

DEFENDERS IN THEIR MOST RELENTLESS MOOD

Success Was Deserved And Well Earned

By **CHILTERN**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR ... 0
LUTON TOWN 1
Stephenson.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR.—Hooper; Ward, Whatley; Burgess, Hitchins, Buckingham; Sargent, Hall (G. W.), Hall (A. E.), Duncan, Tomkin.

LUTON TOWN.—Coen; King, Dunsmore; Finlayson, Dreyer, Roberts; Carroll, Redfern, Billington, Connelly, Stephenson.

Referee.—F. J. Lowe, Bristol.
This, I think, will be classed as Luton Town's best performance of the season. They went to White Hart Lane, and smashed 'Spurs' proud home record, a feat which most of the "cracks" of the Division had failed to accomplish.

In doing so, they broke the home players' hearts, too, and those who were only too eager to cry "Lucky Luton" at the end, received scant sympathy from me.

By the way some people were talking after the match, it would seem that 'Spurs should have won by a substantial margin, but they were mostly Londoners who were sadly disappointed at their team's poor showing.

Make no mistake about this. Luton deserved the points. They beat their opponents at every phase of the game, and no success has been more hardily earned.

MIGHT HAVE HAD A BIGGER LEAD

There were narrow escapes and many missed chances at the Luton end, I know, but what of the good fortune the 'Spurs' goal had at times?

The Town might easily have had a bigger lead, for Billington was desperately unlucky with two rousing shots, and might well have done the "hat trick."

Main honours in this great win must go the defence. They fought every inch of the way, and not for many weeks have I seen every defender in such a relentless mood. Relentless is the right word for it.

They simply did not know what it was to be beaten, and went into tackles with all they had. They hustled and hustled the 'Spurs forwards right off their game, and the crowd did not like it.

ABOUT THOSE FREE KICKS

Several free kicks were awarded against the Town defenders; many were deserved, some were not, but there was nothing of a vicious nature, and they were penalised mostly because in their eagerness to get the ball away, they went just a little too far.

However, these rugged tactics incensed the crowd, and for some reason or another, they gave Dunsmore "the bird" for more than half the match.

He was pulled up for a foul on Sargent, and then the booing began. It began every time the ball went near him afterwards, and the left back deserves a special note of praise for his coolness under very trying conditions.

WHEN DUNSMORE WAS SPOKEN TO

His offence did not warrant such treatment, but the crowd were further displeased when he and Hall (G. W.) had a little "spar" right in front of the main stand.

Dunsmore was spoken to by the referee, but Hall got off scot-free, and it was he who had begun the argument. That was one official decision I could not understand, and there were one or two more.

The most obvious foul during the match was by Dreyer in the first half when he pulled Hall (A. E.) back by his jersey when he was in full cry for goal.

Had not Dreyer committed the infringement, I think Hall might have scored, but that is not the type of tactics I like to see.

This may have had some bearing on

the later treatment of Dunsmore, and I think it more than probable that the crowd got the two mixed up.

A lot has been made of the fouls, but I have seen as many in several matches this season, and against Luton, too. Some of the play of the Luton defenders was not too gentle, but after all, this is a man's game, and not a kindergarten exercise, and 'Spurs did not exactly treat the match as a practice outing either.

It was a typical hard game between two neighbours, and, in a way it reminded me of the old struggles with Watford. It was hard graft all the time, with purple patches of grand football.

DEFENCE PLAYED FOR SAFETY

The Luton defence was just grand, and what I liked most of all was the way they played for safety. If the ball came to them anywhere in the region of the goalmouth, and there was the slightest suspicion of danger, it was booted into the crowd.

Not very pretty tactics, some will say. No, but how effective they were, and how we have longed for something of the sort in previous matches.

If supporters will think back, they will remember occasions when goals have been thrown away because of a penchant among the defenders for dribbling, and hesitating in the danger zone.

