

APRIL 1978: NO NOTES TAKEN

Southampton 0-0 Tottenham Hotspur

SOUTHAMPTON
1 Peter Wells
2 Manny Andruszewski
3 David Peach
4 Steve Williams
5 Chris Nicholl
6 Malcolm Waldron
7 Alan Ball
8 Phil Boyer
9 Ted MacDougall
10 Nick Holmes
11 Tony Funnell
12 Trevor Heberd

Venue	The Dell, Southampton
Date	Saturday, 29th April 1978
Competition	Football League Division 2
Referee	Mr D J Biddle (Bristol)
Attendance	28,846

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR	
1	Barry Daines
2	Terry Naylor
3	Jimmy Holmes
4	Glenn Hoddle
5	Don McAlister
6	Steve Perryman
7	John Pratt
8	Neil McNab
9	Chris Jones
10	John Duncan
11	Peter Taylor
12	Gerry Armstrong (used)

Match Details			
	0-0		

I was writing regularly about the football matches I'd attended by April 1978. In this season, when Saints were promoted (regaining the first division place they'd lost back in 1974), my thoughts were written into a page-a-day 1978 diary. However, nothing was written about this game which was between two promotion contenders.

Saints, barring a most bizarre swing in goal difference, were already there but Tottenham's fate was very much in the balance. Four teams were in contention but only three could go up. It was really between Spurs and Brighton & Hove Albion to determine who would grab that vital third spot. Spurs, with a win, could take the runners-up space and Saints would finish third. Leaders Bolton Wanderers were already up but were now going for the title.

The atmosphere was red hot and tense, akin to a cup final. It was an all-ticket affair and hooliganism was beginning to get a grip in those times to the extent that steel fences had been erected at the Archers Road end of the ground where the visiting fans had been penned. Some of their fans seemed intent on spending the entire match trying to bust through the fencing to gain access to the pitch, thankfully without actually succeeding.

No notes were written into my diary. This was most unusual, after all it was the last match in Division 2. Perhaps it was because the season had finished after this game and I'd just forgot? But perhaps this was because the tense game I'd watched suggested to me that my interest in the professional game was sadly on the wane.

There is little point saying much more about this one. But if the reader is keen then there is plenty written about it by others, just by searching on the internet. This outcome suited both teams and it seemed inconceivable that Tony Funnell, who'd come through late in the season and had registered some very important goals in the run in, missed a rather simple chance from close range, hitting the post, which was the closest either side came to registering a goal.

There was a suggestion after the match that Bolton had lost, which indicated that Saints might have been Division 2 champions but that was soon dispelled as Bolton did claim the title. Tottenham took that last promotion position and have remained at the top level of English football since. They shared 56 points with Brighton (who'd won their final match) and the Londoners goal difference was 34 whilst the Seagulls was 25. Back in October Spurs had beaten Bristol Rovers 9-0 which obviously helped their goal difference by that same amount overall.

It might seem strange but there is a worse 0-0 to write about but this match certainly held that tag at that time. Halifax Town v Rochdale in 1982 takes it but the award for 'my worst recorded game' could easily go to this match.