

JUST THE PRESENT FOR CHRISTMAS

TOWN MAKE IT A HAPPY ONE FOR SUPPORTERS Hat-Trick—And League Century—By Turner

..... 4 Charlton 2
By Chiltern

BEFORE the match scenes at Kenilworth-road this afternoon were more reminiscent of a Reserve team than a First Division game. Approaches to the ground usually chock-a-block with people were almost clear and there was no doubt that the Town had reached a new low so far as attendance was concerned since they gained promotion. Disappointment about recent Petrol rationing? The fact that the unattractiveness of Charlton? The fact that this was the last Saturday before Christmas? Who knows the answer? But I should say it was a combination of the lot.

There was the added factor that the weather at mid-day looked unpromising and, in fact, it was before the kick-off there was to be doubts about whether it would be possible.

When the fog cleared, and when the sun came out visibility was possible, though there was the possibility of the fog falling again during the closing stages.

LOSING A DEBUTANT
In the last minute, the Town decided to leave Turner at inside-left, possibly because he was losing a debutant at left-half in Cox, and possibly the Town manager saw an opportunity for Turner to regain his confidence.

Instead of five changes in the forward line as compared with last week, there were only four. Morton occupying the inside-position, which I do not recall doing previously.

The pitch was heavy and looked sticky, and the advantage went to the Town, who won the toss and decided to defend the Kenilworth-end.

In the early minutes Campbell was penalised for fouling Gregory and the best move so far was one started by Morton, who pushed the ball through for Duff to pick out trouble.

How The Goals Came

CULLEN for Luton after 14 minutes.
STEWART for Charlton after 15 minutes.
TURNER for Luton after 20 minutes.
TURNER for Luton after 31 minutes.
RYAN for Charlton after 65 minutes.
TURNER for Luton after 69 minutes.

goalkeeper might have been beaten.

Play began to run in the Town's favour, and during an all-out attack, started by Pemberton heading the ball into the goal-mouth after a corner had been half cleared, here was a melee in front of goal.

Gregory, Turner and Morton all had shots beaten out, and the ball went to CULLEN, who, from an acute angle, made a drive, to which Duff got both hands, but the ball spun out and crossed the line before he could recover.

Despite Charlton's appeals, the referee awarded a goal, and the Town were ahead after 14 minutes. Their lead lasted for exactly one minute, because only that time had elapsed before STEWART, with his first goal in League football, put Charlton on level terms with a low drive that got in just inside the post, with Streten drawn out of his goal.

TAKEN BY SURPRISE
The movement, quickly mounted, seemed to have taken the Town defence completely by surprise.

Excitement was increasing and with the Town attacking again, Gregory missed a chance by pulling the ball wide, after he had done well to force a way through.

The Town were having to watch out for Summers, a tall, well-built centre-forward who was worrying Owen. Swinging round on the half turn, he forced Streten to make another brilliant save.

Straight from this, Morton pushed the ball down the middle and McLeod did well to evade the attentions of both Ufton and Campbell before turning in goalwards on his right foot with which, however, he could not get sufficient drive to worry Duff.

Excitement was mounting, and Streten threw himself full-length at Summers's feet to keep out a low cross by Kinsey.

Right away, the Town went on to the attack and were awarded a penalty when McLeod was pulled down by Hewie when he looked reasonably certain to score.

About the award, the referee had no hesitation, and TURNER, who has never missed from the penalty spot since he took over the role from Mitchell, easily beat Duff, to put the Town ahead again after 20 minutes.

HIS 99TH
This was Turner's 99th goal in League football.

The entertainment value of this game had stepped up appreciably with three goals in seven minutes.

Charlton were given a free kick just outside the penalty area, scarcely justified I thought, but the referee held that Owen had fouled Summers.

The kick was beaten down, but two corners to Charlton followed, both of which brought work for the Town defence but did not bother them unduly.

The turf was inclined to be treacherous, making a secure foothold precarious and escapes were happening at each end.

Chamberlain, showing a liking for coming through, went close to levelling the score with a shot that was out of Streten's reach but missed the post, too.

