

TOWN DEFENCE IS NOW MORE STABLE

First Clean Sheet For Over Three Months

By "CHILTERN"

LUTON TOWN 2, SHREWSBURY TOWN 0

MUCH of the present trouble in which the Town find themselves has stemmed from the fact that they have given away too many goals that were of the preventable variety, partly because the covering was not good enough.

Now this problem has been tackled by the bold inclusion of the 18-years-old centre-half, Caleb, who pleased supporters by the way in which he shaped in this hard-fought match at Kenilworth-road on Saturday.

For the first time since November 2, a blank sheet was kept and it is vastly important that the goal average should be improved because this could well be a factor in the final reckoning.

Not only has the promotion of Caleb brought more stability, but the wing-half pairing of Pacey and Lownds in the last two matches has brought more domination in the middle of the field, and both have helped Caleb in his first samples of League football by the way in which they have covered him and helped him out.

On the credit side, too, is the fact that the right-back position is now being filled more adequately than has been the case for so much of the season now that McBain is being given an extended run in the side and his confidence has benefited as a result.

And with Bramwell in more of the form which at one time attracted the attention of England selectors, the defence has a stouter, more compact look and now seems to be a foundation on which the Town can reasonably build.

Maybe, they were not given the most severe of tests by the Shrewsbury forwards who were lacking in thrust, with the exception of Middleton, who always needed careful watching and Pacey managed to do just that.

Like so many of the teams in the Third Division, Shrewsbury proved to be hard and uncompromising, especially in defence, and the Town's attempts to play constructive football in attack, largely came to an untimely end.

Particularly was this the case with Walden, who came in for some rough treatment, but, even so, emerged as the most dangerous forward.

However, it was from the other wing, where Riddick was not all that happy in his comparatively new position, that the opening was made for O'ROURKE to shoot the Town into the lead after 29 minutes.

In almost the same movement, he controlled the ball and swept it into the net, and appeals by Shrewsbury for offside were not allowed.

Four, indeed, was the character of the play, with few clear-cut scoring openings occurring, though Clarke, near to half-time, headed on to the bar and the vigilant Baynham was on to the rebound in a trice.

With defences holding much of a stranglehold, there were many scrappy passages in the second half, and it looked as though O'Rourke's goal would be sufficient until 10 minutes from the end.

Then the referee, who had made many odd decisions, to say the least, rehabilitated himself in the

eyes of the home crowd by awarding the Town a penalty when Harley pulled down Walden and McKECHNIE scored from the spot.

That relieved a rather undistinguished game for the inside-right, who ran into trouble too often and it was Reid, with some good distribution who was the more effective inside-forward.

O'Rourke again worked willingly and hard, but he found fewer opportunities coming his way than was the case the previous week.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McBain, Bramwell; Pacey, Caleb, Lownds; Walden, McKechnie, O'Rourke, Reid, Riddick.

SHREWSBURY TOWN: Boswell; Wright, Helmsley; Harley, Rowley, Brodie; Gregson, Ross, Clarke, Middleton, Taylor.

Referee: R. Aldous, Ipswich.
Attendance: 6,282.