

MIGHT HAVE BEEN VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY FOR TOWN

HAD THEIR CHANCES AT HIGHBURY

Weakened Defence Gave A Gallant Display

By Chiltern

FOR the Town this could so very easily have been a Christmas to remember with a double over the mighty Arsenal, who have run into something like the eighth problems the Town have encountered these last weeks.

With a sweeping 6-3 victory on Boxing Day, the town regained the enthusiasm of many of their supporters who had become lukewarm in their attitude and, had they made better use of their chances and suited their tactics to the very heavy conditions, they would not have lost the return at Highbury.

Assessing the worth of the Town's performance on Saturday, in which they held a single Arsenal team to a single goal, one has to take into account the fact that they were without stalwarts like Owen, Morton, Turner and Dunne. Wisely resting in view of future commitments, Owen accompanied a team as twelfth man and, while Turner was able to travel, but the club doctor had forbidden him to do anything more active than that. Morton, however, was forced to spend the week-end at home with back trouble and Dunne is resting his damaged toe.

Scrapiness Brought By Heavy Going

ANYBL, if some of these players had been able to turn out, there would have been a different story to tell of a match that descended to depths of scrapiness at times and was not worthy of such a big crowd as 50,000.

Much of the blame could be laid on to the very heavy going which defeated most attempts to play constructive football, and it was in this respect that most of the Town forwards went wrong. Cummins, brilliant in his footwork at times, failed to play his usual close game, instead of making more use of the long pass and trying to get the ball out to the wings.

Dragging The Ball Through The Mud

THIS tended to clog the forward machine and then, too, we had the sight of Adam Smith from the comparatively reaches of the wings and dragging the ball into the thick grass in the middle. In fact, there was too much fixing of the ball by the Town

'PICTORIAL' WEEK-END SPORTS SPECIAL

and it did not pay against an Arsenal defence that was much tighter than on the previous day after the four changes that had been made.

Dodgin saw to it that the gap down the middle did not occur and there was a much stronger display from the debutant, McCullough, than we saw from Evans on the previous day.

Baynham Unlucky To Be Beaten

MOST of the early pressure came from Arsenal, who took the lead after 20 minutes through Bloomfield, and it was rather an unlucky goal from the Town point of view.

During a scramble, Bloomfield shot from point-blank range and Baynham, throwing himself at the ball, made a miracle save.

In the circumstances he could not be expected to hang on to the ball, which rebounded to Bloomfield and, after striking Kelly, rolled just over the line.

Not until the last ten minutes before the interval did the Town really look likely to draw level.

and then, after fine work by Bingham and Cummins, Brown shot straight at Kelsey from close in.

Three Chances Went By The Board

FOR a few minutes the Arsenal defence was in trouble and Brown headed wide after another smart movement.

Then came a hard cross from the right by Gregory (that no-one could quite reach, and these were three distinct chances of the Town reaching half-time level.

When it was seen that Vic Groves, who had developed a limp during the first half, was a passenger at outside-left at the start of the second half, it certainly seemed that the Town's chances were bright.

But although there was some cleverness in midfield, in the main it was the old story of things fizzling out at the verge of the penalty area.

Foiled Twice By Kelsey's Agility

ADMITTEDLY, there were two or three all-out assaults in a couple of which McCullough joined, to be slightly injured for his pains, and it was left to Bingham to make the most serious attempt for an equaliser.

His high centre all but deceived Kelsey, who delayed his leap until the last split second and just managed to negotiate the ball over the bar.

In the closing minutes there was hard pressure from the Town but other than a lob from John Groves, in dealing with which Kelsey again showed his great agility, there was no real hint of an equaliser.

Arsenal's Defence Kept Them Ahead

SO, there it was. A disappointing affair, really, with Arsenal's reconstituted defence being responsible for them gaining both points.

On the basis of the fact that they played the better football, the Town perhaps deserved a point, and they certainly would have had one had they taken their chances during that spell before the interval.

Once again Bingham was the best of the forwards, but was not given the service he received the previous day and, in addition, met with a sturdy challenge from McCullough.

Gregory Tried To Repeat Tactics

OFTEN he switched into the middle in an attempt to produce some drive, but there was not really the support for him.

