

BROWN'S FIRST GOAL BEFORE HOME CROWD

Rest Of Luton Attack Lacking In Punch

By Chiltern

Luton - - - - - 1 Portsmouth - - 0

OF securing the two points that means safety for them, the Town made heavy weather at Kenilworth-road last night against Portsmouth, whose single-goal defeat means that they are now eight points behind Luton.

In a match that was much of a scramble, doubtless because of Portsmouth's desperate situation, the Town had the chances in the first half to have ensured that they were in an impregnable position.

As it was, the finishing of the forward line was poor, and several gilt-edged chances were allowed to slip by. In the end, fittingly enough, it was the Town's most effective forward, Brown, who secured the winner, which was his first goal before the home crowd.

Lacking the marksmanship of Turner, and with Brown not receiving the support he might have done, the front line as a whole did not move smoothly, with Cummins still much below his best. Groves was too frequently caught in possession, and there was not sufficient drive from the extreme wings.

About the defence there could be little complaint because they held, without a great deal of difficulty, a Portsmouth attack that showed a deal of enthusiasm and dash, but were no better than the Town when it came to finishing.

Owen made a fine job of holding Henderson, Morton was strong and incisive, and the full-backs were mostly the masters of two clever wings.

All in all, it was a disappointing, scrappy match, but at least it gave the Town the opportunity to atone in some measure for their failure last Saturday.

After all, none of the Town's four casualties was able to return, and the team was the same as that which lost to Burnley.

Compared with the side that met the Town last Wednesday, Portsmouth showed four alterations.

Teams:

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

PORTSMOUTH: Uprichard; McGhee, Mansell; Albury, Dickinson, Pickett, Harris, Clugston, Henderson, Weddle, Dale.

Referee: A. Bond, London.

After a fast, keen opening, the Town missed a splendid chance of taking an early lead when misjudgment of a bouncing ball by Dickinson left Cullen with a clear run for goal, with only Uprichard to beat.

Although he took careful aim as the goalkeeper advanced, he sent the ball too high.

Brown and Morton had made that opening possible, and the former was prominent in two subsequent Town raids that worried the Portsmouth defence.

MORE EFFECTIVE

After a period when the Town, playing more effectively than they did on Saturday, threatened to get on top, they had a narrow escape following a corner, when Baynham, badly unsighted, only just managed to scoop out a drive by Albury.

In the sudden rush that ensued two Portsmouth forwards failed to secure the rebound.

In the end it was Morton who cleared, and encouraged by this near miss, Portsmouth produced some lively football during the next few minutes.

With just over a quarter of an hour gone, Brown switched to centre-forward and immediately induced panic measures that brought a corner and a scramble in front of goal.

The referee had a word with Cummins and Pickett, as a result of which the players shook hands

How The Goal Came

BROWN for Luton after 59 minutes.

and the upshot was a free kick to the Town six yards outside the penalty area.

Jones came up to take it, and hit in a terrific drive that struck Albury square on the head with such force that it knocked him over.

Cummins shot into the hands of Uprichard and Brown, sent through cleverly by Groves, pulled his shot wide from the edge of the penalty area.

GREAT SAVE

The Town were the more dangerous, and only a great save by Uprichard prevented McLeod from making the most of a through pass by Cummins.

Spectacularly, Uprichard punched away virtually off Brown's head a centre by Morton who a minute or two later from inside the penalty area, shooting left-footed, hit the ball wide.

Certainly, the Town had the chances to be in a reasonably comfortable position.

For quite a time the Town forwards struck a bad patch, several

Player Is Bereaved

THE father of Leslie Jones, the Town full-back, died yesterday afternoon. In the circumstances, the Club discussed with Jones whether he would play in last night's match, but he said he preferred to do so.

Indeed, they would have been in a hole had he not taken this view, because Dunne and Aherne are unfit, and the only other full-backs with any real experience played in the Reserves team at Birmingham yesterday afternoon.

of them continually running into trouble, and far too high a percentage of passes was intercepted.

The Portsmouth defence was coming in to meet the ball all the time, and the Town were largely ineffective at close quarters.

One of the best shots so far came from Weddle, a 25-yards affair that Baynham pulled down from under the bar.

Half-time:

LUTON 0
PORTSMOUTH 0

There was a brisk start to the second half by the Town, but it was Portsmouth who came nearest to scoring, when Harris popped up on the left wing and after over-running the ball and getting himself angled hit the side net.

Except when Brown was in possession and with some room in which to work, the Town attack, a very hit-and-miss affair, continued to misfire.

Brown had begun this half at inside-right, with Groves in the middle again, but although the Town were still having more of the play, the punch was not there.

Then, with 59 minutes gone, the Town took a lead they should have gained much earlier.

BROWN it was who succeeded, and this was his first goal before the home crowd.

It was from an attempted shot by Groves, which Uprichard had covered until the ball seemed to break, that Brown, racing up at top speed, nipped in and flicked it past the surprised goalkeeper.

There could have been another goal when Morton, well inside the penalty area, was left with a clear shot at goal but he hit the ball well over.

Similarly, Harris lifted the ball much too high when Henderson carved out a scoring opportunity for him.

Baynham made a thrilling save from Henderson, in vain as it happened, because the whistle had already gone for offside.

Without making a deal of impression, Portsmouth were striving hard for an equaliser, and Baynham twice snatched the ball away in desperate raids.

First Groves, then Brown, made determined efforts to charge Uprichard over the line after he had cut out a centre by Cullen, and Cummins saw a high-powered drive cannon off Albury.

In an effort to snatch an equaliser, Henderson and Harris switched