

SPECTATORS HAD ROLE OF MOURNERS

Town Pushed Rovers Into The Third Division

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 2, BRISTOL ROVERS 0

FROM the third minute, this game became more like a funeral service than a football match. Funereal because, with every second that ticked by, it became more and more plain that the Third Division would be the Rovers' orbit next season.

Yet, in the first minute, obviously through a pre-arranged plan for a flying start, they nearly caught the Town napping and but for a daring dive by Standen, Bradford would have given them the lead that might have meant these two vital points for them.

From the time that Radford half kicked the ground in taking a goal kick and sent the ball rolling gently to TURNER, who scored without trouble, Rovers were fighting a losing battle.

There was panic in defence in which all sorts of fundamental errors occurred, and the wonder was that the Town did not increase their lead before the 18th minute, when ASHWORTH hit a low cross from Clarke past the diving Radford.

Had Jones been in luck instead of desperately unlucky in the 23rd minute, when he made a great shot that cannoned back into play off the inside of a post, the Rovers might have been able to make a fight of it.

However, their forwards showed few constructive ideas and, generally, fell easy victims to the Town defence, which was in the sort of mood to yield nothing.

Much of a scramble was the

second half, with each team having a goal disallowed for off-side, but on balance the better chances fell to the Town, who did not make the most of them, and there was never much sign of the expected Rovers revival.

BEST CHANCE IN LAST MINUTE

Ironically, Rovers' best chance came in the last minute, when Bumpstead shot high over a yawning net, but by then such missed opportunities had really ceased to matter and Rovers appeared to be resigned to their fate.

On the day, the Town were the more able team, without impressing as a good one. Certainly, what good football was played came from them, chiefly through the distribution of Pacey, who used the ball with a good deal of intelligence.

In flashes, Turner showed signs of his old form and Fleming would have been a big success if only his finishing had matched in quality his approach work.

Once again, Ashworth had not a great deal to show for much hard work, but Clarke wasted very little in the way of material.

About the defence there could be little complaint. Kelly was again strong and resourceful and was ably backed up by McNally and Bramwell, and if Morton and Groves did not hold a complete grip in midfield, at least they kept the Rovers inside-forwards quiet.

Standen could not complain about being overworked, but what there was to do he accomplished in confident style.

LUTON TOWN: Standen; McNally, Bramwell; Morton, Kelly, Groves; Clarke, Ashworth, Turner, Pacey, Fleming.

BRISTOL ROVERS: Radford; Hillard, Frowen; Bumpstead, Davis, Mabbutt; Jarman, Sykes, Bradford, Jones, Hooper.

Referee: K. J. Seddon, Southport. Attendance: 6,555.