



Sid Owen

BIFF-BANG LEEDS SAVE A POINT

Owen The Magnificent Was Town's Hero

LEEDS UNITED 1, LUTON TOWN 1

By CHILTERN

CLASS, they say, usually triumphs in the end, and class as represented by the Town nearly took them to their third consecutive win on the Elland-road ground on Tuesday night. They had the constructive ideas, all too often not carried out to fulfilment, but although not 100 per cent in some positions they did look a team capable of producing something of a sensational nature.

On the other hand Leeds, were adherents of the biff-bang, steamroller type of game, trying to bull-doze their way through by means of big kicking and strong following up.

Without hitting their top form as a line the Town attack still did well enough to secure a single-goal lead, and deserved more if the situation were to be judged in the light of constructive ideas.

Early on they caused the Leeds defence some trouble, with Pacey making shots just wide of the target, and after a spell of Leeds pressure in which Overfield forced Baynham to stick out a rather desperate foot to save, the Town swung back to the attack again. TURNER forced Wood to push over his 30-yard drive somewhat hurriedly, and then, in the 22nd minute, he gave the Town the lead.

There was an element of luck about the way the chance came, but none at all about the way in which it was taken.

A centre by Adam was harmless enough until it struck Cush on the knee and the ball rebounded kindly to Turner. This sort of opening he rarely misses, and with his left foot he banged the ball past the helpless Wood.

STRONG TACKLING

Some Leeds pressure brought little shooting, nor was there much from the Town, who found difficulty in sustaining their attacks, which often broke down through inaccurate passing and some strong tackling by the forthright Leeds defence.

The opening phase of the second half suggested a quick increase in the lead, because Turner brought Wood into action with a low shot, and then was inches wide from a Brown pass.

A goal at that stage would have dampened the Leeds spirit,

but encouraged by their supporters, surely one of the most vocal crowds in the country, they hurled everything into the attack.

This particular storm was weathered, but the Town defence had a sticky time because the ball was coming back at them continually—something that has an all-too-familiar ring about it.

Just as we were thinking that the critical period had been overcome, Leeds were awarded a penalty in circumstances which the Town players felt were harsh. Adam was back helping in defence, and just inside the area near the dead-line he had a tussle with Forrest. Owen raced across to help, but before he could make his tackle Forrest fell full length over Adam.

"PENALTY"

"Penalty," said the referee, after making sure it had happened inside the area. As for the Town players they thought the operative word was "fell."

CROWE took the kick and nearly made a hash of it because his shot hit the underpart of the bar and bounced into the net.

So Leeds were level after 63 minutes and the game was in the melting pot. For the Town, the initiative had gone, but gradually their football took them back in the game briefly.

Then it was more Leeds pressure with Baynham making a wonder save from Crowe and things looked distinctly sticky. After a while, the Town clicked together again and a golden chance was missed when Adam made a low centre from the

right to which Brown could not apply the needed touch.

Five minutes from the end, Turner, who had had a kick on the ankle earlier, suffered an attack of cramp and went to outside-left. Leeds tried desperately to snatch a late winner, but were thrown back by stern defensive measures.

OWEN THE HERO

Stern, indeed, they had to be at times, with Owen in such magnificent form that he must still be counted as one of the leading centre-halves in the game. It was his head that reached the centres and through passes, and Forrest could never make much of him.

It was a heroic performance by him, and another to earn top marks was Morton, who held O'Brien and found time to help Dunne against the speedy Overfield.

In the first half, especially, Dunne needed assistance against the winner, who could well have been a match winner. Dunne had a distinctly unhappy spell, but was more successful after the interval.

More effective was Hawkes, who was quick and hard into the tackle, and of this facet of his game there is little to complain.

However, it would be of value if when time allows he tries to make more use of the ball instead of thumping it unheld. But he did an invaluable job.

Without touching his form of Saturday, Pacey was quite effective, and Baynham was always confident and completed a defence that, on the whole, gave a very brave showing. Forward, there were still imperfections, and, perhaps, problems to solve.

Most dangerous of the attack was Turner, who did nearly all the shooting, but Bingham, in the first half, did not have so much of the ball as he did on Saturday.

He came into it more afterwards, and I liked the way in which he began to come back to challenge Overfield. Adam, too, was fighting for the ball, which made up for some of the errors he made in his finishing.

So far, Brown has not struck his best form, and his usually pin-point passes went astray too often. He found the lively white ball difficult to control, and that, combined with the bustling tactics of Charlton, and a large proportion of awkwardly-bouncing balls with which he had to contend made things difficult for him.

So the attack did not revolve round him as it can, but there was a need for more assertiveness from Groves, who worked willingly though there were times when he seemed unable to get into the game.

This was a good point for the Town, because after their drubbing at Bolton on Saturday the bustling Leeds were desperate. Bustle they did, and at times they put the Town right out of their stride. Full marks to the Town, though, for being able to regain their football smoothness after the storm Leeds produced midway through the second half.

Leeds United: Wood; Dunn, Hair; Gibson, Charlton, Cush; Crowe, Peyton, Forrest, O'Brien, Overfield.

Luton Town: Baynham; Dunne, Hawkes; Morton, Owen, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, Brown, Groves, Adam.

Referee: T. H. Cooper, Bolton. Attendance: 26,400.