

POWER PLAY SHOT TOWN OUT OF CUP

Collapse Came After A Fine First-Half Showing

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 2, LIVERPOOL 5

AFTER the way in which the Town dominated the proceedings in the first half of this replayed Football League Cup-tie at Kenilworth-road on Monday, the final result came as surprise.

However, a fundamental change of tactics by Liverpool, no doubt brought about by some very much to the point comments at half-time, caused a remarkable transformation.

From the fumbling, ill-at-ease combination they had been in the first half, Liverpool suddenly revealed themselves as a powerful unit who forsook their rather muddled first half attempts to make progress by means of close passing, completely unsuited to the conditions, in favour of hitting the ball hard and often.

This, supported by speed in following up and some tackling that bordered on the ferocious, found holes in the Town defence that had not been there previously.

What really turned this game was a double blow by LEWIS in the first five minutes of the second half which removed forcibly the narrow, one goal advantage the Town had been enjoying.

With only a minute gone, he smacked the ball into the roof of the net after a cross from the left had not been cleared and, four minutes later, put Liverpool in the lead with a low, cross drive that spun out of O'Hara's hands and over the line before Hunt, seeking to make certain, touched it.

From that point on, Liverpool were in command with the Town defence having no answer to these steam-roller tactics and, seemingly not the physical strength to resist them.

When, after 61 minutes, HICKSON secured a third goal, there was no doubt about the Town's career in this competition coming to a premature end and, apart from a couple of thrilling runs by Tracey, the Liverpool defence, so worried before the interval, was in very little trouble.

TWO LIVERPOOL NAMES WERE TAKEN

Just one chance cropped up to McBride, who missed it, before HUNT increased the lead after 73 minutes from what looked suspiciously like an offside position and before TURNER hit back for the Town with a fine goal two minutes later. Harrower became the second Liverpool player to have his name noted by the referee.

First was White during the first half for a very rough tackle on Noake, and that sparked off a scrambling period in which petty foul followed petty foul and brought a long series of free kicks.

The Town took the lead in the 10th minute, when Noake hit across low a free kick for hands by Molineux awarded for an

offence that seemed to have occurred inside the penalty area. However, justice was served because the ball broke to BROGAN, who carefully smacked it into the net.

It was after this that the Town held most advantage and should have cashed in on it. To a certain extent they experienced bad luck because McGuffie made a fine overhead shot that Slater just managed to push over via the bar.

Shortly afterwards the crowd, greatly encouraged by the much-improved form of the Town, were ready to shout for another goal when McBride came diving through to connect with his head a centre by McGuffie, but Slater made a brilliant save. Other chances cropped up and Noake should have done better than shoot wide from an opening created by Turner.

COLLAPSE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND

Had the Town been two or three up at half-time they would not have been flattered, a fact that made all the more difficult to understand the collapse that followed.

And a collapse it was, because the defence, which had stood up so competently in the first half, was simply swept aside by these new power tactics.

Obviously, Liverpool had noted that O'Hara, vastly promising though he is, has limitations in dealing with the cross ball, and this they exploited considerably after the interval, and at least two of the goals could be traced to this.

Most of the trouble came down the Town left flank, where McGuffie and Daniel were unable to keep tabs on Lewis and Hunt after the interval and Groves, who had a tight grip on Hickson earlier, began to find himself bypassed.

All struggled hard enough, including McNally and Brown, who did not find themselves faced with quite so much trouble, but they just had no answer to this new Liverpool.

As for the forwards, they had new-found liveliness in the first half, only to show the old fault of not being able to turn their work to final account.

Enthusiasm and fight there certainly was, but the final reckoning of the worth of any attack is reckoned in goals.

To finally rub it in, HUNT obtained Liverpool's fifth goal two minutes from the end after Turner's goal and a re-shuffle of the forward line had failed to spark off a rally.

LUTON TOWN: O'Hara; McNally, Daniel; Brown, Groves, McGuffie; Tracey, Turner, McBride, Brogan, Noake.

LIVERPOOL: Slater; Molineux, Byrne; Wheeler, White, Leishman; Lewis, Hunt, Hickson, Harrower, Callaghan.

Referee: K. G. Aston, Ilford.
Attendance: 6,125.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"Bright spots for Luton were few. The tall, somewhat ungainly inside-left David Brogan showed football ability and it was a pity his more experienced colleagues did not make more use of his work.

"Orient had more constructive ideas than Luton." — "Sunday Express."

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"On the basis of this game attention must be given to a forward line that showed life and determination in the second-half but a complete lack of anything resembling finishing power." — "News of the World."

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"This was Luton's fifth defeat in the last six games. The club are naturally worried, but on the credit side they did not look such a poor side as their lowly placed position might suggest.

"In fact, they should strike winning form very soon." — "The People."

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"On this evidence Luton have plugged the holes in their defence in which another newcomer John Bramwell gave a pleasing display at left-back but the forward-line needs urgent attention." — "Sunday Dispatch."

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"There is still plenty to worry about in the attack.

"David Brogan, 19-years-old Scot, and Alec Ashworth both moved well but rarely produced a goal threat despite all the frantic second-half pressure." — "Daily Express."

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"Luton's forward problems are manifold, but at least they have discovered one good prospect in David Brogan. The rest of the inexperienced line just have not the skill to create openings." — "Daily Mail."

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Luton Town v Liverpool

"Luton, as they trooped off for half-time a goal ahead through David Brogan, looked certain winners.

"Sixteen-years-old Luton goalkeeper Mike O'Hara gave a plucky display but as soon as Liverpool noted his limitations in dealing with cross balls, Luton's troubles began." — "Daily Express."

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"Luton, who took an early lead through Dave Brogan, slumped before the fierce Liverpool onslaught." — "Daily Herald."

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"Shankly's reshaped scheme was for hard-tackling left-back Gerry Byrne to move upfield to bring extra pressure on Luton right-half Allan Brown, and to shoot on sight at 16-years-old goalkeeper Michael O'Hara.

"The plan worked within five minutes of the restart, Liverpool turned a one-goal deficit into a 2-1 lead." — "Daily Mail."