

Luton's Turner Made It A Dramatic

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LAST-MINUTE GOAL FITTING REWARD IN TOUGH STRUGGLE

By "Chiltern"

LIVERPOOL 1, LUTON TOWN 1

FORTUNATELY, the thick fog that enshrouded the north west last night had cleared by this morning so that visibility in Liverpool this afternoon was completely normal and the weather, though dull and cold, was dry.

Big blow to Liverpool before the start of the match was that Roger Hunt, their inside-right, and leading scorer with 18 goals in 16 League matches this season, failed to pass a fitness test this morning.

He twisted a knee at Preston last Saturday and although Manager Bill Shankley said before the match that he could have played at a "pinch" there was a risk of him breaking down and it was considered wiser to give him a further week's rest.

So into the attack came Kevin Lewis, £15,000 buy from Sheffield United last season.

Lewis, normally a winger, lost his place last Saturday to Callaghan but has had previous experience at inside forward and scored five goals in seven outings in that position last season.

At the same time the absence of Hunt which deprived Liverpool of their chief spear-head seemed to improve the Town's chances considerably and they approached the game in confident frame of mind, despite the formidable record of the leaders, who have dropped only one point on their own ground this season.

TWELFTH MAN

Although Bob Morton had recovered from injury he was given twelfth-man duty today and the team remained the same as that which beat Leeds United last Saturday.

After the poor crowds we have seen at Kenilworth-road lately, it was a pleasant change to see thickly-populated terraces on this Anfield ground and there were prospects of a gate of in the region of 40,000.

The pitch looked in remarkably good condition having been freshly rolled, but it was soft on top and conditions with no serious wind or sun looked just about perfect.

LIVERPOOL: Slater; White, Byrne, Milne, Yeats, Leishman; Callaghan, Lewis, St. John, Melia, Acourt.

LUTON TOWN: Standen; McNally, Bramwell; Pacey, Cope, Groves; Fleming, McKechnie, Turner, Ashworth, Legate.

Referee: J. R. Loynton, Solihull.

From the start, the Town, attacking the Spion Kop end, moved smartly and Ashworth had a shot charged down. However, Liverpool, with barely a minute gone, should have taken the lead when Lewis broke through yawning gap in the middle of the Town defence, with only Standen to beat, as Cope and McNally raced across in an attempt to cover.

That was a distinct let off and, we hoped, not a sample of things to come.

STILL MENACING

Liverpool kept it up in menacing style and from a cross from St. John, Melia, shooting hurriedly, sliced the ball yards wide.

A strong tackle by Bramwell stopped a run by Callaghan, who came again and then was forced into touch.

Moving the ball about smartly and without waste of time, Liverpool continued to be dangerous but the Town had a turn and the tall Yeats just prevented a centre by Fleming reaching McKechnie who had taken up a good position in the middle.

A foul by Groves on Lewis gave Liverpool a free kick midway in the Town half, and it led to Liverpool taking the lead after six minutes through LEWIS.

Milne placed the ball over to the left, and it dropped near to the Town goalpost. Groves was close up to it, but somehow or other seemed to make no attempt to clear, perhaps because he thought McNally would so do, and Lewis bent low to steer the ball just inside the post past a surprised Standen.

Undoubtedly it was a well-taken chance by Lewis, who literally hurled himself at the ball, but I could not help feeling that the Town defenders should have done more about it.

With the Town struggling to find their touch, this was the sort of start they most wanted to avoid and there was no disputing the fact that Liverpool were the smarter, quicker and more dangerous-looking outfit.

Once Turner very nearly cut out a scoring opening for Ashworth, who however, could only just reach the ball with his head and it spiralled gently to Slater.

Much more decisive was an attempt by Melia, who beat Pacey cleverly in mid-field and went on to produce a drive that sailed over but was close enough to



KEVIN LEWIS, Liverpool's deputy inside-right, put Town in arrears after six minutes following a free kick taken by Milne.

raise a cheer from this highly partisan crowd.

TOWN IMPROVED

Improvement by the Town came through a run by Legate in the course of which he beat White before turning the ball inside to Ashworth who could not get much power behind his shot and Slater saved easily.