Ploughing a way through the mud was a difficult task for Gregory, who did his best to repeat the danger he provided in the first match by constantly trying to force a way down the right wing.

In the circumstances, I thought he did a reasonably successful job, though the results were not so spectacular.

If any forward was going to shine in this sort of going, one would have thought, naturally enough, that it would have been Brown, but he had only an ordinary sort of game, and his finishing was not good enough.

Weakened Defence Was Gallant

WEAKENED as they were, the Town defence gave a very gallant account of themselves.

Inevitably, Kelly always suffers by comparison with Owen when he comes into the team, but I thought he did very well indeed.

Certainly he lacks Owen's dominance in the air, but not his determination in the tackle, and he made it a not very impressive home debut for Julians.

John Groves continues to earn high praise for his work at wing-half, and he was always prominent in this match, tackling hard and always trying to push the ball through.

Groves Should Not Be Left Out

WHEN all the players are available again, I cannot see that Groves can be left out of the reckoning in the middle line and, on that assumption, it would seem most likely that Morton will be given a chance to settle down at centre-forward.

And that poses something of a problem in view of the display on Boxing Day by Gregory which was easily his best in the first team.

For The Records

ARSENAL 1
Bloomfield 1
LUTON TOWN 0
ARSENAL: Kelsey; Wills, McCullough; Docherty, Dodgin, Pettis; Clapton, Groves (V), Julians, Bloomfield, Henderson.
LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McNally, Hawkes; Groves (J), Kelly, Pacey; Bingham, Brown, Gregory, Cummins, Adam.
Referee: R. E. Smith.
Newport, Mon. Attendance: 56,501.

Presumably, all four who missed Saturday's match will be available for the visit of Birmingham this week, though, naturally, that will depend on the progress made by Dunne who has a toe injury.

No Worries About Middle Line

THERE was a strong display by Pacey, who, however, seemed to be more defensively minded than usual and there were times when he, too, was trying to drag the ball through the mud.

On the whole, though, there was little to complain of in the middle line, which is the department about which the Town have least worry.

For the second time, Hawkes came out on top from his battle with the current England right-winger, Clapton, who has not looked the part on either occasion, because Hawkes matched his speed with shrewd positional play and determination in the tackle.

Difficult Occasion For McNally

TO be pitchforked in at right-back for the first time in nearly 14 months on such an occasion as this, was a consider-

able task for McNally, but he showed splendid fighting spirit.

Maybe there were times when he was caught out of position and his timing was at fault, but he certainly fought every inch of the way.

It was a pretty busy first half for Baynham who often had to dive courageously at the feet of oncoming forwards, and it was sheer bad luck for him to be beaten in the manner in which he was. Certainly he deserved to be in line for some bonus.

Should Have Been A Penalty Or Nothing

MOST controversial issue that this match produced came midway through the second half, when Gregory was sent sprawling inside the penalty area by Dodgin.

From the way the referee pointed, I thought it was a definite case of a penalty and it was a surprise when he gave a free-kick for obstruction.

In my view, it was either a penalty or nothing at all and I could see no case for obstruction.

As for the "water throwing" incident, which trainer Frank King strenuously denied, it seems that a lot has been made out of very little.

When some Arsenal fans threatened him and used bad language to him during the first half, he apparently brandished a wet sponge at them in order to deter them.

There was no question of a bucket of water being used and the whole matter was settled amicably in the presence of the Arsenal secretary and a police inspector.

Young Reserves Were Overrun

WITH only two full-time players in the team, Collier and Barry Hawkes and with McGuffie, at 21, the oldest member of it, the Town Reserves had

neither the strength nor the experience to hold Ipswich Reserves on Saturday.

There were times when they were over-run, despite the way in which they fought, but the extra experience of the home team told in the end.

At the same time, the Town

might have had more than one goal had their finishing been more effective, and Dixon, apart from his work in this respect, was the best of the forwards.

Once again, though, McGuffie was outstanding both in attack and defence, but received little in the way of support.

