

FORWARD PUNCH MUST BE FOUND

LACK OF IT COST TWO MORE POINTS

Mistaken Tactics Played Right Into Stoke's Hands

By Chiltern

WITH still more emphasis placed on the lack of scoring power in the Town attack when they drew a blank against Stoke City at Kenilworth-road on Saturday, Manager Dally Duncan is confronted with an unenviable task this week in naming his team for what is obviously going to be a difficult match at Fulham.

To get back into the promotion hunt with a chance, the Town need to start immediately the sort of run that brought them 18 points out of 20 between October 10 and December 12, and they will not accomplish that without an all-round improvement in finishing.

Since that black day at Oldham when Jesse Pye was injured, only 16 points have been won out of 36 and although there has been a certain amount of bad luck, as at Leicester last Saturday week, the fact remains that those eight league games have brought only nine goals and the defence has conceded only 10 during the same period.

Even though their tactics were largely mistaken on a ground in which it required an effort to pull the ball through the heavy defence in the middle of the field, the fact remains that sufficient opportunities came the way of the Town forwards and they had enough of the play to have sent Stoke home without a point.

Temptation To Play Morton As Leader

BERTH that must be most closely under the microscope this week is centre-forward and there will be a certain amount of temptation to move Morton into the position which he has filled ably on previous occasions.

Serious deficiencies need drastic remedies and the strength of Morton in the middle, allied to his football skill and control of the ball, could step up the goal output. A makeshift remedy this would be, for Morton is too fine a half-back to spend a long period in the attack, but the fact remains that he certainly livened up things considerably when he switched into the middle about a quarter of an hour from the end of Saturday's match.

It Was Expecting A Lot Of MacEwan

WHAT of the newcomer, MacEwan? It was asking a lot of him to plough his way through the Kenilworth-road mud without prior experience of such conditions and the ordeal was not made easier for him by the fact that he did not receive the sort of

service that a centre-forward is entitled to expect.

Taking these two factors into account, he probably did as well as anyone could have done in such circumstances and that he failed to repeat his Leicester success can be largely blamed on the state of the going.

Experience both of conditions and English football are his main needs, it may be decided that a spell in the Reserves would enable him to acclimatise himself more easily.

Cummins Made It Difficult For Himself

NOT that his showing did anything to detract from his undoubted promise for the future, for he again demonstrated the ability to work a ball and had there been more support of the right kind, he might have been the match-winner.

As it was, he struck a post when perhaps a leader of more experience would have scored, but he had few other clear-cut chances.

Why Cummins should have made things difficult for himself by holding on to the ball unnecessarily was something of a mystery and he had perhaps his worst game since joining the Town.

Nothing he did seemed to go right and his passes, often made too short, went astray time and again.

Stoke Moved The Ball About

PERHAPS this phase of his display was made to look worse than it was, at times, by the fact that colleagues had not taken up good position, but a great deal of effort by him did not bring anything like the success it should have done and he always tended to hold up the attack.

What was needed on this going was the long pass, as demonstrated amply by Bowyer in the

Middlesbrough Watched Downie

While there has not yet been a bid for Johnny Downie now on the Town's open-to-transfer list, at his own request, he was watched at Charlton last Saturday by a Middlesbrough representative.

According to reports, he was quite impressed by Downie's display and, with Middlesbrough desperately in need of strengthening their team to avoid the real threat they are facing of relegation, there may be a move from this quarter to sign the Town inside man.

first half when he frequently found Hutton with passes hit from the inside-right position.

Right through the piece, though, Stoke had the right idea by moving the ball quickly and the players not in possession taking up the open spaces.

Did Not Hesitate To Have A Shot

MORE than that, they did not hesitate to have a shot at goal when they reached anything near reasonable range, and marks on the Town crossbar made by drives by Martin and Bowyer showed how easily these tactics could have paid off.

On the other hand, the Town forwards, when they reached shooting distance, were more inclined to pass than to try their luck on their own account.

