

BARNSELEY'S REVENGE

Luton Forwards Were Well Held

BY CHILTERN

At Barnsley yesterday.

BARNSELEY 3
Fisher (2), Barlow.

LUTON TOWN 1
Roberts.

Teams as Saturday, except Hunt for Hamill in Barnsley side.

IT was not until seven minutes before the advertised time of kick-off that Referee Dutton decided play was possible at Oakwell. The ground was shrouded in fog, and it was only just possible from the terraces to see the goalposts. The gates were opened five minutes before the start, and about 8,000 were present when the teams turned out.

Play began five minutes late, and the players were mere ghostly figures, those on the opposite side of the field being almost invisible. For 25 minutes this went on, and then the density increased and visibility was reduced to about 20 yards. The referee called the players and the linesmen together, and after a short confab they left the field.

As soon as they had gone the fog began to clear, and almost immediately the announcement was made that the referee would make an inspection, and in ten minutes' time the light was good enough for the players to turn out, and subsequent play was visible.

Until near the end there was no further interruption.

It was little short of a miracle that the match was finished, and at the start it looked any odds on an abandonment.

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN BETTER

It would, perhaps, have been better for Luton if the game had not started, but Barnsley were worthy winners, though an odd goal in their favour would have been rather more representative of the run of play.

Barnsley pulled out the better football, though the Town players told me afterwards that it was not so good as Barnsley played at Luton. The forwards were more impressive as a line than the Town attack. They opened out the play, and Asquith and Barlow showed up particularly well. These two hard-working forwards were something above the ordinary in cleverness, and Lang and Fisher were given plenty of scope in the first half. They caused some damage, too, and it took both Mackey and Smith some time to get their measure.

FAST WINGERS

Both the Barnsley wingers were fast, and Lang combined strength and clever footwork with his speed. In the first 20 minutes he was definitely the danger man of the home forwards, but later Mackey held him well, and eventually almost blotted him out.

Barnsley kept the ball on the move, but the Town forwards held it too close, doing too much tip-tapping and back passing, and the three inside forwards were often bunched in the middle.

As a line they were far from their best, though this can be attributed in some degree to the fact that Payne was hardly in the picture, and looked as if he were far from being fit. He had scarcely a shot at goal, and only rarely did he get the ball out to the left wing with the long ground pass that has been a feature of some of his games this season.

Dawes suffered in consequence, and did not have so much of the ball, but when he did he found in Shotton a worthy foe; the Town winger, however, got across several good centres.

STEPHENSON STARVED

Stephenson was practically starved in the second half, yet in the first session he was the Town's most dangerous forward, and some of his centres should have been improved upon. After the interval Bokas played well up to Stephenson.

Roberts and Vinall were workers, and the former had as many shots at goal as any of his colleagues. His goal was a beauty, and he had hard luck with a couple of drives.

Vinall led the line cleverly, although he did not shoot as well as he can; Watson kept very close to him, but the centre-forward often left the home pivot standing by brilliant footwork. The main weakness of the forwards was in finishing, and the nearest they came to scoring in the second half was the result of two slips by Binns. Twice the goalkeeper dropped the ball, and he was lucky to find it running away from the Town forwards who were following up.

COULD NOT PULL IT OUT

In the second half the Town forwards always appeared to have a chance of saving the game if they could pull out something extra, but 11 minutes from the end Barnsley put the issue beyond doubt with their third goal. To that point it had been anybody's game, but Barnsley were always the more impressive, and always looked the more likely to increase their lead.

Near the end Payne and Dawes changed places, and Nelson and Mackey joined in the attempts to get a goal, but without success.

Nelson had keen tussles with Hunt, and generally came out on top, though the centre-forward's rushes caused him some concern.

DEFENCE

Finlayson was better than Fellowes, who was rather slow in getting into the tackle; both were almost run off their feet at times, and were not so prominent as usual in distributive work. Smith and Fisher had hot tussles, and both were spoken to by the referee

before the end. Smith's keen tackling was not always to the liking of the crowd, but he effectively checked Fisher, who was a danger man in the first half.