CHILTERN'S FORECASTS

DIVISION I

Aston Villa v West Ham
Bolton v West Brom
Burnley v Leeds
Leicester v Arsenal
Luton Town v Birmingham
Manchester Utd v Blackpool
Newcastle v Everton
Preston v Nottm Forest
Sheff Wed v Manchester City
Spurs v Blackburn
Wolves v Chelsea

DIVISION II

Bristol City v Sheffield Utd
Cardiff v Rotherham
Charlton v Brighton
Fulham v Swansea
Huddersfield v Barnsley
Leyton O. v Derby
Lincoln v Stoke
Liverpool v Sunderland
Middlesbrough v Grimsby
Scunthorpe v Bristol Rovers
Sheff Wednesday v Ipswich

DIVISION III

Bournemouth v Bury
Brentford v Wrexham
Chesterfield v Newport
Colchester v Q.P.R.
Hull v Bradford City
Mansfield v Accrington
Norwich v Southend
Notts City v Halifax
Reading v Rochdale
Stockport v Doncaster
Swindon v Southampton
Tranmere v Plymouth

DIVISION IV

Barrow v Aldershot
Bradford v York
Carlisle v Millwall

Chester v Crewe
Coventry v Shrewsbury
Crystal Pal v Northampton
Exeter v Darlington
Gillingham v Walsall
Hartlepool v Southport
Oldham v Gateshead
Port Vale v Workington
Watford v Torquay

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

DIVISION I

Airdrie v Hearts
Celtic v Kilmarnock
Dundee v Raith Rovers
Dunfermline v Aberdeen
Hibernian v Motherwell
Partick Thistle v Rangers
St. Mirren v Falkirk
Stirling Albion v Q. of South
Third Lanark v Clyde

DIVISION II

Arbroath v Alloa
Ayr Utd v Berwick Rangers
Brechin City v Queen's Park
Dumbarton v Montrose
East Fife v Stranraer
East Stirling v Morton
Hamilton Acad v Dundee Utd
St. Johnstone v Albion Rovers
Stenhousemuir v Forfar Ath

SELECTIONS

TEN HOME.—Manchester Utd., Preston, Wolves, Fulham, Huddersfield, Sheffield Wednesday, Reading, Stockport, Hartlepool, Port Vale.

FOUR AWAY.—Nottm Forest, Stoke, Plymouth, York.

THREE DRAWS.—Leicester v Arsenal; Scunthorpe v Bristol Rovers; Swindon v Southampton.

Greyhound Racing

DAVE LEAVES THE REST BEHIND

DAVE, a comparative newcomer to Luton Stadium, created the surprise of last Saturday's meeting when it won the third race with a clear lead of 16 lengths. Dave, the favourite, got away to a poor start, but recovered quickly and soon raced ahead of the rest of the field. In its previous outing at Luton Dave finished fourth.

I. (410 yards).—1, GUSTO (6); 2, Powder Puff (2); 3, Double R (4); 4, Chub (1); 5, Slim Jim (5); 6, General II (3). 3, 2, 6, 9, 6, 25.88. Off 6.44.
Betting: 4-5 GUSTO; 4-1 Double R; 5-1 Chub; 6-1 Powder Puff; 8-1 Slim Jim; General II.
Forecast: 19s. 3d.

II. (470 yards).—1, RED SIGNAL (5); 2, Ave Maria (3); 3, Freddy's Pet (2); 4, Junior (6); 5, Lady Gay (4); Short head, 33, 5, 6. (Photo for first place). 29.65. Non-runner Valley Prince (1). Off 7.05.
Betting: 5-4 Freddy's Pet; 5-2 Ave Maria; 7-2 RED SIGNAL; 5-1 Junior; 6-1 Lady Gay.
Forecast: £2 6s.

III. (470 yards).—1, DAVE (5); 2, Sagittarius (4); 3, Kingsfare (1); 4, Phadadis (6); 5, Just Ann (3). 16, 3, 3, head, 28.48. Non-runner Hard Times (2). Off 7.27.
Betting: 4-5 DAVE; 7-2 Just Ann; 5-1 Sagittarius; Phadadis; 10-1 Kingsfare.
Forecast: 13s. 3d.

