

GOALS WERE ONLY REDEEMING FEATURE

Otherwise, Town's Attack Had Disappointing Day

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN ... 3 PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 1

Time was when the Town were playing good football without getting the results they deserved. Now, judging by what happened in this match at Kenilworth-road on Saturday, they are achieving results without reaching anything like their previous standard of play.

So, despite that string of seven consecutive home League victories, there can be no complacency about the situation and there are serious problems in attack which must be tackled quickly.

The one redeeming feature in this drab exhibition was the manner in which the Town took their second half goals, which provided some of the few occasions on which the forward line could be said to have functioned smoothly.

Before the interval it had been a tale of almost unmitigated tedium, with neither side showing much constructive idea in attack and even less sign of finishing power.

At half-time there was deep thought about the advisability of switching Morton into the forward line, which showed the measure of dissatisfaction felt, but, wisely, as things turned out, it was decided not to make a switch.

Instead, instructions were given to Morton to do all the attacking he could from his normal right-half position, and he followed them to such an extent that he had a great deal to do with the first two goals.

THE DECISIVE FACTOR

In fact, it could be said that the driving power of Morton was the decisive factor in this match.

From his centre, flicked on by Turner's head, ADAM gave the Town the lead in the 56th minute with a shot taken on the volley and which he only half hit. However, the effect was good enough, for Major was left helplessly placed.

Eighteen minutes later Morton again became an emergency outside-right to make a centre that DAVIES put into the net with a beautifully timed header, challenged though he was by Robertson, and when, four minutes after that, Davies laid on a chance for TURNER to drive the ball past Major, the Town were in a position that had seemed near-impossible earlier.

One commendable feature about Plymouth was their refusal to give up the fight, despite the fact that they were virtually reduced to 10 men by an injury to Langman just before the interval.

For most of the second half he was nearly a passenger at outside-right, with Tadman taking over the leadership.

Their spirit enabled them to gain a consolation goal five minutes from the end, when PORTEOUS made a shot about which he could not have been particularly optimistic.

Streten seemed certain to save, but the ball swerved in its flight and, in his attempt to change direction quickly, the goalkeeper slipped on the greasy surface, and so the Town's blank sheet was spoilt.

CENTRE-FORWARD PROBLEM

One of the problems besetting the Town is the centre-forward position, where Kelly did not look any too happy, even when due regard is paid to the fact that the best of service did not come his way.

Nor was there the constructive skill needed at inside-forward, where Watkins took too long to make use of the ball, and Turner was the most successful of the trio.

By far the more effective winger in this match was Davies, who had a particularly good second half, during which he had a hand in all three goals. On the other wing, Adam had

an off-day, for he found Ratcliffe a rare stumbling block, partly because he did not vary his tactics sufficiently. There could be much more satisfaction about the defence, despite the absence of Owen, for whom Hall, making one of his now-rare appearances in top-class football, proved to be a most adequate deputy once he had got the feel of things.

Backing him up were two strong wing-halves in Morton and Shanks, and, with Dunne and Aherne both in top form, there was little scope for a very moderate Plymouth forward line.

Given the captaincy for the day to mark his 250th League appearance for the Town, Streten had a quiet afternoon, for Plymouth's shooting generally was not accurate enough to cause him much difficulty.

LUTON TN: Streten; Dunne, Aherne; Morton, Hall, Shanks; Davies, Turner, Kelly, Watkins, Adam.

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE: Major; Ratcliffe, Morgan; Tilley, Robertson, McShane; Tadman, Dews, Langman, Porteous, Anderson.

Referee: G McCabe, Sheffield.
Attendance: 15,059.