At the same time, weak though the Town were in front of goal, it is fair to say that they are not getting the run of the ball at the moment and, as Bill McCracken, former Aldershot manager, and now a Newcastle United scout, commented afterwards, the ball did run well for Stoke.

Town Claimed That They Had Scored

THERE was the misfortune again of the ball being cleared off the goal-line, with Robertson well out of position, with Turner the sufferer this time, and a confident appeal for a goal by Morton was disallowed.

Opinions on whether the ball crossed the line after it had slipped out of Robertson's hands were varied, but the Town players on the spot were confident in their assertion that it had.

Mitchell told me afterwards that in his opinion the whole of the ball was over and that a Stoke defender had agreed with him.

Might Have Been In A Worse Position

BE that as it may, the fact remains that the Town should not have been in the position of having to rely on such a hair-line decision and yet, they might have been in a very much worse state as the result of five hectic minutes near the interval, when the Stoke forwards ran riot and the Town defence was swept aside.

It was at that period that Stretton wiped out to a large extent the memory of the mistake that gave Stoke the simplest of goals in the 25th minute, when he failed to collect a through pass and the ball rolled to the feet of Malkin, who simply pushed it into an empty net.

Must Suit Tactics To The Conditions

IN the matter of missed chances, Turner was a culprit and he was another who tended to keep the ball too close and was often caught in possession.

However he did link up with his wing partner better than did Cummins and Davies responded with quite a fair amount of success.

Most effective of the forwards was Mitchell who tried desperately hard to help the Town to beat his former colleagues, but he should have equalised during the period of heavy Town pressure in the closing stages.

From the forwards as a line, though, it was a disappointing, somewhat unimaginative display, and the inside forwards must learn to suit their tactics to the going.

Owen Back To Play A Leading Role

THERE was never any doubt about the soundness of the Stoke defence in which Thomson was yet another reason why MacEwan had little chance, and both Mountford and Sellars got through a tremendous amount of work and were very hard in the tackle.

On the other hand, except for that short period when things got very much out of hand, there could be little complaint about the way in which the Town defence played.

Back came Owen to play a

leading role by subduing King and generally holding a grip on the middle of the field.

Morton And Watkins Gave Good Support

ALL the industriousness and support lent to the forwards by Morton and Watkins could not induce quickness of movement from the men in front of them, and I thought the switching of Morton into the middle might have been done earlier with benefit.

When he dropped back to right-half, Davies's fearless tackling suggested that he would not do amiss there if the occasion ever demands it, but that was merely confirming the impression he left after his longer spell there after Owen had been injured in the third Cup replay at Wolverhampton.

Dunne Had The More Complete Grip

BOTH Dunne and Aherne found some difficulty in the first half because both the Stoke wingers continually went back to forage for the ball, even into their own half of the field.

Both were fast and nippy, and Dunne obtained rather the more complete grip on Hutton and had a very good second half.

Yet, apart from being beaten for speed by Malkin at times, Aherne cut down the danger from this quarter, and his accurate kicking of the greasy ball was always a big asset to the Town.

Only blot on the Stretton display was the error that brought the vital goal. Otherwise, he was well on top of the job, and Robertson, who made more mistakes, was fortunate enough not to have to pay the full penalty.

Allowed Themselves To Be Bugged Down

IT was a game that most Town fans will want to forget as speedily as possible, and, certainly, the Town were not recognisable as the lively, confident combination they had been at Filbert-street the previous week.

They allowed themselves to become bugged down in the mud and I know that before the match, the manager was viewing the going with a rather jaundiced eye. "It will bring both teams down to the same level," he said.

Which, perhaps, was a correct forecast, but did not do justice to Stoke, who were a very solid, hard-fighting team, and who, if they can surmount their own goal-scoring problems, might well be a power in the Second Division next season.

Reserves Missed Chances, Too

TO a large extent, the Reserves' forwards suffered from the same complaint as their seniors when they played Charlton at The Valley on Saturday and, had they made the most of their scoring chances, they would have taken both points.

