

TEMPTED THE FATES, BUT WON IN THE END

LUTON TOWN 3, LINCOLN CITY 0

IN the way in which they missed their scoring opportunities in the first half in which they completely outplayed Lincoln at Kenilworth-road on Monday the Town tempted the fates, but things worked all right for them in the end with another home victory.

Yet, it might have been otherwise because Lincoln, very much second best though they were, had two great chances of levelling matters when they were only one goal down.

First came a minute before half-time, when Groves pulled down Graver from behind, but Standen brought relief by saving brilliantly Linnecor's shot from the penalty spot. He threw himself to his right and "brought down the house."

Earlier, there had been a penalty miss for the Town when Graves went down to grab the ball on the line from Turner, who is not so accurate from the spot as he used to be.

That was after 11 minutes, when Gratton handled unnecessarily, and Lincoln's defence continued to be in trouble against the fast-moving Town attack, which scarcely had the best of luck in front of goal but, at the same time, they had their chances and Lincoln some terrifically narrow escapes.

Graves stuck out a leg to stop a point-blank shot from Brown, and then scrambled the ball off the line from Ashworth, while Pacey was only inches wide.

A goal simply had to come, but it was delayed until the 32nd minute, when FLEMING secured his first goal in English football by driving the ball into the roof of the net after Tracey had ploughed a way through the mud.

Play continued in much the same pattern in the second half, when the 18-years-old Graves, who has solved Lincoln's goal-keeping problem, made a remarkable one-handed save from Turner, who had swung on to the ball with his left foot.

FLEMING'S SECOND GOAL

Then came Lincoln's second chance of getting back into the game with a fighting chance when Chapman broke clean through the defence, but with only Standen to beat, saw his shot strike a post and rebound to safety.

These isolated incidents apart, the Town were vastly superior, and they at last pressed home their advantage with a great goal by FLEMING 18 minutes from the end.

It came after a fine solo run, in the course of which he left Greaves floundering and this time, Graves could do nothing about stopping his fierce, rising drive.

And the score-sheet was made a better indication of the way things went when ASHWORTH put on a third from close range four minutes from the end after

Bramwell had crossed the ball into the goalmouth.

Lincoln were fortunate to escape so lightly and they owed a great deal to Graves, who received a big ovation from the crowd at the end and a congratulatory handshake from Standen.

Considering the dreadful state of the pitch which was a complete mudheap and had water standing on it in places after a downpour overnight, this was good holiday entertainment for a more satisfactory crowd of 15,274.

TURNER OUT OF LUCK

With Fleming playing an outstanding part and Turner working tremendously hard, though out of luck with his shooting, the Town forwards had a goal hungry look.

Tracey was often dangerous, and Ashworth's drive and thrust was a big asset, while Brown, without being consistent, caught the limelight at times, though he has lost the incisive form that marked his return to the team.

Comparatively speaking, the defence was not over-worked because the Lincoln attack showed little thrust and the inside men were mostly in the grip of Pacey, Groves and McGuffie, who formed a strong middle line.

There was another most impressive display from Bramwell, quite the classiest full-back on view and McNally was a resolute, hard-fighting defender.

Standen's penalty save and another fine clearance from Holmes were the highlights of his supremely confident display.

LUTON TOWN: Standen; McNally, Bramwell; Pacey, Groves, McGuffie; Tracey, Ashworth, Turner, Brown, Fleming.

LINCOLN CITY: Graves; Greaves, Jackson; Middleton, Gratton, Linnecor; Holmes, Wright, Graver, Chapman, Hawksworth.

Referee: D. H. Howell, Birmingham.