

Another Fine Performance By The Town

Triumph For Fighting Spirit, Team Work

FULL MARKS FOR THE DEFENCE

Streten's Display Was Positively Brilliant

Blackpool - - - 1 Luton Town - - 1

By Chiltern

There ever to be an end to this marathon Cup-tie that, in going to extra time once more yesterday at Villa Park, Birmingham, has now lasted 5½ hours? For the second time in this series the Town looked like being narrow winners, for they held the lead until four minutes from the end when the injured Johnston, who, following the Arsenal tradition, had been switched to centre-forward, saved the game for Blackpool with an opportunist goal.

It was some minutes before this that the Town had lost the grip they had held for most of the second half because, whether purposely or not, they fell back on the defensive in what looked to be an obvious attempt to hold on to their slender advantage.

It could have been that the ferocity with which Blackpool launched their raids left them with no option, but it did look to be a mistaken policy.

Previously after the interval, the Town had been playing smoothly, quick-moving football that kept the Blackpool defence at full stretch and with Johnston jumping heavily after 57 minutes, the Town needed only another goal to clinch the issue.

It did not come, primarily because the finishing did not reach the same standard as the approach work.

But Blackpool would have thought themselves unlucky to lose and undoubtedly for long periods at times they were kept at bay by the doggedness and determination of the Town defence, and the positive brilliance of Streten, who gave a repetition of his previous fine displays against the Cup holders.

PROMOTION QUESTION

So hard was the struggle that it would have been a pity had either team had to lose, but the Town must be beginning to look at their fixture list and to look back on the gruelling players have had in the last ten days with a certain amount of misgiving.

Is this going to affect their promotion chances? That is the question that must be foremost in the minds of officials and directors.

Undoubtedly the Town had their chances to win through yesterday without the necessity of having to face a fourth encounter.

The only goal they gained was a gem by George Cummins, but other opportunities went astray and quite a useful lead could have been built up with greater punch in front of goal.

This is one of the problems confronting the Town at the moment, and it is difficult to see what can be done about it, especially as the forwards, as a line played some fast, effective and progressive football on this Villa Park surface.

From Cummins again there was a terrific amount of work, and also from Moore, who

however, was again more dangerous out on the wings than in the middle, where more thrust was needed.

FIGHTER ALL WAY

Davies was a fighter all the way, and Mitchell, while doing some clever things, often disappointed, and his finishing was not up to his normal best.

Though Turner was a forager, he did not reach his recent form and did not quite make it, either as an opportunist.

For the defence as a whole, there can only be full marks. There were sticky periods for them when the Blackpool front line moved in style more reminiscent of their brilliance when they won the Cup last season, but they came through gallantly, with their covering again good, and Owen a veritable tower of strength in the middle, taking a complete grip on the nippy Mudie.

Once again Morton caught the eye with his strength in the tackle, the deftness of his footwork and the way in which he set his forwards moving.

AHERNE'S ORDEAL

Completing a strong middle line was Watkins, and Ahern again came out of what must be regarded as an ordeal in looking after Matthews, who came more and more into the game the longer it went on.

There was coolness and an adequacy about Jones, particularly when he cleared off the line twice, and behind them all Streten gave another thrilling exhibition.

This was a game that could well have gone either way, but the Town did enough to deserve to win had they made the most of the chances that came their way, but it was another great performance by them and another triumph for their fighting spirit and great team-work.

The replay will be at Wolverhampton next Monday.



CUMMINS, who scored Luton's goal.

EVERYBODY'S QUESTION

Question everybody was asking was answered when the Town arrived at the ground to find that Stanley Matthews had passed a fitness test and was in the Blackpool team. Fit, too, was skipper Harry Johnston, one of the heroes of the first replay, but he switched to right-half on this occasion to allow Johnny Crosland to take over at centre-half. Crosland missed the two previous matches because of groin muscle trouble.

Switch of Johnston seemed to be a move calculated to increase the striking power for he is a brilliant attacking wing-half.

Jackie Mudie was at centre-forward for the injured Mortensen, but the Town relied on the team that represented them in the first two matches.

MANY FROM LUTON

Both teams had a quite considerable following. Blackpool calculated theirs at 1,000, but judging by the number of coaches and private cars on the road, plus the fact that a special train was run, I should think that considerably more Town fans made the trip.

The pitch was in good condition and there were prospects of a sizeable crowd.

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

BLACKPOOL: Farm; Shimwell, Garrett, Johnston, Crosland, Kelly; Matthews, Taylor, Mudie, Brown, Perry.

Referee: T. Seymour, Wakefield.

There was a real splash of colour in the crowd, the white and black of the Town clashing vividly with the tangerine Blackpool favours.

A Town fan put a miniature black and white hat on the centre spot and a Blackpool fan, wearing a tangerine turban, retaliated by attending the top up energetically blowing a pair of bellows.

TOWN WIN TOSS

Over 31,000 saw the Town win the toss and break up an early attack and then thrust through on the right where Garrett pushed the ball back to Farm.

Twice Owen stemmed a Blackpool front line that had settled down quickly and an all-along-the-line movement, starting with Matthews, brought the first shot from Perry—but Streten handled confidently.

