

BANG! WENT THAT HOME RECORD

Swansea Belied Their "Poor Tourists" Tag

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 1 SWANSEA TOWN ... 2

In view of the previous records of both teams this season, and the fact that the law of averages invariably operates in football, as in everything else, there was always a danger of this sort of result at Kenilworth-road on Saturday.

Truth was, though, that the quality of the Swansea display belied their very poor away record, whereas the Town certainly did not look like a team that had been invincible at home previously and the verdict went to the more deserving side.

If the Town are not to contemplate the top-of-the-table struggle from the remoteness of a middle-of-the-table position, then there must be an immediate all-round improvement from them.

Not only was the forward line showing unsatisfactory, but the defence faltered frequently and the whole thing added up to depressing failure.

One redeeming feature was that the Town produced the rallying power to make a fight of it after being two goals down, but there were insufficient ideas and not enough punch in attack to break down a Swansea defence that was determined to hang on to the advantage they had gained.

Once again much of the trouble in the front line could be traced to the centre-forward position and the task of finding a suitable successor to Pye is proving a longer and more arduous one than was thought likely to be the case.

KELLY WAS WELL HELD

Hard though Kelly tried, he had not the speed, nor the quickness off the mark to unsettle the visiting defenders and Kiley had a comfortable afternoon in holding him.

In an attempt to achieve improvement Davies was switched into the middle for the last 20 minutes. Not that this could be set down as a marked success, but it was during this period that the Town obtained their only goal which gave rise to hopes, futile as they turned out, that a point could be rescued.

The goal was a spectacular one obtained from the edge of the penalty area with a rising drive by Turner, the one Luton forward who looked as if he might turn the tide.

Previously, he had made some good efforts and it was only a great diving save by King that prevented him from putting the Town back into the game earlier.

Ably generalised by that old campaigner, Ron Burgess, Swansea did not panic, nor did they make the mistake of falling back on defence in an attempt to hold what was then a slender advantage, and after a few minutes of heavy pressure, the Town fight back wilted.

The damage to the Town's home record had occurred earlier when GRIFFITHS scored twice between the 26th and 33rd minutes.

Apart from a shock when Burgess nipped into an open space for a throw-in and lobbed the ball against the bar, Swansea had not shown a lot of signs of goals, but both chances were well taken by the inside-right.

First, he fastened on to a pass by Burgess that had been intended as a shot at goal and whipped the ball into the net, and then he neatly headed through a corner by Jones after making considerable ground to meet it.

A sharp contrast in styles was presented by the forward play in this match. Swansea mostly let the ball do the work, and their speed of movement and the way

in which they pulled the Town defence out of position paid tribute to the wisdom of their tactics.

Although there was some neat midfield play at times, the Town forwards were more laboured and deliberate in their methods, and they often took long to reach the point at which a shot could be made.

When it came to finishing, they did not compare with the visiting attack, either, and, apart from the fact that Turner frequently looked as if he might play a rescue role and some spasmodic combination between Groves and Adam, it was a patchy display, with Davies again below form.

Nor did the defence emerge with a great deal of credit, for Dunne and Aherne were much worried by the speed and directness of the Swansea wingers, and Hall had an uncomfortable time, especially in the first half.

Morton began as if this was to be one of the best games of his career, but then lost his grip and got out of touch with his passing, too.

In the end, Ivor Allchurch could look back on his best display against the Town, mainly accomplished through the intelligent way in which he positioned himself.

Even so, the Town's best chance of recovery seemed to be when Morton joined in with the attack. Shanks struggled gamely enough, but he did not use the ball accurately enough, and this was a fault shared by the forwards, too.

For Stretton, it could have been by no means easy to play behind a defence that lacked its usual understanding, but he did his part well, with the exception that his kicking was below his usual standard.

LUTON TOWN: Stretton; Dunne, Aherne; Morton, Hall, Shanks; Davies, Turner, Kelly, Groves, Adam.

SWANSEA TOWN: King; Willis, Thomas; Charles, Kiley, Burgess, Allchurch (L), Griffiths, Melwin, Allchurch (I), Jones (C).

Referee: H. Vickers, Crewe.

Attendance: 15,555.