

In Defiance Of The Law Of Averages

[By Chiltern]

LUTON TOWN 1, PRESTON NORTH END 2

That any team should go ten matches without victory would seem to be in complete defiance of the law of averages, but the Town have achieved this extremely doubtful distinction.

Despite the fact that they had the greater share of the play at Kenilworth-road on Saturday, they seldom gave real promise that they would bring to an end this most depressing run.

To gain territorial advantage without goals is of no earthly use, which is a fact the Town have discovered the hard way this season and they were given an object lesson in the way to accept chances by North End.

First goal came after 17 minutes when HORTON stabbed the ball into the corner of the net furthest away from Hughes, and the second, seven minutes after the interval, when WAYMAN smacked the ball into the net from a low cross by Anders.

Both these were first-time efforts which gave the Town defence no time whatever to tackle—in marked contrast to some of the finishing attempts by the Town forwards.

One of their faults is that they are trying to make too certain of scoring something that arises to a large extent from lack of confidence due to the goal "drought."

The very act of getting the ball under control and then seeking the opening gives the opposing defence time to cover up, and quite a number of shots from the Town forwards cannoned off defenders.

JUST BEAT THE WHISTLE

When the Town did score, it was a snap affair by GLOVER, who drove the ball from near the edge of the penalty area and it sailed into the net after being deflected a little by a defender.

Not that the goal did the Town's cause a lot of good, for the ball only just beat the final whistle on its way to the net, and there was some doubt in spectators' minds as the players left the field about whether the goal had counted, for there was no time to re-start play.

Some of the Town's midfield play was clever, but, too often, it led nowhere and a great deal more snap is required in the finishing. As often happens though when a team is struggling they are not having the slightest luck in front of goal.

Kiernan looked as likely as anybody to score, and although many of his passes went astray, he had a reasonable match.

His partner, Stobbart, had quite a good first half, but faded out later, while Glover did considerably better after the interval than he did before it, when he was rarely in the picture. Taylor was much below standard and had a poor day.

Morton's ability to solve the centre-forward problem could scarcely be judged on this display, for he received only the bare minimum of workable passes, which meant he had little chance to show his worth.

Owen returned to play a strong, cool game, but neither Watkins nor Shanks was wholly impressive, especially in their use of the ball.

Blame for the first goal fell on Cooke, who was uncertain afterwards, but Aherne did well, with his clean kicking a notable feature.

Curious thing was that although he was on the losing side, Hughes had much less to do than had his counter-part, Newlands, but he accomplished confidently everything that came his way.

LUTON TOWN: Hughes; Cooke, Aherne; Watkins, Owen, Shanks; Stobbart, Kiernan, Morton, Taylor, Glover.

PRESTON NORTH END: Newlands; Walton, Scott; Docherty, Mattinson, Forbes; Anders, Horton, Wayman, Quigley, Morrison.

Referee: G. Tedds, Bestwood.

Attendance: 16,637.