This is no feature of the Town defence these days, and it certainly was not on Saturday. "Safety first" was the motto, and if the home supporters did not like it, they could not blame Luton, for the 'Spurs gave us a sample of real spoiling tactics earlier in the season.

'SPURS GIVEN THEIR OWN MEDICINE

One surprise I had, and that was the success with which the Town worked the offside trap. They beat their opponents at the game which they have practised so assiduously, and though I have no complete record of the number, I should think that 'Spurs were caught more often than were Luton.

Another thing that struck me very forcibly about the Luton display was the way the defenders covered up. There was rarely a gap of any description in defence, and this is one of the reasons why so many home attacks came to nought.

They simply could not break down the barrier, with the result that it was not often that they got within shooting distance. Added to this was the fact that their shooting was very poor, and they did miss some opportunities.

DUNCAN MADE MISS OF THE MATCH

The most flagrant miss of all was by Duncan late in the second half. It followed a free kick taken by Ward, and placed high into the goalmouth. Coen came out to fist away, but missed the ball completely, and Duncan was left with an open goal.

The ball was running away towards the far post, but nevertheless it was a gift. Somehow or another, he hooked the ball over when he must have been standing almost under the bar.

The explanation of Coen missing the ball is quite simple. An opponent got hold of his legs while he was in the air, but the referee missed the incident.

That was the nearest the 'Spurs came to saving their home record, and apart from a miss by Hall (A. E.) in the first half, there was very little to give the many Luton supporters a shock.

HALL (A. E.) SHOULD HAVE SCORED

Hall should have scored on this occasion when he fastened on to a bad pass by Dreyer, and blazed over the top with only Coen to beat. 'Spurs had the ball in the net once, but it did not count because of offside.

Hall (G. W.) and Buckingham got in a couple of sizzling shots that Coen saved well, and there were two more from Hall (A. E.) that went over the top. These were the 'Spurs' best efforts, but they were not good enough.

On the other side of the scales was the wonderful shot by Billington in the first half that Hooper just managed to touch on to the bar, and then another in the second half when Redfern put the ball across and the centre-forward's shot struck Hooper's legs.

LUTON SHOULD HAVE HAD A PENALTY

There were other close things, too, and there were few on the ground who did not think that Luton should have had a penalty in the first five minutes when Ward handled. To my mind, there was not an atom of doubt about the offence. The full back pulled the ball down as Stephenson tried to slip it past him.

Appeals from the Town players went unheeded, as they did later in the game when Carroll had his legs kicked from under him as he was preparing to shoot.

There was some doubt whether the incident happened in the penalty area,

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but that did not matter much, for the referee simply allowed play to proceed.

LUCKY 13 MINUTES

The only goal came after 13 minutes, and what a goal it was. It simply went to show the value of an accurately placed long pass.

'Spurs had been forcing play on their left when King came out with the ball, and, seeing STEPHENSON unmarked, swung it right across the field to him. Hitchins and Ward seemed to leave it to each other, and the left winger got the ball under control and drove it past Hooper as the goalkeeper came out.

It was a grand piece of work, and the ball was touched only twice in its transit from some yards inside the Town half to the 'Spurs' net.

Luton played some beautiful football in the first half-hour, and throughout the match their attacks were better staged and more intelligently carried out than were those of the 'Spurs.

NO FINISH ABOUT THE 'SPURS

At times the inside forwards had to concentrate on defence, but when they did move up into attack, they found gaps in defence that the 'Spurs never managed to find in Luton's.

Towards the interval Luton had to withstand some pretty fierce pressure, but there was never any finish about it. It was the same tale in the second half, with the Town often on the defensive, but always dangerous when they got away.

They did not fight a purely defensive battle by any means, and there were times when the forwards swept down the field in most menacing style.

During the first part of the second half 'Spurs threw everything they knew into attack, but long before the end they became quite discouraged, and in the closing stages Luton were doing the pressing and leading the home defenders a merry dance.

