

Defence Faltered Twice And A Point Was Lost

BY CHILTERN

Through this game the Town seemed to be working up to a climax in the form of a brilliant victory, but the closing stages brought happenings which made it an anti-climax after all. It was almost unbelievable that the City, after being second best almost from start to finish should have returned with a point, but that is how things turned out and the Town were robbed of their just reward by an equalising goal four minutes from the end.

Which all added up to one of the most disappointing occasions of the season, for the Town cannot afford to lose precious points as they did in this match and against Barnsley in the previous League game. Their display had been in keeping with the result, the fans would not have minded so much, but they saw their team playing so grand football in terrible positions and really forcing promotion-conscious Manchester City to take over a secondary role.

Neither Team Looked Their Part

They never looked their part and neither did the Town as if they are locked in a struggle against relegation. Their display against Barnsley Rovers, this term came in a breath of spring. There was hesitancy and lack of speed in this match with the forwards cutting in the City defence, the Town might easily have been three or four goals up by the interval. The most unlucky player in his first game again was George Stobbart, who had a brilliant first half which might easily have earned him a couple of goals.

Davie And Moore Were The Scorers

The spectacular Trautmann did much to keep the City's hopes alive, but he made an error minutes before half-time when he punched the ball away from a centre from the right and Davie's head met it and sent it into the net. With a goal lead earned by the undoubted superiority in the first half, the Town looked a good thing at half-time. They seemed to have put themselves in a very strong position when Moore opened his account for them 12 minutes after the resumption following a neat left-wing movement by Davie and Havenga.

Then A "Gift" For The City

A PART from one glorious opportunity that Westcott missed, the City forwards had not given much promise of scoring even one goal, let alone two, but a bit of luck came their way in the 65th minute to bring them a goal which, even then, did not seem to threaten the Town's lead. Streten, Owen and Westcott got tangled up together in going for a down-the-middle pass and with the ball running loose behind them, Smith was left with the simplest possible task of tapping the ball into an empty net. That was an unfortunate and, as it proved, costly lapse, but, even so, the Town had the chances to regain their two goals lead.

Missed Chance To Make It 3-1

THE best fell to Havenga, who went racing through the defence with the ball at his feet, and the crowd were getting ready to cheer another goal, but their cheers turned to groans when it was seen that the winger had shot the wrong side of the post. Trautmann narrowed the angle quickly. Credit goes to the City for the way they kept going until the end, and they began to press as the finish approached, but, yet, there seemed little imminent danger.

Headed Equaliser By Smith

EVERYBODY was convinced that the Town were steering capably home to a great victory when the worst possible thing happened. Some fiddling with the ball a good few yards outside the Town's penalty area caused the City to make ground, and there was a scramble near the 18-yards line. Watkins had a slash at the ball, missed it, and, eventually,

it was headed into the middle by Alison. Smith, again taking up good position, was there to meet it with his head, only about six yards from goal. Left open, he was able to aim for the corner of the net at the far post, and, although Streten went full length, he ball landed safely in the net.

Winner Nearly Came After That

EVEN then the thrills were not over, for a minute or so later, Moore had the chance to become the hero of the hour, for Stobbart raced through on the right-wing and crossed the ball low. Moore, bang in front of goal, met it, but sent it straight at Trautmann, who must have sighed with relief. That was the Town's last chance and a point which would have been of the utmost value just slipped away from their grasp. Results are what count in football, especially in the Town's present situation, but, for all that, there was plenty of ground for considerable satisfaction in their display in this match.

This Form Will Stave Off Relegation

HAD they shown similar form in the Cup-tie, there is not much doubt that they would have been still interested in the competition, but if they can reproduce it in the remaining League matches which will decide the future status of the club, then there should not be much doubt about them remaining in the Second Division. Until the closing stages, it would have been difficult to put a finger on a really weak link in the Town team, for the defence had been sound and the forwards ploughed through the mud and made splendid use of the ball.

