

TWO VICTORIES CAN BRING PROMOTION

Unchanged Team Likely Against Bristol Rovers

By Chiltern

Fateful week dawns for the Town, who if they can win their two remaining matches will just about assure themselves of a place in the First Division next season.

Hurdle comes to-morrow night when the very fateful Bristol Rovers are the visitors for a match that had to be postponed from February 26 because of the icy state of the Kenilworth-road pitch. The meeting also concludes the Town's home programme, and victory, which should come their way, would round off a wonderful home record, for they have dropped only four points on their own ground and it is this consistency that has carved out for them this great opportunity.

Manager Daily does not intend announcing a team until later to-day, and that it is unlikely there will be any changes from the team that overcame Port Vale on Saturday.

In any way, there are no doubts and, as the team which were designed to more punch in the front line, seemed there seems to be no reason for an alteration.

Only, some consideration given to a return by Cummings, who was on Saturday, but it is far probable that Charlie Watkinson will retain the inside-left position what will be his last appearance before he sails for South Africa next month.

Rovers May Try An Experiment

With nothing to lose and everything to gain, Bristol Rovers will try an experiment with an eye on the promotion.

FOOTBALL

LUTON TOWN F.C.
League — Division II
TO-MORROW
WEDNESDAY, 27th APRIL
LUTON TOWN
versus
Bristol Rovers.
Kick-off 6.30 p.m.

Admission: Centre Stand (Season tickets only); Wing Stands (Unreserved) 5/-; Enclosure 3/6, Boys 1/-; Bobbers' Stand 2/-, Boys 1/3; Terrace (not covered) 1/9, Boys 1/-.



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FOR THE RECORDS

LUTON TOWN 4
Turner (2), Davies, MacEwan
PORT VALE 2
Done, Griffiths
LUTON TN: Baynam; Dunne, Aherne; Morton; Owen, Shanks; Davies, Turner, MacEwan, Watkins, Pemberton.
PORT VALE: King; Turner, Potts; Mallard, Cheadle, Sprison; Askey, Smith, Done, Griffiths, Cunliffe.
Referee: E. S. Oxley, Pontefract.
Attendance: 16,700.

luckily beaten by 3-2 after playing under the handicap of having Sid Owen injured for 85 minutes.

The Rovers, who have stuck rigidly to their policy of no buying and no selling, have made a few changes in their team recently, but there will probably be seven players in their side to-morrow night who played in the Cup-tie here four years ago when the Rovers gained a surprise 2-1 victory.

They are Bamford, the complete half-back line of Pitt, Warren and Sampson, Petherbridge, Bradford and Watling.

Prolific Scoring Habit Has Been Lost

JUDGING by the results, the Rovers are another team who are not suited by the firm going, for in their last 11 matches they have scored only 13 goals, a small output for a team that was scoring most prolifically earlier on and they are as badly in need of more punch in the front line as were the Town before their experiments of last Saturday.

Rovers' team that was beaten 2-0 at Stoke was: Chandler; Bamford, Allcock; Pitt, Warren, Sampson; Petherbridge, Biggs, Bradford, Meyer, Watling.

Away from home this season, they have not been particularly consistent, but, at the same time, can point to victories at Fulham (3-2), Hull (1-0), Lincoln (2-0), and Plymouth (1-0). In addition, they drew at Doncaster and Derby.

Tussles Are Usually Very Close

RECENT meetings between the teams have all been closely fought affairs and the Town are still looking for their first Second Division win over them.

Last season, when the Rovers were having their first sample of the higher grade, both their matches with the Town ended in draws—1-1 at Kenilworth-road and 3-3 at Eastville.

If the Town attack can retain its new-found punch that brought them four goals against the Vale, then they should remedy that deficiency, but they will be expecting a hard battle, for the Rovers are a team of fighters who do not give in easily.

With the position so critical, there should be a marked improvement in attendance figures which were so disappointing on Saturday.

Town Supporters Had A Nasty Shock

THERE was a time, too, when the result looked as if it might be disappointing from the Town point of view, for after putting themselves in a very comfortable position and gaining a lead of two goals, they suddenly found that they had lost their advantage.

With only 20 minutes left, and the score at 2-2, the position was decidedly grim but, to their credit, the Town did not allow themselves to become shaken and rallied hard to gain the decisive goals in the last quarter of an hour.

Just what went wrong in the early period of the second half is difficult to say, unless it was that there was a feeling of over-confidence because the Vale had not really threatened to become difficult to beat.

Defence Met With A Sticky Period

HOWEVER, the defence had a decidedly sticky period possibly because Owen had to be drawn out of the middle so often to cope with the wanderings of Done.

There was not all the cover there might have been and, for a time, there were some ominous gaps.