NASTY INJURY FOR ROBERTS

'Spurs did gather their forces together for a last minute bid when Roberts had to leave the field with a cut head. That was less than two minutes from the end, and Roberts was loth to go. However, he had no option, for the wound was bleeding profusely, and two stitches were inserted afterwards.

He received the injury when he and Duncan collided in going up to head the ball. The one last desperate attack was driven off, and the Luton players went off the field hugging each other in their excitement.

Yes, there was enough excitement for anyone, and Luton won deservedly. They took one of their chances, and the defence saw to the rest.

It is rather difficult to single out individual players after such a victory, but, dealing with the defence first, I think that chief honours must go to King, Dunsmore and Roberts.

KING WAS MAGNIFICENT

King was magnificent, and Tomkin, the youngster making his first appearance in the League side at Tottenham, could never get the better of him. If he did manage to round him, King was back in a trice and usually outpaced and robbed him.

In the second half the right-back did the work of two men. Several times I saw him rush across to the left and belt the ball into the crowd when danger threatened in that quarter.

His tackling was deadly, and it is worthy of note that he did not have one foul given against him during the whole of the match.

DUNSMORE SHUT OUT SARGENT

Dunsmore was equally as good, and if Tomkin had an uncomfortable time, the more experienced Sargent was little better off. Dunsmore simply did not give him the opportunity to get the ball under control, and did his side a great service by the way he held this very dangerous winger.

At one time I thought the crowd would worry him, but he simply went on with his work as if there was no one watching and shouting at him. His first time kicking was an invaluable trait, and he was another who disdained the fancy stuff.

Full marks to Roberts who played a real captain's part. It was a pity he got such a crack so near the end, but his job was done then.

Before the match it was agreed that much hung on Roberts's ability to shut out Willie Hall, and although I thought that he was quite equal to this task, I was scarcely prepared for the International being shut out so completely.

ROBERTS COVERED UP FINELY

After the early stages, he was rarely seen, so closely did Roberts mark him. Apart from that, the left-half was ever on the look out for a weak spot, and his covering work could not have been bettered.

If I have singled out these three, it does not mean that the others suffered very much by comparison. They did not, and each did an honest job of work.

Finlayson was outstandingly good throughout, and he ran himself out in his efforts to defend, and to provide material for the attack at the same time.

He put in a tremendous amount of hard work, and at the same time contrived to play clever, effective football.

Nor must I forget the stolid, courageous Dreyer, who was always in the thick of things. In the opening stages he had one or two shaky moments, but he gradually settled down to his normal game.

In the second half particularly, he

had a stranglehold on the middle of the field, and did not venture far from his own penalty area. Always a stumbling block, his tackling was deadly and his kicking consistently good.

Coen completed an unbeatable rear-guard, and kept a clean sheet for the second week in succession, which is something unusual these days. He was sure in all his work, and his sound sense of positioning enabled him to deal with everything that came his way.

FORWARDS DID THEIR PART WELL

The forwards did not have so much limelight as the defence, but, nevertheless, they played their part admirably. The inside men, Redfern and Connelly, did their share in defence, and they did work hard, too.

There was a tendency on the part of both to hang on too long, and it was most marked in Connelly. Still, they compared favourably with the 'Spurs'

pair, and though Redfern is not yet back to his best, were more effective.

Billington, as usual, caused a great deal of trouble to the opposing defence, and his general work continues to improve.

He deserved more than one goal for his persistency, and with any luck at all he would have had a couple. Although at times he was playing something of a lone hand, he gave Hitchins quite as much as he could cope with.

Stephenson had another splendid match, and apart from his match-winning goal, did many other things that were above the average. The burly Ward never managed to completely subdue him, and the left winger was always a thorn in his side.

Carroll, too, did a lot of clever work, and will do even better when he receives the right sort of support. His centres were beautifully made, and he has come into the team to stay.