

INEPT TOWN HAD TO PLAY SECOND FIDDLE

Midfield Domination By Derby Wing-Halves

By CHILTERN

DERBY COUNTY 4, LUTON TOWN 1

THIS result was probably as big a shock to the Derby fans as it came to the long-suffering followers of the Town who had made the trip in anticipation of something better than this.

What happened was that some inept play by the Town, particularly at wing-half and in attack, enabled Derby to take such a midfield grip that they dominated the entire proceedings for long periods.

When one looks back at a match, there is always one incident that might have changed the whole course of things had the execution been better and, for the Town, that occurred in the early stages when Turner made a clever opening which he probably would have been able to finish in more deadly style had not Noake interposed and sliced the ball wide.

That really was the only chance that came the way of the Town during a first half in which they were nearly always playing second fiddle and yet limited their arrears to one goal.

That came after eight minutes when Collier followed a centre made by Barrowcliffe that he had not much hope of reaching and before he could regain any sort of position, CURRY headed the ball into the opposite corner of the net to mark his home debut.

For the Town, these 45 minutes were one long struggle, with the defence continually in one sort of trouble or another and the forwards patently unable to produce anything which had any resemblance to a constructive movement.

With five minutes of the second half gone, they were two down, in rather unlucky style because Dunne's tackle on Powell, which enabled him to clear the ball, looked fair enough, but the referee pointed to the spot, despite the Town's protests, and BARROWCLIFFE scored easily.

ONE GLEAM OF LIGHT

Just one gleam of light came the way of the Town, in the 58th minute when Spencer pushed a long, low pass to ASHWORTH who took it in his stride, evaded an attempted trip, and beat Adlington with a shot that went in off the foot of the post.

Another turning point came shortly afterwards and Turner was again involved, because he made a good header that beat Adlington, but the ball bounced to safety off the top of the bar.

Thereafter, although they were only one goal behind, the Town never looked like rescuing a point, which they certainly would not have deserved and, gradually, they became forced back on to the defensive more and more, despite forward switches in an effort to effect an improvement.

With 12 minutes left, HUTCHINSON increased the Derby lead and three minutes from the end, CURRY headed the fourth goal.

Collier was injured in attempt-

ing to prevent Hutchinson from scoring and it transpired afterwards that he had fractured a bone in his arm.

Despite his limitations in dealing with high crosses, he gave a brave enough display in the face of heavy pressure which was driven on by the fact that Parry and Upton almost had the freedom of the middle of the field.

GROVES STOOD FIRM

Only Groves looked anything like composed and he did much to bolster up a defence that was tottering all around him. For Bramwell, this was no sort of a day on which to make a debut, but he did enough to show that he will be a decided asset and was more successful than was Dunne.

Neither Brown nor Pacey was able to gain the all-important grip in midfield and, apart from being beaten frequently, they gave little service to their forwards.

Of the attack, the less said the better because it was mostly an aimless, incohesive force in which only Ashworth was a bright spot and, to a lesser degree, Turner, who had little support on his appearance at centre-forward.

Little came from Tracey and Noake, and Spencer tried hard enough without achieving much.

DERBY COUNTY: Adlington; Barrowcliffe, Conwell; Parry, Young, Upton; Swallow, Hall, Curry, Hutchinson, Powell.

LUTON TOWN: Collier; Dunne, Bramwell; Brown, Groves, Pacey; Tracey, Spencer, Turner, Ashworth, Noake.

Referee: H. Callaghan, Stockport. Attendance: 13,447.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Luton on the whole were unbalanced and gave their right wing far too little to do. The Derby attack, on the other hand, much taller than in recent weeks, was most impressive." — "News of the World."

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"Luton's new signing from Everton, left-back John Bramwell, had a most unhappy first outing, and despite his goal, inside-forward Alec Ashworth has to speed up the pace of his game if he is to offer anything tangible.

"Thanks to Collier, Luton did not crack until the last 10 minutes." — "Sunday Express."

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"Following Ashworth's goal and a Turner header, which grazed the top of the Derby cross-bar, Luton were subjected to an even more intense battering.

"Luton were short of method, uncertain in defence—except for goalkeeper Collier—and obviously lacking in confidence." — "Sunday Dispatch."

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"This was something like the old Derby, dominating on their own pitch.

"The woodwork (twice) and a full-back on the line (once) saved Luton more punishment." — "Empire News."

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"Derby's greater power and directness was too much for Luton, who had few ideas in attack and were further deprived of raiding power by Brown and Dave Pacey being entirely taken up with defence." — "The People."

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"Luton were a side without thrust and they would have gone down much heavier but for a sound display from goalkeeper Alan Collier, who was peppered with shots." — "News Chronicle."