But they did go one better than the first team and score once through Downie, who was the best of the attack and carved out several openings that were not

FOR THE RECORDS

LUTON TOWN	0
STOKE CITY	1
Malkin.	
LUTON TOWN.—Stretton; Dunne, Aherne; Morton, Owen, Watkins; Davies, Turner, MacEwan, Cummins, Mitchell.	
STOKE CITY.—Robertson; Bourne, McCue; Mountford, Thomson, Sellars; Malkin, Bowyer, King, Martin, Hutton.	

Referee: — A. Holland. Barnsley Attendance: 17,058.

turned to account by his colleagues.

Except in the vital matter of finishing, the Town played some excellent football with their form in the first half being the best they have shown for some time.

Outstanding Display By McGuffie Again

DURING that period, they might easily have built up a substantial lead and they did sufficient in their midfield play to deserve more than a 1-1 draw. Another outstanding display



ALWYN MCGUFFIE, the Town's young amateur wing-half, who was one of the strong men in the Reserves' defence at Charlton.

came from young Alwyn McGuffie whose slide-rule passes made all along the ground were one of the features of the Town's display. For the most part the Town's strong defence had a complete grip on the home forwards, with Hall again very sound and both Hawkes and Pemberton coming through creditably.

Two Points For The Town "A"

THE Town "A" was the only one of the three teams fielded by Luton to collect maximum points on Saturday. They won their Metropolitan League game at Guildford 3-1 and were never in difficulty.

Bennett opened the scoring in the first half and Adamson scored two more goals after the interval. Guildford reduced their arrears in the closing stages when Thomson scored after a corner. Groves and Adamson went near to increasing Luton's lead.

George Clare a young amateur injured a wrist and was off the field for a spell in the second half but he was able to resume.

Chiltern's Forecasts

F.A. CUP—FIFTH ROUND

Bolton v Portsmouth
Hull v Tottenham
Leyton Orient v Doncaster
Norwich v Leicester
Port Vale v Blackpool
Preston v Ipswich
Sheffield Wed v Everton
West Brom v Newcastle

DIVISION I

Aston Villa v Huddersfield
Burnley v Manchester Utd
Sunderland v Chelsea
Wolves v Sheffield Utd

DIVISION II

Bury v Blackburn
Fulham v Luton
Leeds v Birmingham
Notts County v Lincoln
Oldham v Derby
West Ham v Nottm Forest

DIVISION III (SOUTH)

Aldershot v Reading
Brighton v Millwall
Bristol City v Swindon
Colchester v Shrewsbury
Crystal Palace v Walsall
Northampton v Coventry
Q.P.R. v Newport
Southampton v Exeter
Torquay v Bournemouth

DIVISION III (NORTH)

Barrow v Stockport
Bradford City v Grimsby
Chesterfield v Accrington
Gateshead v Darlington
Halifax v Hartlepool
Mansfield v Rochdale
Scunthorpe v Bradford
Southport v Crewe

Tranmere v Carlisle
Workington v Barnsley
Wrexham v Chester

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

DIVISION "A"

Aberdeen v Clyde
Celtic v Dundee
Hamilton v Falkirk
Hearts v Rangers
Partick v Hibernian
Raith v Queen of South
Stirling v Airdrieonians

DIVISION "B"

Albion v Alloa
Arbroath v Kilmarnock
Ayr v Queen's Park
Dumbarton v Cowdenbeath
Dundee Utd v Forfar
Dunfermline v Morton
Stenhousemuir v Motherwell
Third Lanark v St Johnstone

FRIENDLY MATCHES

Arsenal v Portuguesa des Desportos
Gillingham v Charlton
Liverpool v St. Mirren
Manchester City v East Fife
Southend v Brentford

SELECTIONS

TEN HOME: Bolton, W. Brom, Wolves, Notts Coun, Crystal Palace, Brighton, Southampton, Bristol City, Gateshead, Southport.

FOUR AWAYS: Tottenham, Huddersfield, Birmingham, Burnley.

THREE DRAWS: Sheffield Wed v Everton, Bury v Blackburn, Northampton v Coventry.

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