

Inaccurate Finishing Cost Town A Point

[By Chiltern]

COVENTRY CITY .. 0 LUTON TOWN 0

The Town did not quite manage to become the first team to take full points from Highfield-road this season, but they came too near to doing so for the comfort of most of the City supporters.

In fact, had Luton won by a convincing margin it would have been no more than they deserved, for they were much the better team.

Their superiority was most marked in the second half, which also brought their best opportunities of scoring, included a penalty kick with which Billington failed.

Other chances were allowed to slip by, and although at times it looked long odds against the City taking a point, they managed to hold on. That they did so was mostly due to the Town's lack of accuracy near goal, and partly to their own defence, in which George Mason showed that he is still a force to be reckoned with.

There was some excuse for the faulty shooting in that the ground was in an atrocious state after the frost. Hard lumps and holes made the ball liable to kick at critical moments.

In view of the conditions, it was surprising that such a high standard of football was attained. The Town played some grand stuff, especially in the second half, and had the going been more yielding, I am certain that they would have won comfortably.

TOWN HAD MORE METHOD

There was altogether more method in the Luton attack, and some bewildering passing movements often had the City defence floundering.

However, the nearest approach to a goal came just before the interval, when Goodyear drove the ball into the net. The referee, on the spot, promptly awarded the City a free-kick for "hands."

The ball struck Goodyear on the arm as it came across—an unlucky happening.

The best chances fell to Goodyear. From one he shot the ball against Wood from close range, and in the closing minutes looked a certain scorer when Duncan lobbed the ball over, but he rather surprisingly turned it wide of the post.

Those misses apart, Goodyear played so well as a last-minute deputy for Driver that he probably took a load of anxiety from the Manager's mind.

What would happen in case of injury to Daniel or Driver has been a talking point for a few weeks. Goodyear provided the answer, for he fitted into the scheme of things magnificently.

Always using the ball well, he struck up a happy understanding with Waugh, who was again a dangerous number. Every time Waugh came through on the inside of Coen, the City had to look out for trouble.

FEW CHANCES FOR BILLINGTON

Apart from the penalty kick which he placed along the ground wide of the post, Billington had few real chances.

He was closely shadowed by George Mason, who was seldom drawn out of position.

Daniel was again a terrific worker and settled down quite happily in yet another position. I thought he had scored in the second half when he headed in a Duncan corner, but Elliott scooped the ball away and Daniel's second attempt was diverted over the bar.

Duncan was accuracy itself in the way he made his centres, and his corner-kicks were beautifully taken. He usually carried too many tricks for Elliott.

After 14 matches in which at least one goal has been conceded, the defence had much on which to congratulate themselves in keeping a blank sheet.

It was only very occasionally that the City threatened to score. Consequently, Bywater had a fairly light afternoon, though he dealt confidently and safely with everything that came his way.

COOKE AND GAGER OUTSTANDING

There was an air of soundness about the whole defence and I made Cooke and Gager the outstanding figures.

Cooke never put a foot wrong from start to finish. Never flustered, he was always too much for Gardner, who had a poor match in consequence.

Gager dominated the middle of the field. Attack after attack came to a full stop when it reached him, and he took a grip on Smith which was never relaxed.

Beach, still feeling some slight effects of his ankle injury, did everything that was asked of him in his own characteristic way.

Soo's ankle injury was obviously troubling him, but he put in some brilliant play in attack. Gardiner gave his usual 100 per cent. display, and was always working with a large measure of success.

COVENTRY CITY: Wood; Elliott, Coen; Snape, Mason (G), Mason (R); Aldecoa, Barratt, Smith, Murphy, Gardner.

LUTON TOWN: Bywater; Cooke, Beach; Soo, Gager, Gardiner; Waugh, Goodyear, Billington, Daniel, Duncan.

Referee: C J Barrick, Northampton.