For a time the Town exerted some pressure without bringing Slater into serious action and thus early it had become only too apparent that high centres were not going to do them any good at all, because Yeats was completely dominant in this department.

Then the breakdown of a promising Town movement became a judicious pass by Turner bounced off Fleming's knees and ran loose, nearly producing a second goal for Liverpool.

Left back Byrne secured possession, made a bee-line for goal and brought Standen full-length with a shot from the edge of the penalty area.

Liverpool were creating by far the more clear-cut openings and I thought St. John should have done better than shoot wide, narrow miss that it was, after he had been sent through cleverly by Acourt.

TOWN DEFENCE WORRIED

The quickness of movement and thrust of the Liverpool attack was worrying the Town defence, and McNally gave away a corner to stop another dangerous burst by St. John.

Cope also conceded a corner under pressure without anything coming from it, and the Town were carrying play into the Liverpool half quite frequently without looking like potential scorers.

Legate made a clever run, at the end of which his centre was deflected straight into Slater's hands, and the one positive shot that came was from Pacey, from longish range, that sent the ball well wide.

There was a slight hold-up while Lewis received attention for an injury and then a free-kick to the Town when Leishman crashed into McKechnie, but this Liverpool defence was covering splendidly and had revealed no gaps so far.

TURNER MADE THEM THINK

Liverpool were in trouble for almost the first time when Turner worked the ball down the right wing and Leishman made a rash sort of clearance that sent the ball across the face of his own goal.

However, Slater was quick to see the danger and he raced out to boot the ball smartly into touch.

Almost immediately after this Bramwell was hurt in a fierce tackle and while he was still lying on the ground Callaghan came

racing in to test Standen with a fierce drive.

Bramwell quickly recovered and then collided with Cope as both attempted to clear from just inside the penalty area.

Fortunately neither was injured though both finished full length.

As Liverpool pressed again, St. John came from nowhere it seemed to leap and reach with his head a centre by Callaghan but fortunately for the Town the ball missed the post.

A quick thrust by Luton gave McKechnie half a chance, but it was no more than that because Yeats came in strongly to tackle and completed a brilliant clearance.

The Liverpool work all the time was quicker and crisper and their shooting, while not all that distinguished in its accuracy was always there or thereabouts.

Milne missed by inches after another concerted movement.

Turner was given temporary repairs by trainer Frank King for what seemed to be a cut mouth and he carried on with a piece of cotton wool protruding from his lips.

NO CHANCE FOR SHOTS

Try as they would the Town forwards just could not find the openings to make telling shots, and time and time again their movements were breaking down before the penalty area was reached.

Cope twice cleared as the ball came across dangerously from Callaghan and the pattern remained largely the same, with Liverpool making the more openings but lacking the final punch, possibly through the absence of Hunt, to make the most of them.

On the other hand the Town just were not able to pull this immaculate Liverpool defence out of position.

Just before half-time Liverpool pressed strongly again and Standen had to push the ball hurriedly over the bar as it came over from Callaghan.

A foul by Groves on Lewis just outside the penalty area on the right wing brought Liverpool a free kick in time that had been added for injuries, but this was cleared without undue trouble.

Half-time:

LIVERPOOL 1
LUTON 0

First thrill of the second-half came when Lewis brought the ball along the deal line before crossing it dangerously and Standen and St. John went for it together, though in the end it was McNally's boot that cleared it.

Both Standen and St. John were shaken up, both received attention but were able to continue and the damage seemed comparatively light.

With Liverpool remaining on the attack, Ashworth and Legate between them brought down Milne five yards outside the penalty area and White placed the free kick dangerously into the penalty area so that Standen was able to make only a sketchy one-handed punch.

FINAL PUNCH MISSING

Out went the ball to Milne who would undoubtedly have increased the lead but for the fact that Pacey was in the line of fire and his head deflected the ball for a corner.

This was a danger period for the Town with the famous Spion Kopers roaring their heads off for another goal, but for all the Liverpool flourish and effervescence in mid field that final punch was still missing.