A clever goal by Done who beat Owen and rammed the ball in from an angle brought the first ray of hope to the Vale after 55 minutes and when he missed a rather more simple chance shortly afterwards there came the feeling that the Town's passage was not going to be so comfortable as it looked before the interval.

An opportunist's equaliser from Griffiths after Port Vale had reshuffled their forward line produced disquiet among the crowd who had been expecting the Town to build up their lead, not to lose it.

Turner's Quality As A Match-Winner

IN fact, that seemed to be the way things were shaping until Done struck the first blow but then Turner showed his quality as a match-winner by making a brilliant run down the right wing in the course of which he beat two opponents before leaving MacEwan with an easy chance to open his scoring account in League football.

That was a quarter of an hour from the end and Turner settled it three minutes later by heading in a cross by Shanks, who suddenly popped up in the inside-right position.

Even then, there was still some sting in the visitors, who continued to fight back and when the Town defence was guilty of poor covering again Cunliffe missed the chance of the match by driving over from point blank range.

Davies Is In To Double Figures

EARLIER goals for the Town had come from Turner after 10 minutes from a centre by Davies and from Davies 22 minutes later with a header from a corner by Pemberton.

This brought Davies's quota of goals to double figures and ended rather a long blank he has had so far as scoring is concerned.

To Turner, the Town owed a considerable debt and there was a time when it was touch and go whether he would be fit to play.

He must have played under something of a handicap and in the circumstances, it was a very good performance from him.

Idea of recalling MacEwan to the leadership proved to be a happy one, for he settled down from the start, played some clever football and made many shrewd passes.

MacEwan Can Play A Major Role

MACEWAN's form suggested that this is a move that might have been tried earlier, but it is always easy to be wise after the event, and he can play a major role in the vital tussles to be faced this week.

Just how valuable to a club is a player of Pemberton's type has been amply proved before, and, after months at right-half, he came along to give the best outside-left display we have seen in weeks.

The experience of Pemberton and Watkins was a big asset in this match, and although the latter did not shine so much as his partner, he was always seeking to make good use of the ball. Pemberton's value lay in the accuracy of his crosses, and he was very much on the spot in front of goal, as he showed when he banged the ball through, only to have the goal disallowed for offside.

More Directness In The Forward Line

ALTHOUGH Davies had rather a patchy sort of game, he did his part in the scoring of the first two goals, and the line as a whole was more direct and

Fixture Lists Are Wanted

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better balanced than has been the case in other matches of late.

If this directness can be maintained, then the manager's target of six points from the last three matches will become really feasible.

Apart from the spell in which Port Vale obtained their goals, the defence was reliable, but Morton did not settle down as well as had been hoped in his old position of right-half.

After his long spell in the forward line, broken only by a couple of appearances at centre-half, this was understandable, for to him there must have been some strangeness about the situation.

Wise To Revert To This Line-Up

HOWEVER, there will be few worries during this week on that account, and it is wise to get back to the defensive line-up that without doubt is the best the club can call upon.

Although he was drawn out of the penalty area more than usual, Owen, on the whole, made a good job of holding Done, and the cover for him was not always of the best.

This was partly due to the fact that Shanks, who had a great first half, took a couple of knocks soon after the interval, but, even so, Shanks was the most successful wing-half on view, for he always came in to meet the ball and gave good support to his forwards.

Both Dunne and Aherne were sound, with the latter in his most rugged mood and keeping very quiet Askey, a winger who has drawn some big offers for his transfer.

Once again, Baynam made the penalty area his own and is playing with great confidence, especially in his clean handling of the ball.

Each Will Hold Cup For Six Months

BEDFORD TOWN, holders of the Bedfordshire Professional Cup, did not lose complete possession of it on Saturday when they held Luton Town Reserves to a 1-1 draw.

The match was played at Bedford and the home side scored first, through former Luton player Ted Duggan.

That was after only 12 minutes but Luton equalised midway through the second half when Terry Kelly scored after neat work by Cullen and Pearce.

Ironical touch, here was that Kelly scored against his father who recently became manager of the Southern League club. Each club will hold the trophy for six months.

Defeat For Town C.C. In First Match

AFTER going through all last season without a defeat, the Town C.C. met with one at Finchley in their first match last Saturday.

With John Muse and Doug Randall the leading scorers, Luton made 144 in quick time and left Finchley 140 minutes to get the runs.

For a long time, it looked as if this target would be beyond them, but a spurt in the scoring rate in the last half an hour enabled them to win by five wickets with only five minutes left for play.

For the second team there was a happier beginning, for they beat Finchley II by five wickets, following up some good bowling by John Webley, who took 4 for 17, with some consistent batting in which Charlie Baggaley was top scorer with 29 not out and Brian Taylor made 28.



Gordon Turner, Luton's match winner against Port Vale in a goalmouth tussle for the ball. Backing him up is Charlie Watkins.—R8626K