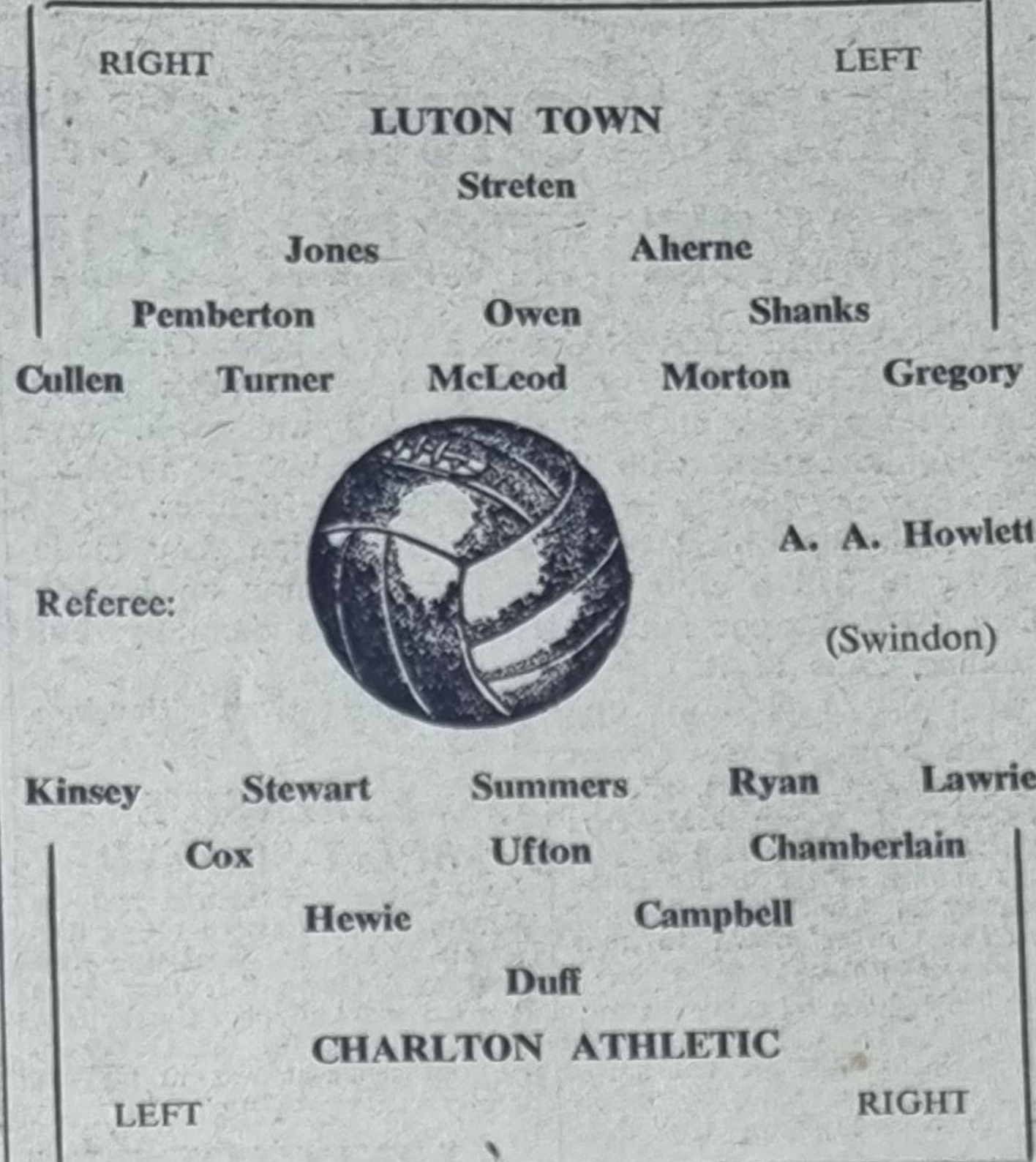
Streten was having quite a lot to do, more, in fact, than Duff and he had to go headlong into the mud again to save from the troublesome Summers.

Just before that, a long, through pass by Pemberton had been intercepted by Ufton so that Turner, nicely positioned, was deprived of the chance to reach his century.

THEN THE CENTURY

Bad passing caused several Town attacks to break down. Jones came down the right wing in enterprising style only to finish badly, but yet it was the prelude to the Town's third goal which enabled TURNER to reach his century with a header that got in just between the angle of the woodwork, after 31 minutes.

Events that led up to this



From an acute angle, Cullen scored for the Town in the 14th minute.



Turner, who never misses from the penalty spot, put the Town ahead again in the 20th minute. Eleven minutes later he found the net again, to bring his tally of goals up to the century mark. More success came his way in the 69th minute, when he completed his hat-trick.

success brought some scathing comments because Cullen, receiving from Jones, pushed it back out on to the wing again when the crowd thought he should have turned goalwards.

However, it all worked out because Jones this time made an accurate centre and so, after 31 minutes the Town were comfortably placed.

Both forward lines were showing liveliness and Gregory, with a clever reverse pass made an opening for Turner who, however, was too angled, and his cross flew harmlessly across the goal.

Cullen was badly obstructed by Cox who finished head-long after what looked to be a neat trip by the winger. From the free-kick, well-placed by Jones, Duff pushed the ball over for safety. The corner brought a narrow escape for Charlton, the ball being scrambled away after McLeod had shot.

GOOD TRIER

One or two of the referee's decisions were causing controversy, as when Morton seemed to have gained a corner, but instead, a goal kick was awarded.

A good run by McLeod ended disappointingly, when Morton drove wide, but there was an encouraging round of applause for the centre-forward, who was try-

ing desperately hard on his debut in this position.

Charlton's defence was looking more than suspect, particularly when the down-the-middle pass was used as it was by Cullen. It split the rearguard wide open, and Turner, shooting with his left foot, hit the ball hard enough, but Duff, throwing himself to his left, pushed it to safety.

Duff produced a save that was nearly out of this world with a great leap that kept out a tremendous drive by Morton, after McLeod had done more good work.

