

THIS WAS THE STUFF TO GIVE THE FANS

TOWN WIN THRILL- PACKED STRUGGLE

Excitement Continued Up To The Last Kick

By CHILTERN

NOTHING could have been in sharper contrast than the last two matches we have seen at Kenilworth-road. In the first, Stoke came, dedicated to a defensive policy, with the idea of saving a point by packing their penalty area.

On the other hand, Rotherham United, on Saturday, were prepared to attack from the start, and, with the Town in similar frame of mind, the result was a fast, open game which kept the fans thrilled until the last kick.

IN considering the present slump in attendances, the Football League should take into account just how far negative play has been damaging to the game and find some way of encouraging the type of play we saw on Saturday.

Right from the start, things began to happen, and they kept on happening all through.

Indeed, at half-time, by which time six goals had been scored, one began to wonder if a new record aggregate for the ground would be reached.

However, there was a notable tightening up by both defences afterwards, with the result that, although the excitement continued, the scoring spate ceased.

Standen's Brave Save Prevented Equaliser

INDEED, a 3-3 draw seemed to be on the cards, and most of the Town fans would have settled for that until 18 minutes from the end when Ironside made a bad mistake in dealing with a centre by Pacey.

As the ball spun out of his hands, Ashworth was on the spot to pounce on it and ram it into the net from a yard or two out.

Even after that, the escapes at each end continued and, in the

dying seconds, only a brave save by Standen prevented Rotherham from gaining the point they thought they should have had.

Standen dived on the ball and received a knock on the side of the thigh as a result.

Pacey Had To Have His Nose Put Right

NOR was this the only injury this full-blooded game produced, because Pacey damaged his nose in a first-half collision with Cope, and, at the end, the club doctor rectified what he described as a slight dislocation.

In quite bewildering style fortunes swayed backwards and forwards in the first half, with the Town seemingly set for an easy win when they became two goals up in 15 minutes.

First, McGuffie, with the game only three minutes old, celebrated his recall by calmly side-footing the ball through after Ironside had pushed out a shot by Fleming.

Rotherham Played Some Fine Football

NEXT, Walden, finding the gap down the middle, raced on to a pass from Fleming to beat

FOR THE RECORD

LUTON TOWN 4
McGuffie, Walden, McKech-
nie, Ashworth

ROTHERHAM UTD. 3
Taylor, Sawyer, McNally
(own goal)

LUTON TOWN: Stan-
den; McNally, Bramwell;
Pacey, Cope, Groves; Wal-
den, McGuffie, Ashworth,
McKechnie, Fleming.

ROTHERHAM UTD:
Ironside; Cassidy, Morgan;
Lambert, Madden, Lancas-
ter; Webster, Houghton,
Sawyer, Kirkman, Taylor.

Referee: A. L. Mason,
Maidstone. Attendance: 9,886

Ironside with a well-placed drive, but before the Town really had time to appreciate their position, Rotherham had hit back.

Morgan pushed the ball down the wing to Taylor and, as Standen came out the winger hooked it over his head.

After that, Rotherham played some of the best football we have seen on the ground this season, moving the ball about with accuracy and taking up excellent position.

For a time, the Town defence was on the run, but nothing happened immediately.

Position For Town Was Far From Happy

THEN it did with Rotherham scoring twice in a minute, the first coming in the 28th from Sawyer and the second when McNally made an attempt to stop a drive by Kirkman, but only succeeded in deflecting the ball into his own net.

At that stage, the Town's position looked anything but happy, especially as the defence continued to be unsettled.

However, they kept on fighting and, with two minutes to go to half-time, McKechnie beat Ironside for the third time, with a low shot.

Up-and-down play continued to be the pattern of things in the second half during which there were near things at each end and the tension was considerable.

Danger From The Opposing Wingers

AFTER the solid defensive displays put up at Liverpool and Sunderland, it was a trifle surprising to see so many gaps develop during the first half.

However, due regard had to be paid to the fact that Rotherham played extremely well and there was particular danger from their wingers, so that both McNally and Bramwell were kept at full stretch and had a harassing afternoon.

Nor could Cope wholly dominate the middle, where he seemed to find difficulty in keeping tabs on the movements of Sawyer.

Both Pacey and Groves kept at it manfully, though sometimes at fault in their distribution, but the defence, as a whole, spent a worried 45 minutes.

Town Were Able To Tighten Up More

OF the two defences, that of the Town showed the ability to tighten up the more after the interval, and all three half-backs took a firmer view of the situation.

Pacey, particularly, stood out, but Groves made a good contribution, too, and there was much more assurance about the play of Cope.

There was some disposition to blame Standen for some of the first-half goals, and I thought that, having come out for the ball when

the first goal was scored, he should have made certain of collecting it.

However, whatever faults there might have been were forgiven when he made that last-minute save.

McGuffie Did Little At Inside-right

FORWARD, there was not the balance hoped for by the inclusion at inside-right of McGuffie because, apart from scoring and another good shot that went close, he accomplished little, and he switched with Groves for the closing stages.

Quite the most dangerous forward was Ashworth, who got through a tremendous amount of work, though I would like to see him concentrate more on being a spearhead.

Of the wingers, Walden is playing better than during his last spell in the team, but Fleming continues to mix bad finishing with good approach work, though he had a hand in the first two goals.

McKechnie played with a good deal of enthusiasm and no little skill which brought him a fair amount of success.