Defence Had To Pay For Two Mistakes

UNFORTUNATELY, the defence made two mistakes late in the game and had to pay the full penalty and it is curious how these last few minutes have often been fatal for the Town this season. True, they had to operate during the second half in the worst of the conditions at the Oak-road end, but they must carry blame for dropping this point, for the forwards did their part well enough, apart from the fact that they might have had another goal or two. However, when a team becomes two up, it should have reasonable expectations of remaining on top.

Showed Soundness Otherwise

SO many times this season, the boot has been on the other foot, with the defence bearing

FOR THE RECORDS

LUTON TOWN 2
Davie, Moore.
MANCHESTER CITY .. 2
Smith (2).
LUTON TOWN: Streten; Cooke, Aherne; Morton, Owen, Watkins; Glover, Stobbart, Moore, Davie, Havenga.
MANCHESTER CITY: Trautmann; Branagan, Westwood; Spurdle, Kigby, McCourt; Alison, Paul, Westcott, Smith, Clarke.
Referee: L. D. Thompson, Workson.
Attendance: 12,087

the brunt of the weight and the forwards not getting the goals.

Yet in this match apart from the way in which the goals were conceded, the defence was solid enough and had a tight grip on the patchy City forward line.

Westcott, who can still put them into the back of the net when the chance comes along, had few opportunities of demonstrating that against Owen, who was very strong and most difficult to pass.

Aherne, back to his best form, kept Alison very much subdued, and Clarke did not flicker much into the picture until the later stages.

Previously, Cooke had been very much on top of the winger and his strong kicking of the heavy ball was a considerable asset.

It Was A Gruelling Job For Everybody

MORTON stuck to a gruelling job and played well throughout, but Watkins, brilliant in the first half and at the start of the second faded out a little towards the end.

This was understandable in view of the quagmire conditions and both teams knew they had been in a match after ploughing through the Kenilworth-road mud for 90 minutes. Streten with far less to do than Trautmann, was not so decisive in the way he cut out passes in side the penalty area as he is usually.

When the first goal was scored, there seemed to be some hesitancy on his part, but he was perhaps distracted by the close proximity of both Westcott and Owen, and by the possibility of the ball not reaching him through the mud.

GREYHOUNDS

Favourites Fared Well At Luton On Saturday

Five of the eight races at Luton Stadium on Saturday were won by favourites.

Traps 5 and 6 drew blanks, and the others provided two winners each.

I (410yds)—1. EMERY (1); 2. Cigar Joe (6); 3. Youma (4); 4. Clonmeen (2); 5. Desert Rat (3); 6. Silver King (5). 2. 7. 3. 4. 4. 25.59. Off 6.35.
Betting: Evens EMERY; 7-2 Cigar Joe; 4 Desert Rat; 5 Silver King.
Forecast: 15/9.

II (470yds)—1. ASHWOOD (2); 2. Salad (1); 3. The Abbot (5); 4. House Warmer (6); 5. Snowey (3); 6. Lone Eagle (4). 2. 1. 1. 1. 29.81. Off 6.55.
Betting: 2 ASHWOOD; 5-2 Snowey; 7-2 Salad; 5 Lone Eagle; 6 The Abbot; 7 House Warmer.
Forecast: 11/2-6.

III (410yds)—1. MR WOO (4); 2. Blue Dawn (5); 3. Little Rio (1); 4. Black Beauty (2); 5. Win's Boy (6); 6. Yvonne's Dream (3). 6. 8. 1. 2. 5.22. Off 7.16.
Betting: Evens Blue Dawn; 7-2 MR WOO; Black Beauty; 6 Win's Boy; 8 Little Rio; Yvonne's Dream.
Forecast: 11/2-1.

IV (410yds)—1. LITTLE SALLY (3); 2. Progress (1); 3. Waistcoat (6); 4. Whistling Wind (5); 5. Mobley (2); 6. Donny (4). Head, 3. neck 11. distance. 25.88. Off 7.36.
Betting: 7-4 LITTLE SALLY; 3 Progress; 7-2 Waistcoat; 5 Whistling Wind; 8 Mobley; 10 Donny.
Forecast: 11/2-9.

