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SOCCER STARS KICK OFF WITH NEW DEAL

As King Football kicks off to another great year, millions thrill to the nation's favourite Saturday afternoon sport. Into the limelight again come the stars of the game - the men who do so much and (by comparison with top liners in other jobs) get so little for it. Men like magnetic magical Stanley Matthews. Not all are so fortunate as the Blackpool and England outside right who runs a thriving hotel business. For though they may be top drawing-cards on a club's lists, well under a thousand-a-year is the most any soccer star can earn from the game, under fixed player's union ruling. Some are lucky enough to become trainers, thus defying the time limit on a footballers' working life; but all too few survive beyond their middle thirties in the profession. To equip the perhaps soon-to-be-forgotten man of soccer for jobs outside the sport, spare-time vocational training schemes are in operation. Some famous players - like legless Willy Hall, formerly of Spurs and England - set up in Sports Businesses to capitalise on their hard-won fame. But for those without star names, the future is seldom bright.

Another Spurs player - Goalie Ted Ditchburn - ranks with those who strike while their name is Green. Near the White Hart Lane ground in Tottenham Ted runs a growing ticket agency.

Skilled hands go with the nimble feet of Preston and England winger Tom Finney - his future assured in an engineering business which he shares with his brother.

Yet another great player to launch on a simultaneous career off the field is Blackpool International Stan Mortensen, Fancy Goods shop-keeper. Unlike the turnstiles and the Pools promoters the men who make the game seldom make fortunes. As the new season opens, may Soccer see an end to the tragedy of its good sportsmen unsportingly treated. Soccer must learn to "play the game."