

CUP-HOLDERS HAD A REAL FRIGHT

Back-To-Wall Fight By Handicapped Town

By Chiltern

BLACKPOOL 1 LUTON TOWN 1

A real back-to-the-wall fight by the Town in the second half of this Cup-tie at Bloomfield-road when the rhythm of their attack had been upset by an injury to Turner, earned them the right to a second meeting with the Cup-holders.

And I mean earned, for despite the balance of play which Blackpool so clearly held after the interval, the Town did more than enough to win their second chance.

Indeed, had they lost and this could have happened in the tense lying minutes of the game, they would have been regarded as desperately unfortunate in that they led for 78 minutes and battled on manfully under their handicap.

Blackpool fans had almost made up their minds that this was the only sample of Cup-tie football they would see this season when the equaliser arrived with only seven minutes left and it was a goal against which the Town appealed forcefully and vocally, but unsuccessfully.

Ironical part was that after Blackpool had tried so often to find a way through the Town's defensive wall by clever footwork and close, intricate passing, it was a hefty kick upfield from Shimwell that made the success possible.

He hit the ball hard and high down the middle and the Town defenders were certain that both MORTENSEN and Taylor were offside. Rightly the former accepted the simple chance of putting the ball into the net first and then awaited the argument.

On the Town's appeals, the referee went over to consult the linesman whose decision went against them.

LIVED TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY

So, Blackpool, in rather doubtful style, lived to fight another day and atoned in some measure for the way in which their forwards had wasted chances earlier.

On top for much of the second half, they were foiled by the quick covering of the defence and the brilliant work of Streten, who received an ovation all to himself at the end.

With the ball continually coming back to them, the defence had a real hammering in the second half, but always there was someone to extricate them from danger and, finally, when everything else had failed, Streten to pull off a magnificent save.

In the first half, there had been a different story, with the Town playing altogether the more effective football in attack and keeping the Blackpool defence, not too safe against the long, accurate pass, at full stretch.

This was the traditional Cup-tie football, with the ball made to do the work and this sort of movement brought the Town a great goal after only five minutes.

Davies sent Moore streaking away down the right wing, and from his centre, Shimwell could only head straight to CUMMINS.

Without hesitation, from the edge of the penalty area, the inside-left met the ball on the volley and sent it crashing past Farm, who was left helpless.

To describe that as a shock to the home fans is to under-estimate the effect it had, but some 10 minutes later, they looked confidently for an equaliser when Blackpool were awarded a penalty when Streten pulled down Mortensen after an offside claim had been refused.

'This is it,' everybody thought, but Brown, running almost nonchalantly at the ball on the penalty spot, missed the target completely.

After that, though Blackpool weaved a lot of patterns, they did not look so dangerous as the Town who missed a fine chance of consolidating their position

when Turner, with only Farm to goalkeeper's legs.

DESERVED TO LEAD AT THAT STAGE

The interval was reached with few not prepared to admit that the Town had earned their narrow beat, crashed the ball against the advantage and then came that great second half fight, with Turner a near-passenger on the wing, and everybody at full stretch to hold on to the slender lead.

For the Town, there could be nothing but praise for their part in this very good game, and the defence earned full marks throughout the piece.

While Streten played a starring role with his daring, agility and anticipation, he was splendidly covered by a defence that knew that the marking had to be close to diminish the effectiveness of this famous Blackpool forward line.

There was great strength in the middle line, where Morton and Watkins cut down to a very marked extent the potential threat there was from the international inside men, Taylor and Brown.

In the middle, Owen stuck relentlessly to the task of keeping out a Mortensen who was desperately eager to end his run of matches without finding the net, and Owen came through a testing time with great credit.

So did Aherne, who had one of football's most unenviable jobs in trying to keep "tabs" on Matthews. The ball did not begin to reach the winger consistently until midway through the second half, but Aherne was always there or thereabouts, and he never made the mistake of going straight in to tackle.

Although Jones was too far away from Perry at times, he completed a strong defence that deserved to go through this match with a clean sheet.

When at full strength, the forwards looked a fast-moving, dangerous lot, with Moore finding the open spaces and, in doing so, worrying Johnston a great deal.

Moore led the line with plenty of life, and there was good work, too, from Cummins, a brilliant, shrewd craftsman on this showing, and from Turner until he was injured.

Although Mitchell often showed Shimwell a clean pair of heels in the first half, Davies was rather the more dangerous winger, and he did a tremendous amount of work when he had to move inside.

BLACKPOOL: Farm; Shimwell, Garrett; Fenton, Johnston, Kelly; Matthews, Taylor, Mortensen, Brown, Perry.

LUTON TOWN: Streten; Jones, Aherne; Morton, Owen, Watkins; Davies, Turner, Moore, Cummins, Mitchell.

Referee: T. Seymour, Wakefield.