

Goal-Hungry Town Win Thrilling

TWO AHEAD—THEN ROTHERHAM CAME STORMING BACK

By "Chiltern"

61/62

LUTON TOWN 4, ROTHERHAM UTD. 3

AFTER a team had come away with a point from such formidable opposition as Sunderland, as Luton Town did last Saturday, it would seem reasonable to expect a better-than-average crowd at Kenilworth-road this afternoon especially since the Town had been unbeaten for five matches.

Rotherham may not be glamorous opposition, but they were third in the table this morning and are serious promotion aspirants, yet five minutes before the kick-off there were wide gaps in all parts of the ground.

After yesterday's torrential rain, which groundsman Tom King told me had put the pitch two inches under water in places, the pitch had made a good recovery.

However, it was still very soft and liable to cut up.

Both teams made three forward changes. The Town, through injuries to Turner and Legate, moved Ashworth to centre-forward and brought in McGuffie and Fleming at inside-right and outside-left respectively.

On the other hand, Rotherham were strengthened by the return of Kirkman and Taylor, who form the left wing. To make way for this partnership, Houghton, who has been at inside-left, switched to inside-right.

It was a cold, crisp sort of afternoon with fitful sunshine.

Teams:
LUTON TOWN: Standen; McNally, Bramwell; Pacey, Cope, Groves; Walden, McGuffie, Ashworth, McKechnie, Fleming.

ROTHERHAM UNITED: Ironside; Cassidy, Morgan; Lambert, Madden, Lancaster; Webster, Houghton, Sawyer, Kirkman, Taylor.

Referee: A. L. Mason, Maidstone.

The Town defended the Oak-road end and made progress, but neat work between McKechnie and Ashworth was spoilt because McKechnie passed back to the centre-forward who had moved out on the wing and the result was an offside decision.

Then Ashworth streaked past Madden only to find the ball running away too quickly and Ironside collected it with only a split second to spare.

SPECTACULAR RETURN

With three minutes gone the Town went ahead through McGUFFIE, who thus made a spectacular return to the team.

Groves had found Fleming with a beautifully placed pass, and the



McGUFFIE made a spectacular return to the Town's first team with a three-minute goal.

winger closed in and shot. Ironside, who had narrowed the angle, managed to push the ball out.

McGuffie, who had followed up, kept his head and calmly sidefooted the ball into the corner of the net.

With great determination Rotherham hit back and there were two narrow escapes for the Town, first when Houghton shot wide and then when Lambert was similarly just off target.

Clever work by Pacey opened up the Rotherham defence again but Fleming turned the ball into Ironside's hands.

One sparkling movement on Rotherham's right wing brought a shot from Cassidy which Standen appeared to turn outside. The referee indicated a goal-kick

although Bramwell had punted the ball to the corner flag.

TWO MINUTES—TWO GOALS

Rotherham went on looking dangerous, and Sawyer missed a near open goal when Taylor flashed the ball across before it went for a corner.

With 15 minutes gone a sharp break-away brought the Town their second goal, through WALDEN. He raced down the middle to chase a low through pass by Fleming and, showing good judgment, rammed the ball into the net as two defenders converged on him.

Two minutes later Rotherham scored through TAYLOR, who chased a long pass by Morgan. As Standen came out trying to block the ball, the winger lifted it over his head into an empty net.

The crowd were certainly getting value for money, with both teams playing open football.

Pacey saved the situation for the Town by throwing himself at a through pass, and Standen was able to scramble away a shot by Houghton.

For a time Rotherham had the better of matters with wing-halves backing up lively forwards, and Lancaster drove the ball a couple of feet too high from just outside the penalty area.

TOWN IN LUCK'S WAY

The Town were in luck's way when Kirkman was left with a clear run to goal after the ball had been lobbed over Cope's head but he was flagged offside.

Ashworth, spending more time in midfield than had been expected, suddenly showed up in the Town's attack and struck the side netting from a pass by Walden.

There was a stoppage while Cope and Pacey, who had collided had attention.

Slackness in midfield led to Rotherham drawing level after 28 minutes through SAWYER, who took a pass from Kirkman and scored with a weak shot that rolled into the corner with Standen unsighted.

A minute later Rotherham were in the lead for the first time when more slackness in the Town defence developed and Kirkman shot from point-blank range. McNALLY made a gallant attempt to stop it, but the ball spun off his leg into the net for an "own goal."