Less confidence was shown by Shimwell in giving away a corner that Mitchell placed well, and Farm cleared as Davies raced in.

Mudie had a chance when the bounce beat Bob Morton and Watkins, but was much too high.

So far, Blackpool had been looking better balanced in attack than in previous games. Not that the Town defence was in trouble and Blackpool were looking rather the more uncertain in that department against the Town's speedy raids.

Once Mitchell whipped in quicker than Garrett and swept the ball wide of the post, and Davies could not quite reach a hard clearance by Farm after Moore had centred from the left.

ON TOP NOW

The Town were on top now and Davies made a brilliant drive with his left foot from fully 20 yards that Farm, a little way out of his goal, finger-tipped inches over the bar.

Turner had a chance when Crosland misjudged the bounce of the ball and let him through. The inside-right perhaps delayed his shot a fraction too long, and although he might have beaten Farm, the ball struck Shimwell as he raced across.

Taking advantage of grand support from behind, the Town attack pressed hard for a spell and there was no relief for Black-

pool until Matthews got going and gained a corner from Ahern.

Blackpool had a turn, though, and only an "out of this world" save by Streten prevented Mudie, from an angle, giving Blackpool the lead.

Streten threw himself across to divert the ball. Mudie was injured slightly in shooting, but recovered quickly.

After a spell of Blackpool pressure, during which Owen excelled, the Town struck back, and Mitchell took the ball on just too far after Moore had sent him through with a chance to shoot

UP AND DOWN

When these Blackpool forwards were in full flight, moving the ball along the carpet, they were dangerous, and a brilliant reverse pass by Mudie found Brown in an open space, and Streten saved his powerful shot at the second attempt.

Up and down the battle swayed and Mitchell made a tame header into Farm's hands from a line centre by Moore. I thought he should have made more of this chance.

Shock at the other end came when Jones narrowly missed putting through his own goal in passing back. Narrow escape, too, came when Mudie and Owen had a race for a through pass and Streten, coming out, snatched up the ball as Owen turned it back.

Without even being really in command, Blackpool were looking the more dangerous. The Town survived a free kick a yard outside the penalty area, from which Taylor shot yards too high.

With the Blackpool pressure continuing, Streten shot out a leg to stop a cross-shot. The ball rolled on across the goal and Owen belted it clear before any danger could accrue. Then, twice in quick succession, Streten, playing brilliantly again, saved from Perry.

FIRST BLOOD

After half an hour the Town took the lead in a breakaway. As in the first tie, CUMMINS was the scorer, and he fastened on to a grand through pass by Morton. Faced with Farm and an awkwardly bouncing ball, he showed real coolness.

First, he drew Farm and moved across to the left before driving the ball into the back of the net with two Blackpool defenders running back desperately.

That changed the situation, that had begun to go against the Town, and in the next minute, Moore, picking up a weak clearance by Crosland, made a raking drive inches too high.

Blackpool hit back and the Town had an amazing escape when Matthews made one of his rare shots, to which Streten got both hands, but the ball dropped behind him and Jones kicked off the very goal-line. Appeals for a goal were waved aside.

Blackpool were fighting desperately but were again keeping the ball too close in attack.

DEFENCE IN FORM

Perry and Mudie in turn were dangerous but this Town defence was in great form and no further chances fell to Blackpool.

A minute from half-time a quick throw-in gave Mitchell a chance but he put the ball into Farm's hands and then missed again just afterwards from Davies' pass, this time not getting contact. Half-time:

LUTON TOWN 1
BLACKPOOL 0

First minute of the second half brought a hard header by Mudie and another fine save by the brilliant Streten.

The excitement went on and a canny pass by Moore sent Turner racing through but Farm daringly snatched the ball away at the last split second.

A moment later the Town should have had a penalty when Turner was obstructed unceremoniously when in a good scoring position, but the referee did not agree.

INCHES WIDE

It was the Town's turn to be on top and they harassed the Blackpool defence for some time before a free kick against Owen put Blackpool on the attack, and with the ball moving around the penalty area, Brown was only inches wide with a terrific shot.

It was not long before the Town were back again and Farm did well to save a dangerous, swerving centre by Davies.

Twice the referee awarded free kicks against the Town when there seemed to be no offence and both posed a threat, first Streten, then Owen, making fine clearances.

Fine work by Moore took the Town on to the attack again and his long cross-pass reached the unmarried Mitchell. Moore was positioned for the centre, which, however, did not carry, and Kelly headed clear.

Johnston was injured when Jones pulled him down and the

Blackpool captain was carried to the touchline in obvious pain. A free-kick was awarded and Streten saved from Garrett. Brown, who has played for Scotland at wing-half, dropped to right-half.

Treatment, however, soon got Johnston fit again and he returned after only a couple of minutes absence. For the moment, at any rate, he went to inside-left and was limping rather heavily.

The Town had regained their grip and there was a free-kick for them for a foul on Davies. Nothing came of it, though, but the ball was kept at the Blackpool end.

