

# ROTHERHAM WERE MORE DIRECT

## Town's Tactics Were Much Too Close And Finicky

By CHILTERN

**ROTHERHAM UNITED 2, LUTON TOWN 1**

ON the journey back to Sheffield where the party were spending Friday evening, Manager Bill Harvey went down the coach and said to his somewhat dispirited players, "The same team will play against Chelsea on Boxing Day."

Which was fair enough because if, on the strength of the Millmoor display he had decided to leave out one player, he would have had to omit about four others and such wholesale changes would have been undesirable.

Although the losing margin was narrow, the fact is that this was the most disappointing Town display since their recent improvement began.

They failed to match the direct approach of Rotherham who concentrated on hitting the ball down the middle and following up hard.

Chief spearhead was McCole, a lively centre-forward on whom Cope never obtained a grip, and with Morton and Pacey both well below par, the Town did not achieve command of the middle of the field.

More than that, they persisted in keeping the ball close and, far too often, used the square pass with the result that the home defence was never drawn out of position.

Rarely did they do the obvious and use the speed of Walden and Jardine and, with everything taking too long in which to reach fruition, the result was complete frustration.

To make matters worse, Davies, now regarded as the Town's trump card, was completely in the grip of Madden, who almost strolled through this match.

### PROMISE OF RIDDICK

One pleasing feature in a rather gloomy occasion so far as the Town were concerned was the promise shown by Riddick on his League debut. As a ball player he has vast potential and should be a valuable asset when he has gained more experience and when he begins to use the ball more quickly.

Certainly, he did not waste much in the way of passes and showed confidence which suggested that he has been in the game much longer than he has.

Turner worked willingly enough and often took up good position without the ball coming to him in the end, though early on he missed a possible chance from what is normally his favourite angle.

Really, this game turned on the mastery Madden achieved over

Davies and, conversely, the way in which McCole led Cope such a dance.

Even so, had the forwards really shown a spark, the Town could have gained a much-needed point, but they had only two shots at goal in the second half.

### WALDEN'S SUCCESS

One, a lob by WALDEN which went in just inside the post, brought them their only goal after 62 minutes but, at that stage, they were already two down, both scored by McCOLE.

The first came after 23 minutes when he beat Cope in a heading duel and went on to score with a shot that got in off the inside of the post and his second, six minutes later, when Cope failed to intercept a through pass.

Apart from the middle line being out of form, Bramwell had a struggling sort of game, and although McNally could never really be said to be on top, his rare enthusiasm pulled him through.

But for some poor finishing by the Rotherham forwards, and some brilliant goalkeeping by Baynham, Rotherham's advantage could have been greater even though Houghton was something of a passenger for the second half.

**ROTHERHAM UNITED:** Morritt; Jackson, Morgan; Lambert, Madden, Waterhouse; Kirkman, Houghton, McCole, Blain, Taylor.

**LUTON TOWN:** Baynham; McNally, Bramwell; Morton, Cope, Pacey; Walden, Turner, Davies, Riddick, Jardine.

Referee: K. J. Seddon, Southport.