

TOWN HAD JUST TWO MINUTES TO SPARE

Opportunist Mitchell Did The Trick Again

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN ... 2 BLACKBURN ROVERS 1

Two minutes to go and the Town look likely to lose yet another home point that should have been safely in the bag long ago. Still hammering away for the winner, they gain a free kick when Cummins is brought down heavily—not for the first time in the match.

Although he is almost in the inside-right position, Cummins takes the kick himself, cleverly “chipping” the ball over the heads of defenders into an open space where MITCHELL, also out of position, hurls himself at the ball and heads it into the net.

Down goes Mitchell under a flurry of bodies and, for many people on the ground, there is a wait until the heap had sorted itself out before they are certain who it was has snatched that dramatic winner.

Such was the dramatic ending at Kenilworth-road on Saturday.

When the excitement died down, it was Mitchell who was carried to the touch-line, out to the world, and who was eventually taken to the dressing-room with the cheers of the excited crowd still ringing in his ears.

So did the Town's left-winger again prove himself to be the winner of a match that if it had had any other result would have been sheer injustice.

Indeed, had the Town really had the run of the ball, or had they taken the fullest advantage of the chances that came their way, they would have whipped Blackburn just as completely as they did last season.

This time, however, things did not go quite so smoothly in front of goal and they did not make the most of the weakness of the Blackburn defence early on.

EARLY SIGNS OF PANIC

Then, there were definite signs of panic, especially when Pye was in possession of the ball, and the only wonder is that they managed to keep the score as low as two.

From a somewhat unexpected quarter came the first, though the marksman, WATKINS, has given previous examples this season of his shooting powers.

This time, he received the ball from a quickly-taken throw-in by Mitchell, swung in towards goal, and beat Elvy with a shot that found its way into the top corner of the net and which was leaving the goalkeeper all the way.

For half an hour the Town produced high-powered football that looked certain to produce further goals, but, somehow, did not, and they had to be content at the interval with this slender lead.

Only bad luck prevented Turner from increasing it with a shot that struck the foot of a post with Elvy beaten, and then came the shock of the match.

Blackburn's forwards had looked a completely innocuous lot, apart from one or two forays by Briggs, and then, suddenly, they were on level terms.

McLean picked up the ball just inside the Town half and hit it hard down the middle. Owen and BRIGGS went for it together, and it was the latter who gained possession to go on and drive the ball past Streten as he left his goal in a desperate attempt to narrow the angle.

In the minutes following that, Blackburn were more dangerous than at any other stage in the match, and the bustling Briggs twice came near to setting the Town struggling against arrears.

THEN, ALL WAS WELL AGAIN

Then, suddenly, all was well again, and the Town began seeking the winner that proved so elusive and which seemed further away than ever after Cummins had had a goal disallowed for off-side.

If the margin had been a little more convincing everybody would have been satisfied with this display but, even so, it would have been difficult to pick out any weak spot in the team.

There was a workmanlike look about it, with the forwards moving well, though they could perhaps have done a little more in the shooting line.

From Davies and Turner there was a lot of go-ahead, thrustful work, with Pye and Cummins, although tending to hold the ball overlong at times, doing most of the scheming, much of it successfully.

To the wide-awake opportunism of Mitchell, full credit must be given, and at times he showed Stuart a clean pair of heels. This would have happened more frequently had he received more through passes.

Apart from that unsettled 10 minutes when Blackburn got on top, Owen made a fine job of holding his old opponent, Briggs, and there was solid work from

Morton, captaining the team on his wedding day, and Watkins.

Dunne scarcely put a foot wrong and with Aberne usually the master of McLean, and Streten effective and confident in goal, the defence, again apart from that ten minutes, was very sound.

LUTON TOWN: Streten; Dunne, Aberne; Morton, Owen, Watkins; Davies, Turner, Pye, Cummins, Mitchell.

BLACKBURN ROVERS: Elvy; Stuart, Eckersley; Smith, Kelly, Bell; McLean, Crossan, Briggs, Quigley, Langton.

Referee: G. Pankhurst, Warwick. Attendance: 16,269.