

COULD NOT CREATE SCORING OPENINGS

Nor Did The Forwards Show Any Thrust

By CHILTERN

SOUTHAMPTON 3, LUTON TOWN 0

AT the start of the second half at The Dell on Saturday, this match was as wide open as a barn door. A goal down, the Town were pressing, but their forwards had neither the constructive ability in approach, nor the accuracy of finish to break down the home defence.

Yet, the opportunity was there so obviously but, just once, the Town came close to the goal that had seemed so far away from them throughout the piece. Then, the agile Godfrey made a great save from a flick by Ashworth that seemed to be going right away from him.

Until the closing stages of the first-half, it had been mainly a story of the Town struggling against a more aggressive, cohesive side, and Baynham made several fine saves before being beaten by REEVES in the 18th minute.

Slack defensive covering enabled Reeves to worm his way through along the dead-line and all Baynham could do about stopping his shot from an almost incredible angle was to stick out a desperate foot which served only to help the ball in.

Apart from a shot made on the volley by Turner which, unfortunately, was well within the reach of Godfrey, the Town, although they had a good share of the latter play before the interval, were seldom a real danger.

Yet, Southampton faded out to a marked extent and the early part of the second-half showed the Town much in command but, again, not promising sufficient power in the front line to encourage any hope for success.

Could they have scored only once, a different tale entirely might have been unfolded, but that Godfrey save from Ashworth was a vital turning point and the Town's chance of staging a revival slipped away.

PAINE FOUND THE GAP

Slowly, Southampton regained their grip and, in the 68th minute, a quick pass by Paine found a gap down the Town middle and O'BRIEN was on hand to ram the ball into the back of the net.

Virtually, that was the end of it, because the Town scarcely suggested the ability to score one goal, let alone two, and Southampton, who had so nearly allowed this game to slip through their fingers, increased their lead five minutes later.

It was a simple affair which relieved for MULGREW an otherwise undistinguished game, because when Baynham and McNally nearly collided in trying to clear a centre from Paine, the ball went to Mulgrew, via Baynham's fist and the inside-left rolled it back into the net.

So far as the Town attack was concerned, it was not so much that chances were missed, but that they were not created. Only one who tried to hold the ball and use it constructively was Turner, who probed just about every open space on the field without receiving much in the way of support.

Latest attempt to solve the burning inside-left problem by the introduction of Jardine was a failure, something that was admitted tacitly 20 minutes from the end when he was switched to outside-left.

CARDINAL WING WEAKNESSES

Apart from a lot of hard running, Ashworth accomplished little and the lot of the inside trio was not helped by the cardinal weakness and the prodigal misuse of material by both Walden and Fleming.

Standing head and shoulders above anyone else in the Town team was Pacey, who did his level best to make up for the

deficiency of the men in front of him, but it proved to be an unequal battle.

Cope has not yet regained his best form since his recovery from injury and could not be said to have held a grip in the middle of the field, but McGuffie turned in another useful performance in an unobtrusive sort of way.

Because the full-backs did not pivot, there was a square look about the defence which made them vulnerable to the through pass and there was more excuse for Bramwell, who came through the difficult job of holding Paine well, than for McNally, because the Southampton left-wing was almost starved.

That the Town were in the game with a chance for so long was a tribute to the ability of Baynham, who made some first-class saves.

SOUTHAMPTON: Godfrey; Patrick, Traynor; Clifton, Knapp, Huxford; Paine, O'Brien, Reeves, Mulgrew, Penk.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McNally, Bramwell; McGuffie, Cope, Pacey; Walden, Ashworth, Turner, Jardine, Fleming.

Referee: E. T. Jennings (Stourbridge). Attendance: 13,037.