A dash by Perry, now at inside-left, and a bewildering run by Matthews that ended in the face of a determined tackle by Morton, brought a change of venue but only temporarily.

Perry, in fact, was now at centre-forward, with Mudie inside-left, and Blackpool were severely handicapped by Johnston's injury.

With more of the play now the Town were not looking so dangerous at close quarters, although they were moving the ball about accurately, using the long ball to effect.

"HIDING" JOHNSTON

There was no doubting the Town's superiority and in an attempt to "hide" the injured Johnston, Blackpool were trying all manner of switches. Now he went to centre-forward with Perry going back to outside-left.

More pressure by the Town, in which Cummins played a notable part, evaded Blackpool's defence, but not to the extent of allowing the Town to have a shot at Farm. Twice Matthews tried to galvanise his team into action but the Town defence was in relentless mood and not yielding an inch.

With their quicker attacks the Town were the more dangerous and they had a free-kick that was not far off being a penalty when Cummins was heavily brought down by Kelly. Farm fisted away Mitchell's cross.

Despite the handicap, Blackpool were putting up a grim fight, but although some of their approach work was well conceived, they were causing Streten hardly any trouble at all.

There was the hint of trouble, though, when the ball went out to Matthews, unattended for once, but after coming across in menacing style he placed the ball low into Streten's hands.

A minute later, Mudie made a great shot that whistled wide of the post with Streten covering it well.

DESPERATE LOOK

Now Taylor was at right-half with Brown at inside-right and there was a desperate look about Blackpool.

A long free-kick by Garrett brought them a corner from a header by Jones and there was a roar of disappointment from the Blackpool fans when Mudie put behind.

After this, Streten drew the referee's attention to something amiss with the ball, which was changed.

Now the character of the game had changed, with the Town forced back on to the defensive, and another corner came from which full-back Garrett put just wide.

For several minutes Blackpool threw everything in, only to be met with a cast-iron defence again. When the Town did come away Farm moved near the post from Turner.

There was a tense atmosphere now, with Blackpool doing everything they knew to equalise.

A Johnston back-heel from Taylor's pass did not catch the vigilant Streten napping, and then he punched out brilliantly a free kick by Garrett that swung dangerously near the Town's goal.

THE EQUALISER

With four minutes to go, Blackpool did what had seemed impossible, and equalised. It was the injured JOHNSTON who did the trick when he swung round to drive the ball past Streten from about five yards after Mudie had headed across the goalmouth a corner by Matthews.

A sudden rush of Town defenders could not prevent the injured Blackpool captain from earning a hero's rating. However, a minute later, the Town might have had a penalty when Mitchell was brought down.

Revitalised, Blackpool were working for a winner now and Perry hit the side net. Then Streten made a tremendous save from a header by Mudie that was booked for the corner of the net.

So, on to extra-time again. In the first minute of extra time Perry flashed the ball across the Luton goal.

Blackpool had found new strength and Streten punched the ball off the head of Brown who was still at inside-right. Blackpool had the better of matters for a time, with Johnston of considerable assistance value in the middle.

Matthews was popping up all



Streten—"Positively brilliant."

over the place, inspiring the Blackpool forwards, who were the more dangerous.

Owen was injured in beating off a raid but resumed quickly and was soon in the thick of it.

When the Town made ground, Turner beat two men cleverly, but with the way still blocked to a shot, fell at the third obstacle.

Improvement by the Town followed this and Farm collected a centre from Davies. Both teams were beginning to feel the effects of their recent hectic time but it was still a grim fight.

A free-kick by Shimwell that was deflected put the Town in jeopardy, and although Streten miraculously got a hand to the ball, it was roiling goalwards when Jones kicked clear.

A thrust by the Town saw Mitchell making a bee-line for goal from Turner's pass, but just as he had set himself to shoot Shimwell made a hard, effective tackle that left the winger spread eagled.

A heavy Blackpool raid was driven off and when half-time of extra time came there was still no further score.

So this grim Cup battle went on, with the Town making the first break and Crosland clearing a bouncing ball with Moore close up. Mitchell just failed to find Cummins but the Town kept up the attack and Farm moved a centre from Mitchell.

A grand run by Perry gave Johnston a possible chance, but he could not move quickly enough and, in any case, was bundled over so promptly that there were calls for a penalty from the Blackpool fans. Eventually, Streten emerged with the ball.

Anybody's game it still was, and Brown made a terrific shot that rose too high. Another dazzling dribble by Matthews got the Town defence into a tangle but Mudie lost possession when the ball had been worked into the penalty area.

On the whole, though, both forward lines had lost some of their sting—understandably enough after this gruelling game though Brown still had the energy to make a 30-yards run that ended in a tackle by Owen.

Cummins cleverly worked a corner from which there was a sudden rush and play went on for some seconds while Garrett lay injured near his own goal.

Meanwhile, Farm saved from Mitchell, and then play stopped for attention to the left-back who recovered quickly.

The Town were pressing now and Mitchell's determined bid was stopped. With the pressure continuing, Matthews came back to clear.

Raids at each end failed to provide a winner.

BLACKPOOL 1
LUTON TOWN 1