Mackey settled down after the first 20 minutes, and kicked a very good length.

Coen again gave a brilliant display, and three of his saves in the first half were magnificent; he was fearless, and several times dived at the feet of Hunt and snatched the ball away when the centre-forward looked to be a certain scorer.

THE PLAY

Luton lost the toss, but were first to attack, Vinall shooting over after good work by Roberts. Barnsley made ground on the left, and Lang sent across from a good position, when he might have done better. Lang sent over a centre just afterwards, and Smith upset Barlow when the inside right was within shooting range.

Coen made a clever save from Asquith, and Nelson held up Hunt when the latter took a pass from Barlow. Mackey cleared strongly, and the Town left advanced, Stephenson centring well for Payne to shoot over.

Barnsley returned, and Coen punched away from Lang. The pressure was maintained, and Coen again saved brilliantly from Hunt at point blank range. Mackey stopped Lang, but the left winger regained possession and centred for Hunt to put in a great shot, but once more Coen was equal to the occasion, diving at full length to make a grand save.

FIRST GOAL

After 15 minutes Barnsley scored. Asquith worked through; Coen came out and stopped the ball, but with Asquith close on him could only divert it to the left, and FISHER dashed in and netted.

Luton broke away immediately, and the Barnsley goal escaped narrowly from Stephenson. After 19 minutes Vinall cleverly beat Watson and passed for ROBERTS to take the ball on the run and shoot a fine goal, the ball passing just inside the upright.

Luton kept up the running for some time, and Stephenson centred well, Dawes shooting just wide.

Barnsley had another turn, and Coen saved his side again when he ran out and took the ball from the feet of Hunt. Barnsley had the better of the game, and Smith just scrambled the ball clear in another assault.

LEAD AGAIN

After 30 minutes Barnsley regained the lead. Finlayson tried to make ground, but was robbed, and Lang was sent through; there was some slackness in the Town defence, and the winger slipped the ball through to Hunt, who shot hard; Coen saved again, but the ball went to FISHER, who promptly drove it into the net.

Luton came back, and Vinall went through from Stephenson's pass, but Watson came up in the nick of time and saved the situation. Dawes, Roberts and Vinall all had shots before half-time came with the score:

BARNSELEY 2

LUTON 1

On restarting the Town goal underwent a bombardment, and Coen saved from Asquith and Hunt in quick succession, and Smith successfully tackled Fisher.

Mackey cleared the Town goal from danger when a free kick for hands was given against Nelson, and when Luton attacked Vinall got through after good work by Payne and Roberts, but Shotton dashed across and blocked his shot.

Dawes gained possession and centred, and Binns dropped the ball almost on the goal-line; Vinall made a great effort to get the ball through, but Bokas got it away.

Coen fumbled a shot at the other end, but recovered and got the ball away, and then each goalkeeper was tested in quick succession. Dawes fired over in another Luton attack, and Hunt was just off the mark when he was allowed to go through while the Town players were appealing for offside.

WILD SHOT

Luton pressed again, and Payne shot wildly when he had a good chance as Vinall headed past Watson and left the inside right with a clear run in.

Hunt again shot well, and Coen saved splendidly, but 11 minutes from the end Barnsley scored again. Lang centred well, and BARLOW, weaving his way through by clever footwork, gave Coen no chance with a terrific drive from the penalty spot.

The Town made great efforts to reduce the arrears, but failed, although forcing two or three corners that brought scrambles in the goal-mouth.

FOG SPOILS LEIGHTON'S CHRISTMAS GAME

A thick fog made play impossible in the Spartan League match, arranged for Christmas morning, between Leighton United and Berkhamsted Town at Leighton Buzzard.

A large crowd assembled and both teams were on the field, but after a wait of about an hour the fog increased and the referee had no option but to postpone the game. Gate money was returned.

At Berkhamsted on Boxing Day Leighton lost a Spartan League match by four goals to one after Evans had opened the scoring early in the play.