

HEROIC FIGHT BY THE TOWN DEFENCE

Held Highest-Scoring Attack In Grim Battle

By Chiltern

BLACKBURN ROVERS 0, LUTON TOWN 0

If the indomitable spirit of a fine defence can gain a club promotion, then the Town hold a great chance, judging by their performance at Ewood Park on Saturday when in the face of tremendous pressure, they kept out the most free-scoring forward line in the country.

And a most gigantic task it was, particularly in the second half, when the Rovers, desperately in need of both points if they were to retain a chance of reaching the First Division, simply threw everything they knew into the attempt to obtain goals.

Blackburn had their chances—they will seldom have as many and not succeed in scoring—but much of their shooting was lamentable. Some of it could be traced to the awkward way in which the ball popped at times, but when they were accurate, Baynham proved to be in unbeatable mood.

For the goalkeeper, this match was a triumph, for he gave a faultless, daring exhibition and many of his saves were in the brilliant class.

To both him and Owen, who took a rare buffeting and who

about the defence as a whole and it was as well that there was otherwise the Town's hope would have taken another knock.

MIGHT HAVE HAD TWO GOALS

Although the Town forward had a lean time after the interval they might easily have snatched a couple of goals. Turner was most unlucky with a great drive that struck the inside of the post and rebounded to Adam who could not force it in.

Then, in the very last minute Turner raced through, aimed for



Ron Baynham played a wonderful game, and it was efforts like this one—he is seen saving from Langton—that helped Luton hang on to a point.

continually barred the way down the middle, the Town owed an enormous debt.

In the past Briggs has been something of a bogy to the centre-half, who, however, marked him closely, tackled him hard and generally proved himself to be the master of the situation.

Not for a long time has the Town defence as a whole had such a gruelling as came their way in the second half.

Trouble was that they scarcely had time for a breather, with the ball continually coming back at them and the ferocity of some of the Rovers' attacks made it seem impossible that any defence could stand up to such heavy pressure.

But the Town did and all credit to them for a gallant performance in a match that was fraught with anxiety and excitement from start to finish.

HARD-FOUGHT MATCH

Such was the situation and such were the conditions, that clever football could not be expected. What we saw was a terrifically hard-fought game, with the tension on from start to finish and obvious signs of over anxiety.

This was amply demonstrated when the usually deadly Langton shot wide from the penalty spot 14 minutes after the interval when the referee decided that Owen had fouled Mooney.

That miss may be one of the most expensive the outside-left has ever made, for it could cost Blackburn the promotion prize.

Not that the Town's brave fight was a two-man show by any means, for there was splendid backing from the rest of the defence, with the grim-tackling Aherne putting Mooney out of the game.

Result was that most threat came either down the middle with heftily-booted clearances or down the left wing where the elusive Langton was a danger. However, Dunne stuck to him, and his speed in recovery was again a most useful asset on this occasion.

There was much all-out, non-stop work from both Pemberton and Shanks, but neither had much opportunity in the second half to lend support to the attack, so often was the defence at action stations.

So, there was a solid look

the far post and saw it miss by inches, with the oncoming Adam unable to give the ball the tap it needed.

Before the interval, there had been plenty of promise about the way in which the forwards moved in midfield, and play was more even then than it proved to be later.

Gradually though, the forwards were forced out of the game and the fact that they have failed to score in three of the last four matches is a matter that must be causing serious thought.

So far, they have not proved that they can act on the firm going and Cummins is one who has not adapted himself to it. He is in a sticky patch, and, with Adam fading right out after a bright opening, there was not a lot from the left wing.

With strictly limited material, and much of what came his way being in the air, Morton strove hard, but Turner's thrusts made him the most dangerous of a rather disappointing forward line and Davies suffering from lack of support, was often forced to go foraging for the ball.

In the closing minutes Blackburn urged on by nearly 36,000 excited fans, tried everything they knew to get the deciding goal, but whatever they did, they could not break down this great-hearted defence and if ever a point was earned the hard way this one was.

BLACKBURN RVRS.: Elvy; Smith, Eckersley; Clayton (R), Stuart, Bell; Mooney, Crossan, Briggs, Quigley, Langton.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Aherne; Pemberton, Owen, Shanks; Davies, Turner, Morton, Cummins, Adam.

Referee: L. Richardson, Doncaster. Attendance: 35,800.