

TOWN FORWARDS HIT A NEW LOW IN LACK OF PUNCH

SELDOM DANGEROUS IN SCRAMBLING GAME

Series Of Mistakes Led To Sunderland's Vital Goal By Chiltern

EXCUSES for one of the most boring football matches I have seen for a long time were easy to advance and were advanced after the Town's defeat at Sunderland.

There was a strong, blustery wind playing tricks with the white ball, the turf was greasy and, of course, some difficulty was brought about by the floodlights which were used from the start.

But even allowing for all that, two teams with a reputation for constructive football should not have sunk to such a depth as this.

SUNDERLAND disappointed their own supporters despite their victory in this match of continual mistakes and mis-communications, but even so, they were way ahead of the Town, whose fans should be pleased that this particular display was reserved for a ground so distant that very few were able to follow them.

Yet they could so easily have had a point, which would have haled their rather alarming drift towards the lower reaches of the First Division table.

The goal that decided it all was completely in keeping with the football in general, and it always seemed a safe margin for Sunderland, so weak were the Town forwards.

Back Pass Led To The Only Goal

IT happened so early in the second half that Manager Daily Duncan had not returned to his seat from his half-time talk in the dressing-room and did not see it happen.

Right from the restart Sunderland made ground into the Town's half, and Groves began the series of errors that led to the goal by making an ill-advised and ill-directed back pass.

The ball went in the general direction of Owen, with Fleming coming up fast. Perhaps because he was waiting for Stretton to come out, Owen hesitated for a fraction of a second, and the next thing we knew was that the ball was in the back of the empty net, with Stretton having made his advance just too late.

Owen Said, "It Was An Own Goal"

AT the time there seemed some doubt about who had applied the finishing touch, but the Sunderland players rushed to congratulate Fleming, and it looked as if he had managed to stick out

FOR THE RECORDS

SUNDERLAND 1
Fleming
LUTON TOWN 0
SUNDERLAND: Bolland; Hedley, McDonald; Anderson, Daniel, Aitken; Bingham, Hope, Fleming, Shackleton, Elliott.
LUTON TOWN: Stretton; Dunne, Aherne; Pemberton, Owen, Shanks; Pearce, Turner, Morton, Groves, Adams.
Referee: J. H. Clough, Bolton. Attendance: 28,473.

Apart from that incident and one when Morton nearly managed to lob the ball over the head of Bolland who had come out too far, the Town forwards spent most of the rest of the afternoon running into trouble.

Whether, after this latest poor display, Town officials will now be persuaded that the time has come to make an excursion into the transfer market, we can only wait and see, but the seriousness of the situation cannot be over-emphasised.

Schemer Needed In Attack

SOME of their midfield work was pretty—and pretty ineffective, too—but the line not only lacked punch and drive, but it had no effective schemer.

A thoroughly fit Cummings would be worth his weight in gold to the Town and it is only to be hoped that the strengthening exercises he is doing will enable him to make an early return to the team.

Groves was not an adequate deputy because he wanted far too much time to do anything

Greyhound Racing



PANCHO FINISHES IN FIRST PLACE IN SEVENTH RACE

AFTER finishing sixth in his last race, Pancho found his best form at Luton Stadium on Saturday and won the seventh race by two lengths from Office Boy.

Favourites won only three races, but there were no high-priced winners.

I (410 yds.)—1, MADHAT (6); 2, Tony's Pet (5); 3, Ryan's Rose (1); 4, Teazy-Weazy (4); 5, Icknield Girl (3); 6, Scamp (2); 8, 5, 1, 4, 2; 25.15. Off 6.44.
Betting: Evens MADHAT, 4-1 Tony's Pet, Teazy-Weazy, 5-1 Scamp, 7-1 Icknield Girl, 8-1 Ryan's Rose.
Forecast: 12s. 9d.