IV. (410 yards).—1, CHEETAH (6); 2, Hawk Eye (5); 3, Daily Mail (3); 4, Bluebell (2); 5, Late Rouble (1). 1, 3, 7, distance, 25.72. Non-runner Abbot (4). Off 7.46.
Betting: 6-4 CHEETAH; 3-1 Hawk Eye; Bluebell; 7-2 Daily Mail; 10-1 Late Rouble.
Forecast: 11s. 3d.

V. (470 yards).—1, QUEEN BEE (6); 2, Jennie's Chance (3); 3, Page One (4); 4, Gazelle (2); 5, Mr. Chips (5); 6, Icknield (1). Neck, 4, 4, 1. (Photo for first place). 28.95. Off 8.07.
Betting: Evens QUEEN BEE; 4-1 Jennie's Chance; Icknield; 6-1 Mr. Chips; 8-1 Page One; 10-1 Gazelle.
Forecast: 15s. 9d.

VI. (410 yards).—1, HICHOCK (5); 2, Gladness (3); 3, Houghton Boy (4); 4, Donna (2); 5, Tonto (6). 6, 8, 1, 2, 24.88. Non-runner Strong Man (1). Off 8.27.
Betting: Evens HICHOCK; 3-1 Gladness; 7-2 Houghton Boy; 7-1 Tonto; 8-1 Donna.
Forecast: 16s.

VII. (470 yards).—1, BANGER (6); 2, Colossal (4); 3, Dicky Bird (1); 4, Blarney (3); 5, New Mexico (2); 6, Broomfield Snow (5). 1, 1, 4, 3, 4, 29.51. Off 8.48.
Betting: Evens BANGER; 3-1 Broomfield Snow; 4-1 Blarney; 6-1 Dicky Bird; 8-1 Colossal; New Mexico.
Forecast: £1 11s. 3d.

VIII. (410 yards).—1, REGGIE BOY (5); 2, Stamp (3); 3, Bobby A (6); 4, Grannie (4); 5, Mother Riley (2); 6, Lovely Teresa (1). 6, 4, 7, 6, 2, 25.36. Off 9.06.
Betting: 5-4 REGGIE BOY; 3-1 Stamp; 7-2 Grannie; 9-2 Bobby A; 6-1 Mother Riley; 10-1 Lovely Teresa.
Forecast: 12s. 3d.

RUNNERS AND SELECTIONS FOR TONIGHT

7.30 (410yds).—244 Bendigo; 456 Butcher; 53 Gwendoline; 434 Just Jake; 534 Pancha; 666 Twink; reserve 534 Tiger.
7.48 (470yds).—656 Deuce; 433 Mr Gang; 6 Mavro; 522 Peebles; 531 Ryan's Rose; 543 Very Useful.
8.06 (410yds).—Grand Lad (Dec 4, 10.1, 24.81, Dec 6, 10.5, 24.90); 251 Ian; 2 Josbell; 3 Little Mure; 526 Rooney; 5 Tunc Clue.
8.24 (410yds).—52 Bally Fairy; 65 Duchess; 133 Golden Sun; 512 Record; 351 Red Light; 252 Very Hands.
8.44 (470yds).—321 Hard Times; 25 Jiminy; 515 Lady Dol; 253 Lucky Dream; 1 Sarah; 616 Slipper.
9.04 (410yds).—215 Ash; 312 Compere; 214 Dark Flight; 414 Mechak; 31 Quaint; 414 We Four.
9.22 (410yds).—5 Blondie's Boy; 413 Blue Jet; 2 Boy; 332 Jewel; 236 Solitude; 16 Willow.
9.40 (410yds).—131 Dr Paddy; 345 Miss Patience; 412 Novo; 45 Rita; 32 Sorrowful; 136 Why Not; reserve 234 Old Timer.

SELECTIONS
7.30—Just Jake (Bendigo, Pancha); 7.48—Peebles (nap) (Ryan's Rose, Very Useful);
8.06—Josbell (Ian, Grand Lad); 8.24—Record (Golden Sun, Bally Fairy); 8.44—Lucky Dream (Sarah, Jiminy); 9.04—We Four (Ash, Quaint); 9.22—Jewel (Blue Jet, Boy); 9.40—Dr Paddy (Novo, Sorrowful).

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