for three seasons, they have never yet won a game against Luton.

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Unfortunately, the gate proved to be the smallest of the whole 32 ties, and Luton's share, including fares, did not amount to £40, which will mean a big loss on the week's expenses, especially after the extra cost incurred in travelling down overnight.

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One interesting item was noted on the return journey. The Great Northern Railway ran three excursions to Gainsborough, Lincoln, and Grimsby respectively, but from Boston to Hatfield all travelled by the same train, and the fact that all three Southern teams to visit Lincolnshire should make a draw and thus compel the Lincolnshire clubs to come South, was looked upon as decidedly curious.

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The Gainsborough correspondent of the "Morning Leader" writes:—"In the North and Midlands there is a prevailing impression that Southern clubs are not good Cup fighters, but after Saturday's results the impression will exist no longer. At Gainsborough it was considered that Trinity would win pretty comfortably, but the home side cut up badly, and Luton administered a severe shock to the Trentside footballers. They looked for a side which would play pretty exhibition football, and would lack the speed and dash which generally win Cup-ties. Luton, however, totally deceived them, for they fought through a typical Cup-tie in genuine Cup-tie fashion.

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"If the home team suffered by the absence of Betts, their stalwart and clever left back, Luton were more heavily handicapped by the injury to Jackson, and for nearly the whole of the game they may, in perfect honesty, be said to have played ten men. Even then they played with more confidence than did Trinity, and White, who dropped to full-back, letting in Fitzpatrick at centre-half, did wonderfully well, and Fitzpatrick was always cool, clever, and judicious. Trinity did not play their customary game. The best forward work was done by the wingers, Foxall making some fine flashes on the left, but he spoiled his work by his wild finishes. Bagshaw kept an almost perfect goal, and Prescott and Cartwright were safe and strong at back. Jenkinson, however, was the shining light of the team. He did two men's work at centre-half. On the whole, Trinity were rather fortunate in drawing.

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"Platt, in the Luton goal, gave a very fine exhibition, and McCurdy was the best back on the field. The halves were steady and reliable, but the forwards, though tricky and generally clever in midfield, were not strong in front of goal. Warner played a brilliant wing game, and placed centre after centre with beautiful accuracy, but the other forwards failed to take the chances thus offered. Still, Luton did considerably the most pressing, and on the form shown should win the replayed tie at Luton on Wednesday."