II (470 yds.)—1, PAGE ONE (4); 2, Mary Ann (6); 3, Samson (3); 4, Pepsi-Cola (1); 5, Just Jake (5); 6, Miss Jane (2); 3, 4, head, 1, 5; 29.08. Off 7.05.
Betting: 5-4 Mary Ann, 2-1 PAGE ONE, 5-1 Samson, Just Jake, 8-1 Pepsi-Cola, 10-1 Miss Jane.
Forecast: 15s. 6d.

III (410 yds.)—1, KEEP MOVING (5); 2, Adios (6); 3, Boston Browne (1); 4, Meter (3); 5, Lady Rosa (4); 6, Plasterer (2); 1, 6, 4, 3, 3; 25.34. Off 7.25.

Betting: 2-1 Adios, 5-2 KEEP MOVING, 11-4 Meter, 5-1 Plasterer, 8-1 Boston Browne, Lady Rosa.
Forecast: £1 4s. 9d.

IV (470 yds.)—1, DAZ (4); 2, Tin Ribs (6); 3, Wings (5); 4, No Lights (2); 5, Kismet (1); 6, High Tension (3); 8, 3, 2, 6, 8; 28.35. Off 7.44.
Betting: 6-4 Tin Ribs, 3-1 No Lights, 7-2 DAZ, 5-1 Wings, 10-1 others.
Forecast: 19s.

V (470 yds.)—1, BOOTBLACK (5); 2, Easter Bonnet (2); 3, Trigger (1); 4, Our Bob (6); 5, Maid Marion (4); 6, Neddy (3); 2, 1, head, 1, 1; 28.54. Off 8.05.
Betting: Evens BOOTBLACK, 9-4 Maid Marion, 5-1 Our Bob, 6-1 Trigger, 7-1 Easter Bonnet, 20-1 Neddy.
Forecast: £1 6s. 3d.

VI (410 yds.)—1, LAUGHING BOY (6); 2, Tony Token (5); reserve: 3, Opera (2); 4, Citizen (1); 5, Fish and Chips (3); Ladylike (4); d.n.f., 3, 1, 6, 6; 25.08; non-runner Can't Wait (5). Off 9.0.
Betting: 5-4 LAUGHING BOY, 4-1 Tony Token, Opera, Fish and Chips, 5-1 Citizen, 10-1 Ladylike.
Forecast: 12s. 6d.

VII (470 yds.)—1, PANCHO (3); 2, Jimmy's Lil (6); 3, Dark Invader (2); 4, Running Water (1); 5, Office Boy (5); 6, Brisket (4); 2, 3, 2, 1, 2; 29.18. Off 8.44.
Betting: 2-1 Office Boy, 5-2 Jimmy's Lil, Brisket, 4-1 PANCHO, 7-1 Dark Invader, 10-1 Running Water.
Forecast: £3 3s. 6d.

VIII (410 yds.)—1, SHEILA'S CHOICE (1); 2, Lucky Blackie (2); 3, Lumberjack (3); 4, Minnie (5); 5, Twink (6); 6, Andrew (4); 12, 4, 3, 3, 8; 25.07. Off 9.07.
Betting: 7-4 Twink, 5-2 SHEILA'S CHOICE, 3-1 Lumberjack, 4-1 Minnie, 5-1 Lucky Blackie, Andrew.
Forecast: £2 11s. 3d.

RUNNERS AND SELECTIONS FOR LUTON TONIGHT

7.30 (410 yds.)—255 Little Albert, 64 Miss Patience, 665 Old Sal, 543

with the ball and too many of his passes were made towards his own goal.

This held up the whole business and Groves always tended to keep the ball too close and was often caught in possession.

Situation Is Now Very Serious

TURNER just does not seem to be able to regain his best form and the fact that he cannot get among the goals is a handicap under which the Town are labouring heavily.

Add to that the fact that Morton was almost completely overshadowed by Daniel and that, in addition, his distribution was inaccurate, and the root cause of the present troubles become clear.

Whether, after this latest poor display, Town officials will now be persuaded that the time has come to make an excursion into the transfer market, we can only wait and see, but the seriousness of the situation cannot be over-emphasised.