V (410yds)—1. SWEET SUE (1); 2. Red Ted (6); 3. Evening News (2); 4. Dinfolley (4); 5. Tracker (3). Head, 3. 5. distance. 25.12. Non-runner: Engaged (5). Off 7.55.
Betting: 2 SWEET SUE; 3 Red Ted; Evening News; Dinfolley; 10 Tracker.
Forecast: 18/9.

VI (470yds)—1. MALCOLM (2); 2. Charlie H (1); 3. Clancy (4); 4. Snuff (3). Short head, 1. 4. 28.99. Non-runners: Castle Rock (5); Black Mask (6). Off 8.16.
Betting: Evens MALCOLM; 2 Clancy; 7-2 Snuff; 10 Charlie H.
Forecast: 11/2-7.

VII (410yds)—1. THE GIANT (4); 2. Terry's Pal (6); 3. Exchange (3); 4. Panda (4); 5. Port Barn (2); 6. Recorder (1). 3. 3. 3. 3. 25.17. Off 8.30.
Betting: 11-10 Panda; 4 Terry's Pal; 6-4 THE GIANT; 10 Recorder; Exchange; Port Barn.
Forecast: 12/6-3.

VIII (410yds)—1. CORK TIP (2); 2. McGrane's Wish (6); 3. City Lights (1); 4. Mystery Manor (4); 5. Judge (2); 6. Maggie (5). 1. 6. 1. 2. 1. 25.51. Off 8.50.
Betting: 7-4 Mystery Manor; 3 McGrane's Wish; 6 City Lights; 4 CORK TIP; Judge 6 City Lights.
Forecast: 12/6-6.

RUNNERS AND SELECTIONS FOR TO-MORROW

7.30. 4. 1. 26. Captain Cople (Jan 21, tp 6, 24.84); 663 Fascination; 555 Ian's Pet; 164 Just Peter; 656 Moschier; 654 Peabody Boy.

Quality Play By The Inside Men

FEATURE of the attack was the quality of the inside-forward play contributed by Stobbart and Davie who, on this showing, can mould the line into a really potent force.

No one on the field worked the ball as well as did Stobbart in the first half when he constantly found gaps in the defence, and though he was quieter after the interval, he was always using the ball effectively, and striving hard to make openings.

So was Davie, who showed the hallmark of class in the way in which he beat his opponents and distributed the ball.

He had some cracks at goal, too, and added to the claims that are being made for him—that he is the best bargain the Town have made in years.

Moore May Prove To Be The Spearhead

TOO much could not be expected of Moore on his first appearance in this class of football, but he did sufficient to show that he can be the man to round off the cleverness of his inside partners.

His goal was well taken and he had one or two other powerful drives. Given time to settle down, he might well be the answer as the spearhead in the middle.

Glover turned in another useful game without being quite so dangerous as he can be on occasion, but his partnership with Stobbart looks promising, especially in the way in which they interchanged.

Havenga was definitely an improvement on Wyldes, judged on his Bristol display, and he provided some lively interludes without quite producing real accuracy, though it was from his cross that the second goal came.

Reserves Unlucky At Birmingham

THE Reserves, too, did not reap the reward they should have had at Birmingham where they gave their best display for weeks and yet went down by 2-1. They claimed that the City's first goal was offside and had what appeared to be a perfectly good goal by Jack Taylor disallowed.

Shanks, who was outstanding at outside-right, obtained the only goal with a screaming shot from 30 yards and Arnison, who came through this test with complete success, also played good football and had several shots at goal. Hall and Smith were outstanding in a defence which was mostly too good for the Birmingham forwards.

FOOTBALL

LUTON TOWN F.C.

LONDON MID-WEEK LEAGUE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7th

LUTON TOWN "A"

v.

FULHAM "A"

Kick-off 3 p.m.

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