

SPOILING TACTICS UPSET TOWN RHYTHM

Opportunism Of Legate The Decisive Factor

By CHILTERN

61/62

LUTON TOWN 3, LEEDS UNITED 2

WHEN one team goes into a match as Leeds United did at Kenilworth-road on Saturday, bent on spoiling, obstructionist tactics, the standard of football is bound to suffer badly.

Although there was quite a measure of excitement, especially in the second half when a minor goal rush developed, this was no game for the connoisseur and, for a long time, it looked as if the curious record of meetings between these teams who have had uninterrupted success on each other's grounds, would be continued.

Thanks in the main to the opportunism of Legate, making his first home League appearance of the season, the Town went on to win narrowly, but deservedly on the run of the play.

However, they found that the Leeds tackling, which caused the referee to award a series of free kicks against them, threw the forwards out of the smooth rhythm they can produce on occasions.

Almost every time a promising attack was in the course of development, a foul brought it to an end and these tactics are not calculated to bring the missing fans back to the terraces.

In the early minutes, Leeds looked extremely dangerous and Standen had a busy start, but the Town settled down and, after eight minutes, LEGATE, faced in front of goal by an awkwardly-bouncing ball, sensibly used his head to guide it into the net.

After that, things seemed to be going well enough for the Town until Fleming lost possession of the ball just inside the Leeds half and it was pushed through to REVIE.

With no decisive tackle coming, Revie went on towards the goal and beat Standen with a shot into the far corner of the net. Mainly because of a weakness down the middle, the Town defence had a sticky period after that, but they survived the pressure and after Turner had missed a great chance by heading wide soon after half-time, they regained the lead.

FLEMING'S "DIPPER"

From near the edge of the penalty area, FLEMING tried a shot that seemed destined to go over, but the ball dipped and got in under the bar, with Younger well beaten.

Two minutes later came the decision that produced a storm of controversy when the referee awarded Leeds a penalty following a scramble in front of the Town goal.

Few could pin-point the reason for the decision and the Town protested forcibly, to no avail, and BREMNER equalised from the spot.

Afterwards the referee said that a white-shirted defender had handled, a verdict with which the Town did not agree because they said that the handling had been done by Standen.

For a short time, that looked as if it might be the means of depriving the Town of a point, but they came again and LEGATE secured what proved to be the winner with another header after the ball had come across from the right.

PROBLEMS ARE NOT SOLVED

In general, the Town's forward display did not suggest that all their problems in this department are solved and, in particular, there seems the need for a more constructive plan so far as the inside trio are concerned.

Admittedly, circumstances made it not a good day on which to judge them especially as Turner was well below his normal form, but the midfield link-up is still missing.

McKechie had a struggling sort of match and Ashworth with his gallant thrusts at goal turned out to be the most dangerous of the three.

But the man who carried most threat was Legate, more consistent on this occasion than Fleming, who showed some improvement after a poor first half.

Chief defensive problem still concerns the middle and was most evident in the first half

when both Pacey and Groves had to do a deal of covering because Cope could not prevent the continual Leeds raids made by the simple expedient of plugging the ball through.

However, to a certain extent, Cope seemed to solve the difficulty after the interval, with the result that there was a welcome tightening up.

Pacey followed up his splendid display at Norwich with another grand performance and he and Groves got through a tremendous amount of work.

Without being outstanding, McNally and Bramwell were adequate and there was some impressive handling by Standen who is dealing with high crosses much better than was the case last season.

LUTON TN: Standen; McNally, Bramwell; Pacey, Cope, Groves; Fleming, McKechie, Turner, Ashworth, Legate.

LEEDS UTD: Younger; Hair, Kilford; Smith, Goodwin, Bell; Bremner, Revie, Charlton, McConnell, Peyton.

Referee: R J Leafe, Nottingham. Attendance: 10,341.