McGUFFIE GOES NEAR AGAIN

McGuffie came within inches of putting the Town level when he raced through, but Ironside just managed to block his shot.

Rotherham's remarkable recovery went on, and Webster beat Standen from a sharp angle only to see the ball flash past the far post.

The Town forwards were showing little understanding and accuracy, and Fleming, after Groves and McKechnie had made an opening, sliced the ball wide.

Then the Town improved suddenly and McKECHNIE put them level after 43 minutes when he stuck out a long leg to a loose ball inside the penalty area and it went well outside Ironside's reach.

The Town kept it up and McKechnie had a shot blocked in another heavy raid. Half-time:

LUTON TOWN 3
ROTHERHAM UTD. ... 3

During the interval the Luton Band displayed the championship trophy it won at the Berkshire and Neighbouring Counties Band Festival last Saturday.

The first incident of the second half was a mild ticking off from the referee for McKechnie for a foul on Lambert.

Rotherham, striking again at the Town's suspect defence, nearly went into the lead when



WALDEN raced through to score the Town's second after 15 minutes.

Taylor hustled McNally into a mistake, and his shot, with Standen beaten, was much too close for comfort.

Rotherham were having more of the play, though there were free kicks each way. Ashworth was fouled by Cassidy, and although he went on to drive the ball into the net the whistle had already gone, and the free kick availed the Town nothing.

ASHWORTH ON THE WANDER

A mistake by Cassidy nearly put Rotherham in trouble when Groves lobbed the ball over from the right, but the right-back made a quick recovery.

Ashworth, who wandered all over the place looking for the ball, set the next Town attack in motion. Ironside had to snatch the ball off the head of McKechnie. Quickly Rotherham hit back and Standen cleared from the lively Taylor.

Pacey began to take a share in attack, and a full-blooded shot from him might have troubled Ironside but for the fact that it struck a defender and went for a corner.

Another deflection from a cross by Bramwell nearly had Rotherham in difficulty.

Then Madden kicked away wildly as the Town pressure mounted.

Luton gained a free kick just outside the penalty area when Walden was pulled down by Taylor and this caused a terrific mix-up in front of the Rotherham goal before Lancaster booted into touch.

ROTHERHAM MENACING

Rotherham broke away and Kirkman had a shot charged down. A similar fate awaited an effort by McKechnie, and Ironside came to the penalty spot to snatch the ball away from the onrushing Ashworth.

Rotherham still looked menacing when their attack was moving, and Standen did well to save a snap shot by Taylor after Sawyer found a gap.

It was still anybody's game, the Town could not make much progress.

There was still plenty of action to keep the crowd entertained, and hints of more goals.

With 72 minutes gone the Town regained the lead in the

see-saw struggle, and just about deserved it. It was the persevering ASHWORTH who scored, from close range after Ironside had gone up to try to cut out a centre by Pacey and failed to hold the ball.

A couple of minutes later the Town escaped more lightly than they should have done when Taylor was left with a good chance but could only hit the side netting.

TOWN GOING ALL OUT

It was still a full-blooded fight with the Town all out for the goal that would make victory certain, but Madden was a stumbling block.

Webster nearly caused a fifth goal with a pass towards his own penalty area. Ironside had to rush out, and he collided with McKechnie. It was very much touch-and-go and just as well for Rotherham that the goalkeeper's reaction was quick.

There was still plenty of fight about Rotherham, but with bare minutes remaining, Fleming dispossessed Lambert and swept the ball to Walden, who centred across the goal. McKechnie's shot was deflected for a corner.

Even now there was no let-up in the terrific pace, and the crowd was in high excitement. A Rotherham effort was stopped by Cope, and Ashworth forced the ball into the net, but the referee disallowed the goal as offside.

A minute later Ashworth got through again with a clear field, but shot wide to great shouts of "Oh"! However, he was offside.

Rotherham broke away, and in a rush on the Town goal Standen held on to the ball despite being injured. Result:

LUTON TOWN 4
ROTHERHAM UTD. ... 3



McKECHNIE Put Town level after 43 minutes, when they had fallen a goal behind.

How The Goals Came

McGUFFIE for Luton after 3 minutes.

WALDEN for Luton after 15 minutes.

TAYLOR for Rotherham after 17 minutes.

SAWYER for Rotherham after 28 minutes.

McNALLY (o.g.) for Rotherham after 29 minutes.

McKECHNIE for Luton after 43 minutes.

ASHWORTH for Luton after 72 minutes.