

LATE BLOW BROUGHT FIRST HOME DEFEAT

Below-Par Forward Line Had No Shooting Power

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 0, EVERTON 1

HAD the Town won this match, their supporters would have left the ground satisfied with the quality of the entertainment that had been provided because it was always an interesting game between two well-matched sides.

However, a late goal that meant the end of the Town's unbeaten record took much of the guilt off the gingerbread and came as a second disappointment after the loss of a home point to Leeds United in mid-week.

There had been plenty of warning of the quality of this rejuvenated Everton team and Manager Dally Duncan had first-hand knowledge of it because he watched them beat Arsenal recently.

A compact, highly efficient team they will obviously be difficult to beat, but had the Town forwards struck anything approaching their best, they could have halted what has now become a slump.

Even though the forwards did little in the way of shooting, the Town might have preserved their home record in the first half because they were most unlucky when a great drive from Pearce cannoned off the face of the bar, too fast for the on-coming Turner, and again when the left-half dropped the ball on top of the net.

DUNNE NEARLY DID IT

Other close call came when a lob by Dunne beat Dunlop and was hooked off the line by Donovan. So it was a half-back and a full-back who came nearest to putting the Town ahead.

Near the interval, Everton's defence was in sore trouble against all-out Town raids, but, once again, the finish was not forthcoming.

The second half opened in promising fashion with Turner missing narrowly after his first shot had rebounded to him, but after that, the covering of the visiting defence was too much for the Town forwards.

In fact, the more difficult tasks confronted Baynham who made several smart saves.

Just as the fans were resigning themselves to a goalless draw, Everton went ahead, with only seven minutes remaining, through an opportunist goal by FIELDING.

Following a throw-in, he picked up a pass from Meagan and, as Turner challenged him, toe-ended the ball into the far corner of the net well out of the reach of Baynham.

By far the more satisfactory department of the Town team on this occasion was the defence in which Pearce was outstanding again and his display clinched his selection for the Football League XI.

Quite a considerable amount of danger was expected to come down the middle through the dash of Hickson, but this did not happen because of the strength of Owen who held the centre-forward well, as he has on previous occasions.

Mainspring of the Everton attack was Fielding who was too elusive and clever for Groves and it was from the inside-left's accurate use of the ball that most of the Town's trouble stemmed.

Both wingers showed speed and directness which Dunne and McNally had to strive hard to match, and the latter did well enough on his first senior appearance of the season, after a somewhat hesitant start.

FORWARDS DISAPPOINTING

Twice in succession now, Baynham has had the disappointment of being beaten in the closing minutes after having deservedly kept a clean sheet, but he had no chance to save and all his work was stamped with an air of completeness.

Apart from a certain amount of neatness and cleverness in midfield, the Town attack was largely disappointing, with neither inside-forward impressive in dealing with the lively ball, and Morton largely left without workable material.

Only on rare occasions did Cullen manage to pass Tansey and McLeod's direct runs which are his asset were matched by the speed of Donovan and his strength in the tackle. Most disappointing factor, though, was that it was only most rarely that a forward really promised to score.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, McNally; Groves, Owen, Pearce; Cullen, Turner, Morton, Brown, McLeod.

EVERTON: Dunlop; Donovan, Tansey; Rea, Jones, Meagan; Harris (J), Temple, Hickson, Fielding, Harris (B).

Referee: G. McCabe, Sheffield.
Attendance: 19,767.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Luton, after their customary good start, are slipping back to their normal set-up—strong in defence but weak in attack . . . their forwards badly need a general."—*"Empire News and Sunday Chronicle."*

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"There was no-one in the Luton front line with the ability to hold the ball and use it intelligently. . . . Luton problems are in attack."—*"Sunday Express."*

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"The real Luton trouble today is lack of power on the wings."—*"The People."*

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"Luton's biggest need seems to be someone to hold the ball intelligently, draw a defender and so create an open space."—*"Reynolds News."*

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"Ron Baynham cannot be far off regaining the England place. In the second half he made three magnificent saves."—*"Sunday Dispatch."*

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"Reg Pearce, the Luton left-half, was outstanding. This big fellow, who can join up as a sixth forward or retreat as a third back, must be the envy of many First Division clubs."—*"News of the World."*

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"Luton will play worse and get the points . . . there is nothing seriously wrong with Luton."—*"Sunday Pictorial."*

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"This was a rip-snorting match."—*"Sunday Graphic."*