

SPARKLING TOWN WIN GREAT CUP TRIUMPH

Speed And Power On The Wings Worried Leeds

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 5, LEEDS UNITED 1

WHAT a transformation this match brought!

Changes which had been much criticised beforehand, particularly those in the forward line made the difference to a team that has found all the difficulty in the world recently in scoring goals.

Speed and power on the wings was the main reason for the humbling of Leeds who went out of the Cup at the first attempt for the seventh consecutive time.

Nor did it ever look like being otherwise because Leeds failed signally to adapt themselves to the difficult conditions presented by the frozen-hard pitch which had been heavily sanded in order to fill in the holes left after the battles in the mud.

On the other hand, the Town settled down as if they thoroughly enjoyed the experience and, by dint of keeping the ball on the move and making it do the work, they kept the Leeds defence busy.

United's bad luck was that they were deprived, to all intents and purposes, of the effective services of their right-back, Ashall, after about 20 minutes.

In a fall, he sustained a suspected fracture of his left wrist, and spent the rest of the match on the right wing, and that brought a considerable re-shuffle.

While this may have affected the margin by which the Town won, Leeds officials afterwards were quite satisfied that it did not affect the final result and they were sorely disappointed by the way in which their team failed to adapt themselves.

When the mishap occurred, the Town were already a goal ahead through BINGHAM, who swept through a centre by Gregory after 16 minutes.

Always the Town looked the more capable side, with the defence holding a not very virile

visiting forward line with considerable comfort.

MUCH IN COMMAND

Although the margin at half-time was still one goal, the Town were much in command and their superiority was emphasised ten minutes after half-time when Gibson pulled down Cummins heavily inside the penalty area.

With the memory of four missed penalties all too vivid, it was a trying task for anyone to take this kick and it was entrusted to GREGORY, the most inexperienced member of the forward line.

He shot wide of Wood's left hand, but not wide enough, because the goalkeeper reached the ball without being able to prevent it rebounding. That gave Gregory a second chance, because he had followed up strongly, to bang it into the roof of the net.

That goal seemed sufficient to clinch matters, but ideas had to be readjusted momentarily five minutes later when SHACKLETON reduced the lead after Baynham had pushed out a hard free-kick from Crowe.

However, before Leeds could reap any real benefit from this success, there was a sudden bombardment at the other end, during which MORTON beat Wood after two close-range shots had been beaten out.

After that it was nearly all Luton, and there were several narrow escapes for Leeds before BINGHAM secured the fourth goal after 76 minutes.

This came from a low cross from Gregory that found Bingham unmarked inside the penalty area, and he cracked in a great first-time shot with his left foot.

Five minutes from the end came yet another goal, this time from GREGORY, who pounced on a chance from close in following good work by Morton.

Even that might not have been the limit of the scoring because Wood had two large slices of luck in the last few minutes.

AUTHORITATIVE TOWN

So the Town swept into the fourth round in most authoritative style, and such was the quality of their display that they must have a real chance of going further—if they can reproduce this form.

From Bingham came some bewildering work on this treacherous going, and, receiving good support from Brown, he was always a source of danger.

So, too, was Gregory, who used his speed and shooting power with telling effect, and there was clever prompting and scheming from Cummins, who used the ball with considerable accuracy and without waste of time.

As the leader, Morton was a live wire, always working and harassing the defence, and Brown showed sufficient measure of improvement to give hope that his bad spell has come to an end.

Altogether, it was a most impressive forward display that thrilled the crowd and compensated for some recent below-par efforts.

Always in command, were Groves, Owen and Pacey, who were on top in the middle of the field and gave the Leeds inside trio an unrewarding time.

Coming in to meet the ball quickly, all three tackled hard and they were a very strong line.

McNally had every reason to be pleased with the way in which he took his somewhat unexpected chance. Rugged, but cool under pressure, he was impressive, and so, too, was Hawkes, who always seemed to be in control of the situation.

With the defence so much on top, this was not a difficult match for Baynham, who had nothing like the work that came the way of Wood.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McNally, Hawkes; Groves, Owen, Pacey; Bingham, Brown, Morton, Cummins, Gregory.

LEEDS UNITED: Wood; Ashall, Hair; Cush, Charlton, Gibson; Humphries, Crowe, Shackleton, Revie, Overfield.

Referee: R. J. Leafe (Nottigham). Attendance: 18,354.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

No complaints about Luton's Cup performance. All the daily and Sunday newspapers agreed that Luton, given a hard surface to operate on, can match the top teams in the country for Soccer skill and punch.

This match also gagged the so-called Town fans who threatened to boycott the game because of their disagreement with the team selectors.

"With their forward line recast, Luton found new attacking power, particularly on the wings, where Billy Bingham laid a new claim for being regarded as the best outside-right in the four countries, and young Tony Gregory came in to make for himself a host of new friends and to ensure a long run in the first team."—"Sunday Dispatch."

"Just look at the score and guess how easy it was. Luton have taken a panning from the fans for weak play, but here was their answer—a five-goal glory day that very plainly told the moaners to shut up."—"The People."

"New-look Luton swept Leeds off their feet and in doing so gave their hypercritical supporters the surprise of their lives. The team that has been struggling vainly in the mud and suffering defeat after defeat suddenly found the poise and confidence that had been missing for so many weeks."—"Sunday Express."

"Town, fallen giants of Division One, hit their best form of the season in this match and delivered a shattering Cup knock-out to a languid Leeds side."—"Sunday Pictorial."

"Luton used the right tactics—the quickly-made through pass that had the slow-turning Leeds defenders groping for most of the match."—"Daily Mirror."

"Luton were prepared for the conditions. They had trained in suitable footwear on Friday. But even allowing that they had the luck of the game, Luton were worthy winners."—"News Chronicle."

"Luton's fine display in most difficult conditions brings an end to the widespread criticism of team selection. Tony Gregory was a great success at outside-left."—"Daily Mail."