

TOWN BLASTED OUT OF THE F.A. CUP

Toss Decision Was A Bad Error Of Judgment

By CHILTERN

IPSWICH TOWN 5, LUTON TOWN 1

A TEST captain risks committing cricket suicide if, faced with a good batting wicket, he invites his opponents to have first use of it and, in football, too, the rule of making the most of the luck in winning the toss also holds good.

However, Bob Morton chose to ignore it at Highbury on Monday because he gave Ipswich the advantage of having a gale force wind behind them in the first half of this second Cup replay and it had fatal consequences.

Not that Morton is wholly to blame, because when the matter was discussed beforehand, there was backing for the decision from a majority of members of the team, who probably thought back to last Saturday when the Town kicked against the wind in the first half at Huddersfield.

What they probably did not realise was that the wind was very much stronger on Monday night, and it gave Ipswich an undeniable advantage of which they proceeded to make the fullest use.

One man who sighed with relief when he saw the unexpected decision made by Morton was the Ipswich manager, Alf Ramsey. Afterwards he admitted that what he feared most was facing the gale, especially as he had to field a comparatively inexperienced goalkeeper in Hall, a late deputy for tonsillitis victim Bailey.

Much aware of this were the Town and the obvious thing, surely, was to pepper Hall with as many shots as possible in the early stages and not give him a chance to settle down.

Instead, Hall had the best part of 45 minutes to get accustomed to the big game atmosphere before he was severely tested, and then he pulled out two magnificent saves to help foil the Town fight back.

"MUST TAKE THE ADVANTAGE"

A grim-faced Sam Bartram afterwards had just one cryptic comment, "You must take every advantage of what the elements offer."

Whether the Town would still retain an interest in the Cup had they kicked with the wind is a moot point, but they would have had a much better chance because the task of trying to wipe out a three-goals lead in the second half proved to be beyond them.

In not one of the three ties did they hold the lead and the shock start of becoming a goal down in two minutes was much in line with what happened at Portman-road.

The Town defence appeared to be taken by surprise when Phillips made a long throw-in and MORAN was on hand to drive the ball home.

Four minutes later, Baynham was picking the ball out of the net again, this time after PHILLIPS had hammered it home from point-blank range.

This followed Bramwell, to whom Baynham had thrown the ball rather unwisely, losing the ball in his attempt to round Crawford.

With 16 minutes gone, the third blow came when, just inside the penalty area, McNally tackled Leadbetter, who went sprawling, and the referee pointed to the penalty spot.

General consensus of opinion was that it was a harsh decision, but it was the means of Ipswich driving yet another nail into the Town coffin because PHILLIPS does not miss from that range.

All through the first half, the Town managed to have quite a reasonable share of the play, but their forward play never matched that of Ipswich for either smoothness or accuracy of finishing.

MADE A GREAT FIGHT

To the credit of the Town, they made a great fight to retrieve what seemed to be at half-time a hopeless situation.

Chandler might have obtained a goal immediately after the resumption, but he was not quite quick enough and Hall came out to clear.

Then, hope returned for the Town in the 56th minute when McNally swung a high ball into the penalty area and ASHWORTH neatly headed it into the corner of the net.

This stirred the Town fans and another goal would really have set this game alight. Unfortunately, it never came though it took a remarkable save by Hall from Walden to prevent it and Pacey twice went close to scoring.

Generally speaking, though, the Town forwards could not make the most of the conditions and Ipswich, holding a great advantage were able to funnel back into their penalty area and pack their goal whenever danger threatened.

DETERMINATION WAS NOT ENOUGH

Then, with eight minutes left, all the tension went when STEPHENSON accepted an easy chance and that the same player obtained another four minutes later, was neither here nor there by then.

Fight with considerable determination the Town certainly did, but it was not enough after they had literally given Ipswich a start which they could ill afford.

Basically, the difference between the teams was in attack because Ipswich were altogether better balanced, made more shrewd use of the ball and certainly were more adept at taking their scoring opportunities.

Badly, the Town needed an experienced hand in their front line to hold the ball and pace the game, but they had only a lot of enthusiasm and dash on which to rely.

Walden, who had starred in the first game, was a disappointment, though he could have been better supported and Legate, with a better service failed to use the ball accurately.

Both Ashworth and McKechnie worked tremendously hard, but mostly ineffectively, and Chandler, his lack of experience there for all to see, did manage to cause some embarrassment to the Ipswich defence at times, but his dash was not sufficient to unsettle them consistently.

No one could point to Kelly as being in any way responsible for this defeat because he played his part well enough and both Morton and Pacey fought hard to try to swing the tide without being the dominant factors they were in the two previous games.

McNally found Leadbetter a vastly more difficult proposition than Owen had been, and much of the Town's early trouble stemmed from this quarter.

Bramwell was rather more successful against Stephenson, who did not really cut loose until the closing minutes, while Baynham was left pretty hopelessly placed when each of the goals was scored.

IPSWICH TOWN: Hall; Carberry, Compton; Baxter, Nelson, Elsworthy; Stephenson, Moran, Crawford, Phillips, Leadbetter.

LUTON TN: Baynham; McNally, Bramwell; Morton, Kelly, Pacey; Walden, Ashworth, Chandler, McKechnie, Legate.

Referee: R. H. Mann, Worcester. Attendance: 29,458. Receipts: £5,581.