

DEFENSIVE STRENGTH IS NOT ENOUGH

Town Lowest Scorers In The First Division

By Chiltern

PRESTON NORTH END 1, LUTON TOWN 0

NO matter how strong is their defence, no team can expect to win points consistently unless they are scoring goals. Sound defensive measures succeed up to a point, but must be allied to scoring power.

Just how much this homily applies to the Town, a glance at the League table will show. Their goals for record is the lowest in the First Division, whereas only Everton have conceded fewer goals.

At Deepdale on Saturday the pattern was all too familiar, with the defence in great form, containing the danger from a forward line which had scored 14 goals on its last three appearances before the home crowd.

Close marking, intelligent covering and hard tackling had the effect of putting the Preston machine out of joint and, by and large, the danger to their goal was somewhat remote, except for a few snap-shots, mostly from O'Farrell, which flew reasonably close.

As it was the defence yielded only once and that was to a penalty kick, award of which was the subject of a deal of discussion, both at the time it occurred, and afterwards.

All the Town defenders looked for an offside decision when, after 21 minutes, Finney, having strayed to the right wing, collected the ball halfway inside the Luton half.

There seemed no reasonable doubt about the England forward being offside, but he was allowed to go on with a clear run to goal.

UNFORTUNATE PENALTY AFFAIR

Baynham did the only thing open to him and left his goal in order to narrow the angle, while Owen came up from behind. Finney seemed to change his pace, perhaps because he lost control of the ball momentarily, and the centre-half cannoned into his back.

Immediate response from the referee was to point to the penalty spot and FINNEY did the rest. From the Town point of view the whole affair was most unfortunate, especially as they had been looking the better side and should have gained goals from two low centres by McLeod.

Quickly, the Town hit back and their luck was out when Cummins headed against the bar and when Turner beat Else, only to see his shot strike Walton.

From the way in which the Town began the second half, it seemed merely a question of time before they reached equality and, for a quarter of an hour or so, it was mostly defence for Preston.

However, the marksmanship continued to be disappointing, half-chances were allowed to slip by, and gradually Preston came back into the game, without making a real impression on the defence.

The longer the game went on, the less likely a goal from the Town looked, though had things really been running for them, they might have saved the day just before the end when a shot by Turner was all but deflected out of the reach of Else.

NO FAULT IN DEFENCE

There was no fault to find with any department of the defence, in which Owen brought his vast experience and knowledge of the game to bear on the task of cutting down the menace from Finney, which he achieved to a marked extent.

To see to it that the sharp-shooting Thompson received few opportunities was the task allotted to Pearce and one he accomplished to a nicety, while Morton covered Baxter so closely that little scheming came from this clever player.

With Dunne in grim mood and Jones playing stylishly and taking no chances on this occasion, it was no sort of an afternoon for the Preston wingers, either, and there was always adequate cover for Baynham, who showed his

class by his completely safe handling of the ball.

Had there been points for skilful football in midfield, the Town forwards would have qualified all right because they played some very neat, good-looking stuff.

Much of it came from Cummins during the first half, after which he intended to hold on to the ball too long, and the inside-forwards looked able enough until it came to applying the finish.

More use of the through ball might have helped considerably but, in the main, Brown was held in check by Dunn, and Turner, perhaps not fully confident after his injury, was not so dangerous as he can be.

Turner was hurt again a quarter of an hour from the end and went to outside-right, which was the signal for a complete reshuffle of the attack.

From McLeod there was a timely return to form and he was the player who caused the Preston defence most worry because he always had the beating of Cunningham.

On the other hand, Adam found Walton a much more formidable proposition and his display was much below that of the previous week.

PRESTON NORTH END: Else; Cunningham, Walton; Docherty, Dunn, O'Farrell, Dagger, Thompson, Finney, Baxter, Mayers.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Jones; Morton, Owen, Pearce; Adam, Turner, Brown, Cummins, McLeod.

Referee: C. H. Sant, Crewe.
Attendance: 25,403.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Luton's attack did a disappearing act in slow motion in the second half."—"The People."

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"Luton were upset. They were yards faster on the ball, and the attack was lively and direct. But the finishing was wretched."—"Sunday Pictorial."

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"Finney was well offside when he received the ball which led to a penalty goal for Preston. Luton were always dangerous."—"Empire News and Sunday Chronicle."

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"Luton had a big share of the play, and it was largely their own forward failings that gave victory to Preston."—"News of the World."

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"Luton would have justified a draw."—"Reynolds News."

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"Preston held on to their 100-per-cent home record—but only just. Luton had reason to regret their wretched finishing when presented with quite reasonable chances."—"Sunday Express."

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"All the crafty touches came from Preston, but they had to be slick to keep out of trouble."—"Sunday Post."

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"As usual, when Luton come to Deepdale they were full of fire and abounding energy. . . . Luton might have saved a point or even won."—"Lancashire Evening Post."