

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

MUDDLED, SLIPSHOD TOWN DOWN AGAIN

Passing Was Shocking, No Accuracy In Shooting

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 1, MILLWALL 3

NO WONDER that there was a mild demonstration, directed at the Directors' Box at the end of this muddled, slipshod exhibition by the Town which Manager Bill Harvey described afterwards as the worst he had seen from them this season.

Chances there were in sufficient number to have made certain that Millwall did not complete this Christmas double which was complete disaster to the Town.

Generally speaking, though, they were lacking in the basic principles of the game, even that of finding each other with the ball at reasonably close range, and the first half, in particular, produced an epidemic of misplaced passes which made easy work for the visiting defence.

Such chances as were created were missed and, once again, the Town attack was round wanting because of the tendency of too many members of it to run with the ball, which was usually fatal against a defence that knew the answers about coming back quickly into their own penalty area.

As a result, it was a very long time before the capable Stepney was even brought into serious action and not until nearly half-time that the Town received an opportunity that one could say fairly should have been accepted.

That was received by O'Rourke through the agency of Turner, who was then in the course of overcoming a quiet start, but the young centre-forward shot straight at Stepney, who had narrowed the angle.

Meanwhile, Millwall had gone into the lead in the sixth minute when TOWNEND rather luckily glanced with his head a free kick by Cripps, awarded for deliberate handling by Fincham.

TWO PENALTY CLAIMS

Early in the second half when the Town, inspired by Turner, crowded on pressure, there should have been goals.

Jardine made a hash of a simple chance from a free kick by McGuffie and there seemed reasonable grounds for assumption that two penalties should have been awarded when first McKechnie, then O'Rourke, were "unloaded."

Unfortunately, the referee, who tended to be lenient with a lot of other misdemeanours apart from these, ruled against the Town who were put in further trouble after 56 minutes when TOWNEND from a pass by Finnegan, saw his shot rebound into the net off the inside of the far post.

Frantic pressure from the Town followed this and they got back into the game 20 minutes from the end when JARDINE scrambled the ball through after Fincham had met a corner.

Then the stage was set for a real revival, but, apart from one wonderful solo effort by Turner which deserved a goal, the Town's rally fizzled out. Yet the pressure went on, and it

was rather unjust when Millwall broke away for TOWNEND to complete his hat-trick three minutes from the end when the Town defence was much more concerned with all-out attack than with doing their own job.

Though O'Rourke again won friends for his enthusiasm, Turner was the most effective forward, getting through a tremendous amount of work and using the ball more effectively than most.

No-one could fault McKechnie on the score of hard work, but he brought much of it to nought through hanging on to the ball too long, a fault that was shared by Jardine, who rarely put the ball into the middle as he should. Another disappointment was Walden, who contributed almost nothing on his return to the team.

Nor was the defence without blemish, because the wing-halves failed to provide the link with the forwards, and McGuffie was never able to get to grips with the elusive Townend.

Pacey did some solid work in defence, in which Fincham struggled hard, without much cover from his full-backs because Morton, especially, was preoccupied with the task of keeping Haverly quiet.

Bramwell was a little better in this respect without being entirely convincing, and there could be little fault to find with Tinsley, though I thought his positioning was somewhat awry at times.

LUTON TOWN: Tinsley; Morton, Bramwell; Pacey, Fincham, McGuffie; Walden, Turner, O'Rourke, McKechnie, Jardine.

MILLWALL: Stepney; Gilchrist, Cripps; Anderson, Snowdon, Wilson; Finnegan, Townend, Terry, Jones, Haverly.

Referee: P. Baldwin, Middlesbrough Attendance: 7,180.

"'We want Mitchell,' chanted the Luton fans after this latest disastrous home defeat. But it is difficult to see what a club chairman can do about a forward line that misses easy chances and a defence that leaves itself wide open.

"Manager Bill Harvey was realistic about it. 'Millwall deserved to win,' he said. But that was only because they at least had the basic ability to find each other with a pass of over 10 yards. Luton's problems are manifold and they now look like descending from Division I to Division IV in the course of four years, which must be an unparalleled rake's progress of relegation."—"Sunday Express."

"Millwall had a marksman in inside-right Garry Townend, promoted from the reserves, who scored an opportunist hat-trick. And that was the vital difference between the teams.

"Centre-half Brian Snowdon just about came out on top in his duel with Luton leader John O'Rourke, throwing the home attack out of gear.

"Luton had two strong claims for penalties turned down then hit back hard in the second half."—"News of the World."

"The great hat-trick by Millwall reserve inside-right Garry Townend brought the threat of relegation even nearer to Luton who had no one to blame but themselves.

"The game could well have gone the other way had the Luton attack showed finishing punch. The easiest of chances fell to Gordon Turner, Harry Walden and Freddie Jardine, and all went begging."—"Sunday Mirror."

"This truly was a dismal display by Luton. They had no method, the defence failed to cover and but for goalkeeper Tinsley and centre-half Fincham, Millwall's victory could have been shattering.

"Luton's forwards were pathetic, and in only one brief spell was the Millwall defence really tested."—"The People."