Lewis shot wide from quite a good position and then Leishman sent the ball soaring over the bar.

For six or seven minutes, dogged defence was the chief Town role, but there followed a measure of improvement without any real suggestion of goal-thrust. Slater had to come out twice

How The Goals Came

LEWIS for Liverpool after 6 minutes.

TURNER for Luton after 87 minutes.

to cut off through passes, and then came the best Town effort yet from Ashworth who from a most acute angle turned in a pass from Fleming and almost caught Slater by surprise so that the goalkeeper had to make a cat-like leap to save one-handed.

Lewis stabbed the ball over from point-blank range after Callaghan had centred from the dead-line and then in a visit to the other end, Legate forced a corner - from which Fleming headed into Slater's hands.

Liverpool were continuing to be prodigal with their chances and St. John, finding himself an open space on the right wing, made poor use of his final pass which rolled across the face of the Town goal without going near any red shirt.

There were some flashes of hope about the Town's forward play at this stage, as when McKechnie sent away Fleming whose centre Slater reached by throwing himself at the ball as Legate, who was pulled up for offside, closed in.

When Liverpool hit back, Standen did well to cut out a fast, low cross from St. John. There was more competition up and down lines now, and Slater pushed outside a shot by Ashworth from a severe angle after Legate had made the opening.

For a few minutes the Liverpool defence had its hands full, but nothing developed. Liverpool swung back to the attack, with Callaghan centring the ball cleverly, but Standen cleared finely a header by Milne.

TOWN ESCAPE

Then the Town had an escape when St. John - whom I thought should have been pulled up for an obvious push on Cope - was allowed to go through.

Standen did all he could by racing out, but St. John forced the ball past him. McNally, as he has often done previously, had run back to cover, and just managed to scoop it off the goal-line, though, straight at Lewis, who, in far too much of a hurry, smacked it wide of the far post.

KICKED OFF THE LINE

Two or three minutes after this, with the Town showing more power in their front line, it was Liverpool's turn for a let-off when McKechnie let loose a low drive that White kicked off the goal line as Legate closed in.

The Town were certainly putting up a fight, and for a time there was little in it.

However, Liverpool always had the edge in attack, but they were finding the Town defence in stubborn mood.

When the Town did get away, after Fleming had switched to the left wing, quite a serious situation developed in front of the Liverpool goal with Legate having a shot charged down and then there was a free-kick for the Town when Fleming was pulled down.

This Groves placed accurately, but the ball was firmly headed out by Yeats, and that was the end of this Town raid, because Liverpool came away busily, through their left-wing pair, and finally the attack petered out with Milne, from 20 yards, driving wide.

After this, there was a heavy Liverpool attack in which Standen made a brilliant save from a rising drive by Callaghan, but even so the ball would have gone in - but for McNally being on watch-dog duty again, and he cleared off the line once more.



TURNER provided a dramatic ending to the game by equalising with only three minutes left

from St. John, whose shot was deflected to such an extent that it seemed impossible for the goalkeeper to reach it, but reach it he did, and the crowd behind the goal swayed in their excitement.

There was little coming from the Town forwards now, and hopes of the Town snatching a point from this hard-fought game were disappearing.

Ashworth and McKechnie had switched, belatedly I thought, because there were only about six minutes left when this happened. Then almost immediately Turner went away in much of his old style and nearly secured the equaliser with a low shot from his favourite angle that Slater could only push out and the ball spun behind Legate who made an efficient but all the same ineffective attempt to back heel it in because White kicked clear.

Then with only three minutes left there came a dramatic equaliser through TURNER.

The goal came like a bolt from the blue during a scramble in front of goal and suddenly Turner booted the ball heftily past Slater and it hit the under part of the bar before turning into the net.

There were strong Liverpool appeals against the award of a goal, though on what grounds was not clear, but the referee refused to consult a linesman and Turner was nearly mobbed by his excited colleagues.

Immediately after this, Liverpool came within inches of regaining the lead, because in a snip raid, Lewis, from the inside-left position, flashed the ball only that narrow margin wide of a post.

Result:
LIVERPOOL 1
LUTON 1