

Words: Mike Royden

Everton and Saints – our first league meeting



Our experience of second-tier football has been rare and, thankfully, brief but that's where the first league meeting between Everton and Southampton took place.

It was at Goodison Park on 20 December 1930 and the Blues were in the Second Division for the first time in our history, suffering relegation just two years after winning the League Championship in 1928, when Dixie Dean famously contributed 60 goals.

The Saints came into the game on the back of a 5-0 win against Bury the previous week, while the Blues were in a rich vein of form and topped the table, despite losing 5-2 at Burnley seven days earlier.

It proved to be a hard-fought match. The wet and muddy conditions clearly hampered Everton's neat passing game but they were still the



dominant force. Dixie Dean opened the scoring after just six minutes with a deft header from a centre by Jimmy Stein.

However, Southampton equalised through Arthur Wilson after 31 minutes, from a corner by Bert Jepson.

A second-half Everton bombardment followed and it was mainly Bert Scriven's good work in the Southampton goal that kept the hosts at bay until late in the game.

In the 85th minute, Dixie bagged a second header following good work by Welsh international Tom Griffiths to give Everton a 2-1 victory.

Line-ups:

EVERTON: Coggins; Lowe, Cresswell; Britton, Griffiths, Thomson; Critchley, Dunn, Dean (captain), Johnson, Stein.
SOUTHAMPTON: Scriven; Hough, Keeping; Adams, Shelley, Lockett; Jepson, Fraser, McIlwaine, Wilson, Arnold.

The Saints had to wait until their last home game of the season to take their revenge. The game at The Dell gave many of the ex-patriot Blues now residing in the city the

opportunity to celebrate the promotion that had already been secured. Many

had relocated there with their families following the move of Cunard and White Star Line operations to Southampton just a few years earlier.

The game was played on another atrocious day of wet weather on a waterlogged pitch. Southampton won 2-1, thanks to a brace from Wilson to add to the goal he'd scored at Goodison, with Dean replying for Everton.

Everton finished as Champions, Dean passed 200 career goals during the season, while Southampton finished ninth.

Original programme from The Everton Collection which can be consulted (by appointment) in Liverpool Record Office www.evertoncollection.org.uk

Thanks to Billy Smith: bluecorrespondent.co.uk
 Images from the Everton Collection and the family of Tommy Johnson.