Only Four Points Out of 18

THIS is no new problem, but it has now assumed such proportions that only four points have accrued from the last nine matches during the course of which the Town have scored only eight goals.

Failing the acquisition of reinforcements, it is difficult to see what the move will be when the team to meet Charlton on Saturday is chosen.

Morton looks unhappy at centre-forward and it might be better to use his constructive skill in an inside-forward position which, of course, would raise

No Sign Of Cup-Tie Fever Yet

There is not much sign of Cup-tie fever in Luton and the usual rush to secure tickets when the Town are at home in the Cup has not occurred yet.

Maybe it is that people are pre-occupied with preparations for Christmas or maybe the present bleak spell through which the Town are going accounts for the fact that applications for tickets for the match with Aston Villa are a lot less than is generally the rule at this stage.

Yesterday's post was said to be an improvement on that of Saturday, but this match has certainly not caught the imagination of the public so far.

again the question of filling the leadership of the attack.

Pearce Liveliest Of The Forwards

ALTHOUGH he did not repeat his success of the previous week, Pearce was the liveliest of the forwards, particularly when, during the second half, he began to come inside looking for the ball.

Otherwise there was little support for him, and the same applied to Adam, who scored Sunderland with a couple of electric runs during the first half.

Thereafter, Hedley, that very capable full-back, marked the winger closely and little threat came after the interval from Adam, who gave little indication that he has gained increased accuracy in his finishing.

An Added Burden On The Defence

CONTINUED ineffectiveness of the forwards is throwing an added burden on the defence, who earned all the credit marks that came the way of the Town in this dreary affair.

Even so, they looked more worried under pressure than did their Sunderland counterparts, who were made a present of the ball time after time by bad passing.

In fact, the Town owed a debt to Stretton that they reached the interval on level terms, for he made three great saves and generally played so well as to revive the arguments when the comparative merits of him and Baynam are discussed.

Owen Had Much Awkward Work

FROM Sunderland there was a lot of buff-bang football with hard following up by the forwards and there was no question about them being the more dangerous team.

Owen stood up to quite a lot of awkward work splendidly, so that Fleming was not often dangerous, and Shanks was another who kept working throughout the piece and was the better of the wing-halves.

Although Shackleton was so little in the game that he was barracked by his own supporters, Pemberton was not quite at his best and, like the others, his distribution was off the beam, and that is usually the strongest point of his display.

Strong Wind Was A Handicap

HERE, it should be admitted that conditions made passing of any length a hazardous matter because the wind played all sorts of tricks with the ball and there

certainly was this alibi for some of the errors that were made.

But it did not excuse the unimaginative football produced by both teams and the wonder was that so many of the supporters stayed to see the end.

Of coping with the speedy Bingham, Aherne made a most effective job and he has had a remarkably successful come-back to First Division football.

Owen's Gambler's Throw Failed

ALTHOUGH he sometimes allowed Elliott too much room, Dunne did well, but the troubles of the Town defence could have been increased considerably had Sunderland been better in front of goal.

As it was Stretton had his work out several times to prevent the home team from gaining a more decisive victory.

Right from the time that Sunderland gained their goal, they seemed safely on the way to two points and they gained them comfortably enough despite the fact that Owen made a gambler's throw in the closing minutes and went up into the forward line, but no opportunity came his way.

Reserves Know The Way To Score

WHATEVER the shortcomings of the first team, the Reserves know how to score goals and, apart from the early weeks of the season, the matches in which the Reserves have participated have, so far as football and goals are concerned, been far more exciting than the majority of First Division matches staged at Kenilworth-road.

COURSE FOR CRICKETERS

In the past, there has been a great need in Bedfordshire for facilities for cricket coaching and net practice during the winter months, but the county club, in conjunction with the Central Council of Physical Recreation, has now been granted the use of the gymnasium at R.A.F., Cardington.

Accordingly, they have arranged to hold four courses beginning early next month and are hoping that cricketers will take this opportunity of developing their game.

