

SPOILING TACTICS UPSETTING TO TOWN

Brown's Missed Penalty Cost A Valuable Point

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 0, BURNLEY 2

THROUGH the years, Luton have never produced their best form against this opposition. Toughness and spoiling tactics are the integral part of the Burnley plan and the Town, not appreciating the change in the going from thick mud to a hard ground, made heavy weather of this match.

Yet, they should have won because what pure football there was came from them in a match which was a poor advertisement for the game from an entertainment point of view.

With sweeping changes in their team because of injuries to Dunne, Pearce, Turner and Shanks, the Town never settled down. Nor were they given much chance to do so because Burnley's strong defence adopted spoiling tactics from the start and did not hesitate to give away free kicks when a strategical advantage could be gained.

There was a series of infringements of which the Town took no advantage at all, and, here, let us give credit to a firm, competent referee who missed very little.

In the first half-an-hour, the Town had sufficient chances to have had this game completely sewn up, but they failed in their finishing with both Brown and Morton missing good chances.

Burnley seemed to be content with a defensive role, combined with breakaway by their wingers, Newlands and Pilkington. Theirs was a completely negative approach to the situation, but it paid off rich dividends in the end.

SCRAMBLED GOAL

With 23 minutes gone and in nearly the first serious raid they had made, Burnley took the lead with a scrambled goal by SHACKLETON, who rushed the ball over the line after Pilkington had returned a cross by Newlands that Jones misjudged.

That was all against the run of the play, but the Town forwards simply could not combat the spoiling tactics of their opponents' defence and play was scrappy and uninteresting throughout.

The style of play adopted by Burnley made them unpopular with the crowd, but the Town had only themselves to blame for the way things went because they showed no finishing power at all.

They could not fathom the Burnley plan of defence in depth and, even when they were awarded a penalty with a bare five minutes remaining, they failed to accept the opportunity of saving a point.

Taking his first spot kick since joining the club, Brown crowned what was an unhappy day for him by shooting straight at McDonald.

FELL FROM GRACE BADLY

That was the end so far as the Town were concerned and, with two minutes left, Burnley gained a second goal, as scrambled and unsatisfactory as the first when CHEESEBOROUGH rushed the ball through from close range.

Combination of the lively ball and the last ditch methods adopted by the Burnley defence seemed to defeat the Town completely.

By comparison with the form they showed in the last two away games, they fell from grace badly.

Part of the trouble was that no forward could control the ball quickly enough to evade the challenge of the Burnley defence and Brown, making his second home appearance in the League, was too closely watched to be dangerous.

Recalled to the team, Cummins disappointed after a promising enough start and although Groves showed skill in use of the ball, he was not forthright enough to thwart the Burnley plan.

All in all, there was a lack of method and construction and the main danger came from the wings—McLeod in the first half and Cullen, after the interval.

Badly missed was the driving power and support that has been coming from Pearce these last weeks. Smith found the vagaries

of the ball and the probing of McIlroy too much for him and it was left to Morton to try to bolster up a faltering attack in which direction he did a little too much.

However, Morton and Owen were two of the few who came through this game with their reputations still high.

Both full-backs had a lot of trouble with the visiting wingers, McNally on the score of inexperience, and Jones, though he held Pilkington quite well, earned criticism for his casual approach and dilatoriness.

Baynham produced one of the thrills of the match in the first half when he made a magnificent one-handed save from McIlroy. But that was one of the few high spots that this boring affair produced.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Jones, McNally; Morton, Owen, Smith; Cullen, Brown, Groves, Cummins, McLeod.

BURNLEY: McDonald; Angus, Winton; Seith, Miller, Shannon; Newlands, McIlroy, Shackleton, Cheeseborough, Pilkington.

Referee: T. Jepson, Mansfield.
Attendance: 16,403.

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Other Critics

HAD FEW MEDALS FOR THE TOWN

National newspaper critics were disappointed with the Town's showing against Burnley on Saturday.

They realised that Luton were below strength, and mentioned the fact that they were without four first team regulars, but they did not consider that an adequate excuse for the home team's poor display.

Allan Brown has had some very good write-ups since joining Luton, but after Sunday's "Press" it is doubtful whether he will want to put any cuttings about the Burnley match in his scrap-book!

Here are some quotes:

"This game was a great disappointment to the Luton fans who had expected to see a repeat of recent form which had coincided with the arrival of Allan Brown from Blackpool. It was probably a day that Brown, at least, will want to forget." *Sunday Graphic*.

"Allan Brown, Luton's buy from Blackpool, has been an outstanding success — until yesterday." *Sunday Pictorial*.

"Luton were a team of bits and pieces, missing particularly ace marksman Gordon Turner and left-half Pearce." *Reynolds News*.

"Luton's inside trio, despite much switching, were blotted right out of the game." *Sunday Express*.

"Luton were disappointing, which perhaps was not surprising in view of the fact that four of their regulars were sitting on the trainer's bench as the result of injuries received in mid-week. Even so, their forwards showed a complete lack of imagination." *Sunday Dispatch*.

"Town were only a pale shadow of the team which beat Arsenal." *Empire News and Sunday Chronicle*.

"A light ball and a dry ground played havoc with this game. Skill suffered and there was hardly a concerted movement by either side." *The People*.

"In recent weeks Luton have been showing new-found spirit . . . but against Burnley they slumped back to their dismal pre-Christmas form." *News of the World*.