

"No Goal" After Referee Changes His Mind

FLOODLIGHT ROBBERY AGAINST POMPEY

(By NIMROD)

POMPEY are level at 2—2 with Luton. The home forwards surge into the attack, Weddle places a swift through pass, and Henderson racing at top speed makes his best effort of many.

Goalkeeper Baynham dashes from his goal, but Henderson manages to reach the ball a yard before it would have crossed the line, and shoots as he falls from what is often described as "an impossible angle."

The ball is in the opposite corner of the net in a flash of white.

The crowd roar their delight at a magnificent effort which, they believe, has brought deserved victory to the home team. Mr. Alf Bond the referee, is marching steadfastly back to the middle, the Pompey players are congratulating the flying Scot.

Then, the anti-climax: Baynham is gesticulating in the goalmouth. The referee examines the net, goes over to the linesman, and then points. He has changed his mind, and awarded a goal-kick to Luton.

Such was the decision which most of the 22,438 crowd thought was "floodlight robbery," depriving Pompey of those maximum points for which they had fought so well, and so badly needed. And for the remaining 13 minutes of the game, they registered their loud protest at both Mr. Bond and the goalkeeper.

Referee's Views

What caused the referee to change his mind? I asked him after the match.

He said: "I found a gap in the net where it had been torn away from the shackles. The linesman said he had examined it at the start, and it had been in order, then. In the light of that evidence, I could not allow the goal."

It seems rather strange evidence, in view of the fact that not much earlier, Weddle had sent a shot hurtling into the bottom of the side netting at the very spot where the gap was said to be.

Weddle himself was emphatic that it was "a brilliant goal." "Jack sent it in waist-high," he told me. "I was in a perfect position to see it go straight in, and it did go straight in. It could not possibly have gone through the

net at the height it was travelling."

He added that one of the Luton players had said he thought it a perfectly good goal.

Well, there it is! The unsatisfactory aspect of the case, judging from Mr. Bond's statement, was that neither of the officials actually saw the ball in its flight.

No doubt it is one of those things which will be argued about for weeks.

Disheartening

Again, it was disheartening for Pompey, but they can congratulate themselves on a first-class show which the crowd were not slow to appreciate. Their roars and the sounding of the "Chimes" encouraged this re-formed Pompey.

The changes, generally, strengthened the side. It was unfortunate for goalkeeper Barnett, playing his first home League match (the second of his career) that the first time he was in action, a goal was scored.

Pompey Off "Hot Seat"

Pompey lifted themselves one place in the League table last night and are now one point ahead of Sunderland, who have played two matches more than the Fratton Park team. Six of Pompey's remaining 12 matches are at home; only four of Sunderland's ten remaining matches are at Roker Park.

The seven positions at the foot of the table are:

Sheffield W.	32	12	4	16	63	71	28
Luton	31	11	6	14	51	60	28
Man. C.	33	9	7	17	60	73	25
Cardiff	32	9	6	17	46	71	24
Portsmouth	30	5	12	13	50	74	22
Sunderland	32	8	5	19	54	74	21
Charlton	34	6	2	26	48	103	14

Yesterday Sunderland lost 1—4 at home to West Bromwich; Cardiff were beaten by the same score at Villa Park.

I hope he will not let it sap his confidence, for he can handle a ball safely, high or low, and on two occasions subsequently, prevented the wandering Brown from scoring at point-blank range.

Barnett has shown that he has the ability, and Pompey need it.

Of the other changes in the side, Albury played well at right-half and deserves a run there. Mansell dominated at left-back, and Wilson, occasionally beaten by McLeod, nevertheless continued his satisfactory performances in his more natural position on the right.

Gordon was very effective on the right wing in the first half, but in the closing stages unfortunately forsook his more direct quick-moving use of the ball for the closer style which has so often spoiled his efforts.

As for the match itself, Pompey went straight into the attack with all the confidence

in the world, the forwards moving the ball at speed.

First-class positioning by Weddle led to the first goal after five minutes' play. From Henderson, the ball flashed to Gordon, then to Weddle, and back to Gordon who centred hard.

The ball went through in the penalty area to Dale, who scored with a replica of the shot with which he gave Pompey the lead against Leeds United on Saturday.

Four minutes later, Turner half-shot, half-lobbed the ball—a "chance-your-arm" effort—from about 25 yards. It came off, the ball travelling over the head of Barnett who had advanced to the edge of the goal area, dipped, hit the underside of the bar, and went in.

Pompey fought back, and for the rest of the half Barnett had little to do—a measure of his team's superiority.

Such was the terrific Pompey pressure that centre-forward Groves appeared to be a third back, and Brown alone lurked in the Pompey half as a possible danger.

In the 32nd minute, another centre from Gordon, who had beaten McLeod, and Weddle joyfully took his chance from close in.

Great Goal

Turner was hurt, and returned hobbling because of strained ligaments when the second half was a few minutes old.

Pompey's attacks continued to the rising crescendo of cheers from the crowd. From a Gordon corner, Weddle headed and McNally headed out from under the bar, with Baynham beaten.

Luton drew level with a great goal from Morton in the 74th minute. The right-half refused to be shaken off the ball, and fired in an unstoppable shot from the edge of the penalty area.

It was certainly against the run of play, although an admirable effort, and Pompey immediately retaliated. Then followed the incident already described.

It very nearly led to tragedy for Pompey, for Dickinson, possibly affected by the disappointment of that disallowed goal, made his only slip of the match—a half-hearted attempt to pass back to Barnett which Brown seized. Barnett hurtled from his goal, and caused Brown to miskick.

A couple of minutes later, Barnett saved Pompey again, blocking Brown's shot from a few yards, and when the ball rebounded via Groves to McLeod, the outside-left missed from six yards.

Pompey stormed into the attack in the closing stages, and within seconds, shots from Gordon, Dale, and Henderson, who was a source of danger to Luton to the last, were blocked on the goal-line.

Teams:—
Portsmouth: Barnett; Wilson; Mansell; Albury; Dickinson; Pickett; Gordon; McClellan; Henderson; Weddle; Dale.
Luton: Town; Baynham; Dunne; McNally; Morton; Owen; Pearce; Shanks; Turner; Groves; Brown; McLeod.