

UNHAPPY AFTERNOON FOR THE FORWARDS

Never Threw Off Grip The Defences Gained By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 0, BOLTON WANDERERS 0

FOR poverty of forward constructive play and finishing power, little worse could be imagined than that which the Town and Bolton produced at Kenilworth-road on Saturday.

So tight a grip did the opposing defences take and maintain that there was rarely much prospect of a goal and very few thrills for the crowd for whom the warm sunshine was the only consolation.

Maybe that same warm sunshine had something to do with the almost lethargic way in which forwards of both teams went about the business of scoring goals.

For the Town, there was some excuse in that Groves badly sprained an ankle late in the first half, switched with Brown and remained in the middle, limping heavily, for the remainder of the match.

Had their original formation remained intact, the Town might have produced something better in the second half, but, with Groves crippled and both Turner and Brown sadly off form, there was never much hope of that.

In fact, not surprisingly, Bolton were stronger and more assertive after the interval, but there were few occasions when the Town defence looked to be in danger of losing their clean sheet.

One came in the first half when Holden headed against the bar, and the other after half-time when the Town defence, for once, was caught unprepared and Stevens was left with a great chance which he wasted by pulling the ball wide.

BINGHAM EXEMPT

Exempt from the criticism that must be heaped on the heads of the remaining forwards is Bingham, who was always a potential danger, but suffered, not only from lack of support, but from close marking by England's left-back, Banks.

Particularly in the second half, Adam did not receive much service either, but he was much in the grip of the hard-tackling Hartle anyway.

A mere glance at the goal average shows plainly where the

Town's trouble lies. The defence has conceded only five goals in seven matches, during which time only nine have come at the other end.

Which rather makes one wonder whether the Town have lost some of their old attacking outlook and are setting too much store by defence.

UNEVENTFUL STRUGGLE

But in this match, both teams were much of a muchness in their reliance on cast-iron defensive measures, and the result was a grim, uneventful struggle of very low entertainment value.

Strength at half-back again formed the basis of the Town plan, with Pacey, always in the picture, making a big impression on England selectors present.

From Owen there was his usual sound, confident display, which meant that there was little chance for Gubbins, standing in for Lofthouse, and little was seen of Parry against the marking of Morton, who, however, was not so constructive as he can be.

Both Dunne and Hawkes came through adequately enough, and when Baynham was brought into action, which was not all that often, he showed that he was completely equipped for any situation.

In the early stages the Town forwards did give some promise of earning victory when Hopkinson had to save from Brown, Adam and Pacey, but it did not last, and after half-time it always looked as if a point was the most the Town could hope for.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Hawkes; Morton, Owen, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, Brown, Groves, Adam.

BOLTON WANDERERS: Hopkinson; Hartle, Banks; Stanley, Higgins, Edwards; Birch, Stevens, Gubbins, Parry, Holden.

Referee: P. G. Brandwood, Kidderminster.

Attendance: 19,699.