

FOILED
AGAIN!

CLOSING MINUTES BROUGHT BLACKPOOL ANOTHER REPRIEVE

Defences Still On Top In Prolonged Cup Battle

By Chiltern

BLACKPOOL 1 LUTON TOWN 1

Remarkable tribute to the power of both defences is that in 330 minutes of stern Cup football in this tie that is rapidly passing from the serial stage and assuming the proportions of a saga, is that only four goals have been scored.

On the other hand, this could be taken as a reflection on the finishing of both forward lines, who have not shown sufficient capacity for snapping up their scoring chances. Had either been able to do so, there would not be the necessity for yet another hard struggle at Wolverhampton on Monday.

Although by virtue of the fact that they have twice been reprieved by a goal in the dying stages of the game when their exit looked imminent, Blackpool can count themselves fortunate to still hold an interest in the competition, they could claim with some justification that they scarcely had the rub of the green at Villa Park on Monday.

For one thing they will claim as vehemently as did the Town about the legitimacy of Mortenson's equaliser in the first tie, that they scored in the first half, and will also point to the handicap they laboured under for the greater part of the second half through an injury to Johnston.

Yet, it was their captain, hobbling painfully, though not a complete passenger, at centre-forward, who gave them the right to a fourth attempt to knock out the Town with a goal four minutes from the end, just when the strong Luton contingent among this crowd of 31,663 (receipts £4,600) had made up their minds that it was West Ham for them on Saturday week.

Though they were pressing quite steadily and frantically switching players' positions in an endeavour to equalise, Blackpool could have had little hope of doing so at that late stage, especially with the Town defence playing so capably.

As things turned out, it was a mistaken policy on the Town's part to concentrate on holding during the last 10 minutes the slender advantage they had, but in a match of this character, the temptation to play "safe" is always great.

This late tendency to put too much emphasis on defence enabled Blackpool to rally, but the Town looked as safe as houses until there came that fateful corner by Matthews.

JONES NEARLY PREVENTED IT

As the ball came over, Mudie deflected it and it went to JOHNSTON, who from point-blank range, blazed it past the diving Streten, with the rush of Town defenders a fraction too late to stop the shot arriving.

Afterwards, Streten said that if he had not dived and obscured the view of Jones, the right-back, who was standing on the goal-line might well have been able to chest the ball away. As it was, it brushed his side on its path to the net.

Pandemonium broke out among the wearers of the tangerine favours and 22 leg-weary players began the extra half-an-hour when Blackpool, more confident after their goal, looked the more dangerous in attack.

Both the Town's goals against Blackpool have been obtained by CUMMINS and the one he gained in this match was a deftly taken affair when he fastened on to a beautiful through pass by Morton.

Close up to him as he got the ball under control, was Farm, but he blithely side-stepped the goalkeeper, before smashing the ball into the roof of the net with his left foot to put the Town ahead after exactly half-an-hour.

That success came at a time when Blackpool were threatening to take command though, earlier, the Town, playing fast, open football in attack, had been near to causing the downfall of the Blackpool defence and both Turner and Mitchell had missed possible chances.

There had been, too, a tremendous drive by Davies that Farm just pushed over the top but, to set against this, there were brilliant saves by Streten from Mudie, Brown and Perry.

Narrowest escape, though, came when Matthews shot somewhat unexpectedly and the ball dropped out of Streten's hands and, over the line, so Blackpool claimed.

Not that there was much chance for anyone to estimate whether the ball had crossed or not, for Jones was on the spot to kick away and remove the cause of argument.

INJURY TO JOHNSTON

Right on half-time, Mitchell should have increased the lead and the battle went on through the second half with Blackpool suffering a severe blow when Johnston was injured in a tackle with Jones after 57 minutes.

First he went to outside-left, then switched to centre-forward, with first Brown, then Taylor, at right-half.

After this, the Town were on top, without really promising to get the goal that would have banished Blackpool's Cup hopes completely and then came the Seaside's final rally, the equaliser and another gruelling half an hour that tested the stamina of every player.

Both teams had the chances at various times during this match to clinch the issue, Blackpool's coming mostly from their close passing which was in marked contrast to much of the open football that the Town played.

Though much of their approach work was good and made the Blackpool defence, without Johnston in the middle this time, look less solid than at Luton, their lack of finishing power was disappointing.

While Moore is doing much foraging and is most harassing and dangerous when he breaks through on the wings, sufficient shooting is not coming from the centre-forward position, and there was less than there should have been from the line as a whole because Turner was unable to strike the form he has been showing in recent matches.

Forward honours were shared by the industrious, clever Cummins and Davies, who was always willing to chase anything and kept Garrett fully occupied.

There was a somewhat patchy display from Mitchell, who could well have been the match-winner had he made the most of his chances and exploited to the full his speed against Shimwell.

GREAT SHOW



Both goalkeepers have made some great saves during the Luton and Blackpool Cup-tie "marathon." This picture shows Farm, the Blackpool goalkeeper, stopping a hard header from Mitchell as Gordon Turner dashes in during a Luton raid in the second replay at Villa Park on Monday G6310J