A panel of coaches will be headed by the Northants captain, Dennis Brookes, who will be helped by K. McCanlis, an umpire on the first-class list, who played for Surrey and Bedfordshire, George August and Sid Morris, of Bedfordshire, while John Oliver has also been invited to join the panel.

Facilities at Cardington are also being used for a course for hockey players, which began last week, and there is ample space for six-a-side hockey.

In their last three home games, the Reserves have scored 17 goals and on Saturday they beat Queen's Park Rangers Reserves even more comfortably than the score of 5-0 suggests.

Might Have Had Double Figures

THE mystery was why Luton did not at least double their score. They certainly had sufficient chances to do so, and the Rangers were absolutely outclassed in all departments.

So superior were Luton that they were inclined to get a trifle lackadaisical in their finishing in the second half, and chances which would normally have been snapped up were let go begging because players tried to over-elaborate instead of shooting first time.

But they could afford to be over-confident, for the visiting forwards were so weak that Collier had just about the easiest afternoon ever in his career as a goalkeeper.

Collier Was Rarely Brought Into Action

IN the first half he made only one save from a Rangers forward, and practically his only occupation was to meet the occasional back passes from his full-backs.

After the interval he was twice as busy. He saved two direct shots and actually had to fire an effort round the post for a corner. Luton scored first through Leslie Jones, who shot from a few yards inside the visitors' half. The ball sailed over the goalkeeper's head and into the net.

Barry Hawkes scored the second a few minutes later, and Gregory, meeting the rebound after Davies had hit the woodwork, made it three before half-time. Rhodes (own goal) and Davies, scored in the second half.

The woodwork saved Rangers on three other occasions, and the spectators lost count of the number of near misses.

Duggan Takes His Tally To 26

THERE seems to be no stopping the Town's third team, who are scoring just as prolifically as the Reserves.

Man behind their successes is undoubtedly Ted Duggan, an experienced player, veteran of the Town's pre-war team, scored two more goals against Wokingham on Saturday. He now has 26 Metropolitan League goals to his credit.

Saturday's 5-1 victory was well-deserved, even though the home team scored first. Collins equalised with a long shot. Duggan added two and Dixon made it four.

Hills scored Luton's fifth in a more even second half. Dixon, one of the Town's latest acquisitions, accepted his opportunity coolly and looks as if he will be a real asset.

Luton Town Football Club F.A. CUP—3rd Round

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5th, 1957
Luton Town v. Aston Villa
Kick-off 2.15 p.m.

Admission by TICKET ONLY to:
STAND SEATS 7/6
ENCLOSURE (Standing) 5/-, boys 3/-
BOBBERS' STAND (Standing) 3/-, boys 2/-

STAND SEASON TICKET HOLDERS must make written application to the Kenilworth-road Office, Luton, marking the envelope "Season Ticket Holder," enclosing remittance, stamped addressed envelope and appropriate "Blue" slip marked "Round 3" from their Season Ticket Book. POSTAL applications only, which must be received not later than Saturday, December 29.

It is not possible, on this occasion, to allocate to Season Ticket Holders in Block "E" their usual seat.

Owing to the number of Stand Season Ticket Holders, and after supplying Aston Villa with their quota, it is regretted that NO Stand Seats are available for non-Season Ticket Holders.

ENCLOSURE Tickets can be obtained by postal application only to the Kenilworth-road Office, Luton, with remittance and stamped addressed envelope. A limited number will be on sale at the Bobbers' Club, Beech Hill-path, Luton, as from 6 p.m. on Monday next, December 17.

Tickets for the BOBBERS' STAND, including Bobbers' Stand Season Ticket Holders, will be on sale at the Bobbers' Club, Beech Hill-path, Luton, as from 6 p.m. on Thursday next (December 20). A limited number will be available for postal applicants to the Kenilworth-road Office, who must enclose remittance and stamped addressed envelope.

KENILWORTH ROAD TERRACE: NO TICKETS. Pay at Turnstiles on entry to ground. 2s. Boys 1s. All prices include Entertainment Tax—P. COLLY, Secretary.

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