In doing so, the goalkeeper injured his head and had to have attention from the trainer.

He was soon all right, and Jones, who was showing attacking propensities, came right up for the corner and was not so far off the target with a fine, rising drive.

A lot of petty fouls were being committed by the Charlton defenders, and another free kick was conceded when McLeod was bundled over by Hewie.

NEARLY ALL LUTON

Jones took it and almost deceived Duff with a lob that nearly crept under the bar.

For some time now, it had been nearly all Luton, with the Charlton defence often in trouble and their forwards not making much progress.

When they did get away, Summers shot tamely wide.

However, just before the interval there was some activity by the Charlton forwards, though not of a serious nature.

Half-time:
LUTON 3
CHARLTON 1

Fog was beginning to fall when the second half was started and it looked as if visibility was going to be very bad before the end.

The initial pressure came from Charlton and Jones spoilt a chance for Kinsey so that Streten was able to pick up easily.

Charlton was throwing the Town back on to the defensive, without causing Streten much bother, but the Town forwards could not get going for quite a while.

Nor were they helped when Cullen took the ball towards his own goal to be dispossessed by Hewie, who won a corner that produced a scrimmage in front of the Town goal that Streten eventually cleared.

LIGHTS ON

With the fog thickening, play, particularly at the Kenilworth-road end, which the Town were attacking, was most difficult to follow.

Duff had to handle from McLeod and by now the Charlton goalposts were only barely discernible.

Then the fog lifted but it was still Charlton who were doing the better, and with eight minutes of the second half gone the floodlights were switched on.

This brought about a marked improvement.

Charlton continued to do the pressing and from the second of two quick corners Ryan forced Streten to throw himself on to the goal-line in order to keep out a header.

This half the Town attack had been fitful and when they suddenly swung into their stride, prompted by Turner, Gregory hit the side net.

Given room in which to come through with the ball, Ryan narrowly missed improving Charlton's position with a shot that finished just wide of the far post.

Then the inside-right, who was being a considerable nuisance to the Town at this stage, popped in to reach a cross before Streten.

The grip the Town had had in the first half had disappeared but they nearly added to their lead when Campbell made a badly-judged back pass to Duff which Gregory just failed to intercept.

After the floodlights had been on for six minutes they were switched off, which showed how much the visibility had improved.

There were shouts from the crowd of "Leave them on!" but nothing happened.

Charlton continued to be the more dangerous, fighting hard, and Summers, shooting on the half turn, was well wide.

INTO MELTING POT

With Charlton still having more of the play, they reduced their arrears through RYAN, after 65 minutes.

He beat Streten with a low shot from close range, and put the game back into the melting pot again.

Before the game restarted the linesman on the grandstand side, who was not immediately concerned so far as the goal went, ran into the middle to talk to the referee, but for what reason was anybody's guess.

The Town had not had much of a look-in this half, and in another Charlton attack Summers shot well over.

Only an acrobatic save by Streten, who diverted the ball over the bar, prevented Chamberlain from equalising, and Charlton had changed the whole course of this game entirely.

We were seeing little or nothing of the Town forwards, but then there came a quick breakaway, during which McLeod went through on the left wing to produce a centre that TURNER met most deliberately on the drop. He drove the ball into the corner of the net, well out of Duff's reach, to put the Town comparatively safe again and to complete his hat-trick. This was after 69 minutes.

McLeod then made an opening for Gregory, who was forced out to an acute angle when he might have passed to the unmarked Cullen instead of going on.

APPEALS IGNORED

Charlton came back hard, and both Summers and Ryan had shots beaten down. Appeals for a penalty when Summers went head-long were ignored.

When the Town came back it was through Turner and Cullen, with the latter producing a centre from which McLeod shot into Duff's hands.

Charlton gained another corner when the ball skidded off Jones's head and it came across dangerously in front of goal, where Owen kicked clear.

Charlton had faded out rather since the Town's last goal, with the Town right back into the game again, and Duff cut out a centre by McLeod.

It was the Town pressing now, and Morton had a shot stopped, Cullen forcing a corner from the rebound.

This was followed by a scramble in front of the Charlton goal, difficult to follow because the fog was coming down again, and it ended with an infringement by the Town.

Out of the gathering mist Gregory came racing through to force Duff to give a corner from which Morton drove wide.

The crowd were now shouting "Lights!"

NOT DONE WITH

Charlton were not done with and with Chamberlain coming through again Streten had to throw himself on the ball at Summers's feet to prevent another disaster.

At the other end, there had to be some agility on Duff's part to keep out a back-pass by Hewie that was going very wide.

Morton came through in most aggressive style to make a shot. The crowd shouted "Goal!" but Duff reached it at full stretch, though whether the ball hit the post first was difficult to tell.

Duff was in the picture again, cutting out a centre by McLeod, made from the left, and then Cullen, shooting first time, put behind.

By now the Town were going along comfortably enough holding their lead.

Morton had two attempts beaten away after Cullen had sent in.

Gregory headed just too high from a centre by Turner in the last minute. Result:

LUTON TOWN 4
CHARLTON ATH. 2