

EARLY HAMMER BLOWS SHOOK TOWN BADLY

Defence Recovered, But Attack Had No Punch

By Chiltern

PRESTON NORTH END 2, LUTON TOWN 0

IN just eight minutes at Deepdale on Saturday, the Town were forced to their knees by two hammer blows from the Preston attack that gave them a two goals lead.

At that stage, it looked as if the Town were destined to be on the receiving end of a real hiding, but to their credit, they kept on fighting and managed to prevent North End from really cashing in on their tear-away start.

Even so, there were several very near things, with Finney and Tommy Thompson continually probing the Town defence and causing all sorts of trouble.

A third goal from Taylor was disallowed for a reason that was not clear and which certainly puzzled the home fans and two or three reasonable scoring chances were missed.

So, the Town could very well have been in an unenviable position by half-time, but the Preston sparkle did not last and they had their share of defensive work towards the interval.

Cummins and Morton both went close to improving the situation, but more power play by the Preston forwards early in the second half conjured up visions of more disasters.

However, the defence had tightened up considerably and, gradually, the Finney-Thompson menace faded out. Indeed, the Town had a very good share of the second half play and had there been more punch in their badly-balanced attack, they could have got the goal which would have given them a fighting chance of causing a big surprise.

GREAT SAVE BY ELSE

Nearest they got to that was when Cummins placed the ball to Else's left, but the goalkeeper reached it one-handed after a great leap.

A chance that fell to Morton after Else had pushed out a centre by Cullen, went astray and, apart from a couple of raking drives by Brown, both of which, unfortunately, went too high, Preston's defence had not a great deal about which to worry.

For the Town there were credit marks for the way in which they recovered from their shocking start in which Preston caught the reconstructed defence before they had had time to settle down.

Quick, crisp passes had them running about desperately and Owen struggled hard to plug the holes that appeared, especially when Docherty was allowed to come through with the ball.

In the end, Owen generalised his defence into a tighter force and gained a grip on Finney after the interval. So, too, did Alan Thompson improve to give an adequate performance after a beginning in which he was often caught out of position.

Smith's hard tackling was always an asset, and although Morton was in quieter vein than in some recent matches, he did a great deal to try to drive on the attack.

As for McNally, his confidence was undoubtedly sapped by a mistake that presented THOMPSON (T.) with the first goal after only six minutes.

Two minutes later, FINNEY took advantage of some muddled work and crashed the ball into the roof of the net with his left foot.

Maybe, McNally did not appreciate the switch to the right flank, but he never really got to grips with the clever Taylor.

BAYNHAM'S SAFE HANDLING

Town player who took the eye most was Baynham for a splendid display of safe handling in which the efficient way in which he cut out high centres was the salient feature.

Big fault of the forwards was that they were not progressive enough, tended to work across the field too much and took far too long in which to develop their raids.

Result was that the Preston defence was given time in which to cover and they were never drawn out of position as was that of the Town in the first half.

Strangely, Cummins's best work came near goal and, with luck, he might have had a couple of goals, but neither he nor Groves moved the ball quickly enough or accurately enough.

Without adequate support,

Brown ranged the field trying to get attacks in motion, but he was rather off the mark with his shooting.

Of the wingers, more came from McLeod than it did from Cullen, who found Walton a stumbling block, and he could rarely rid himself of the full-back's attentions.

On the other hand, McLeod had the speed to leave Cunningham behind and he shone quite brightly in the first half.

PRESTON NORTH END:
Else; Cunningham, Walton; Docherty, Dunn, Evans; Dagger, Thompson (T), Finney, Baxter, Taylor.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McNally, Thompson (A); Morton, Owen, Smith; Cullen, Brown, Groves, Cummins, McLeod.

Referee: F. L. Overton, Derby.
Attendance: 23,361.

Other Critics

FINISHING POWER WAS POOR

If Luton had had more punch in front of goal they might have scored at least one goal, but, as it was, they recovered from a shocking start to hold the much-vaunted Preston attack, although they were unable to prevent North End from recording their 16th match without defeat.

In the words of one critic, Luton were beaten but not disgraced — and considering the fact that the Town had a "utility" side in action, that just about sums it up.

Here are some quotes:

"Although Preston won with ease, there was a slice of good fortune in both goals." *Empire News and Sunday Chronicle.*

"Luton made a grand recovery from their bad start, but never looked like scoring." *News of the World.*

"Luton failed badly in attack." *Sunday Dispatch.*

"Luton were beaten, but far from disgraced. That was the Deepdale verdict on their plucky fight back after the shock of Preston's two quick goals." *Sunday Express.*

"Luton went raiding often enough in the second half, but they gave the impression that they wouldn't have scored a goal if they had stayed at Deepdale all night." *Sunday Pictorial.*

"Luton's only virtues were toughness, tenacity and perseverance." *Lancashire Evening Post.*

"Allan Brown was the best of a poor Luton attack, but his lone raids were useless against North End's quick-tackling defence." *Sunday Post.*