

O'ROURKE ON THE TARGET AGAIN

By CHILTERN

63/64

LUTON TOWN 2, SHREWSBURY 0

SURPRISE late team change by Shrewsbury was the inclusion of player-manager Arthur Rowley, former Fulham and Leicester City inside-forward, at centre-half.

It was a decision forced on him because the regular occupant of the position, Peter Dolby, was ruled out because of injury and the other two centre-halves on the books are also unfit.

There was some speculation beforehand about how long Rowley, who, of course, in his time has been one of the top marksmen in the country, would remain in this unusual role.

On the other hand, the Town, bucked by their big win at Brentford last Saturday, were unchanged.

Both teams wore black arm-bands as a token of respect to the Shrewsbury Chairman, Mr. J. Jones, who died on Tuesday, and whose funeral was this morning.

It was a cool, grey sort of day, and the crowd just before the start looked to be a little bigger than the recent average.

Even so, there were tell-tale wide-open gaps all over the place.

The pitch was firm and had been well rolled after Thursday's County match here.

Dave Pacey again captained the Town, and Rowley, fulfilling a similar function for his own team, called wrongly, and the Town defended the Oak-road end.

Before play began the teams lined up and there was a minute's silence out of respect for the late Shrewsbury Chairman.



From the start Shrewsbury attacked, and an alarming-looking gap opened up down the Town middle, so that Shrewsbury looked dangerous until Lownds came to the rescue with a hurried clearance.

Shrewsbury kept up the pressure and gained a corner after Pacey had headed out a dangerous centre from Taylor.

From this, Ross went up high to connect with his head, only to send the ball wide.

The Town seemed to be inordinately worried by the way in which Shrewsbury had swung into their stride right from the kick off and for some minutes there was a most muddled approach from them.

Too many passes in midfield got them into trouble again, but then Walden sparked off an attack which broke down when McKechnie, in keeping with his unfortunate recent habit tried to go "through" Hemsley instead of round him.

There could well have been a penalty to the Town when they made their first determined raid because O'Rourke was pulled down unceremoniously but the referee waved on play.

After this there came a long shot from Pacey which Boswell saved without trouble and then Walden raised hopes with a sharp burst and a shot that went well wide.

Brilliant work by Walden, who was the one Town forward so far posing any threat, brought a cross that Boswell pulled down and a belated award for a foul two yards outside the penalty area.

Pacey took the free kick, hit it low, and Walden, smacking away first time, sliced the ball well wide.

TOWN IN LUCK

The Town were right in luck during the next Shrewsbury raid when Lownds only half cleared and Clarke twice saw shots cannon against Baynham, who made involuntary and fortunate saves.

Quite correctly the referee had a word with Hemsley after two fouls on Walden, who was rather more than the left back could cope with.

However, the free kick did not pay off.

Another late decision by the referee, who was being unduly demonstrative, gave Shrewsbury a free kick against Lownds and Rowley's lob was headed clear by Bramwell.

From this the Town broke away and there was a close shave at the other end when the ball was suddenly switched across the face of the goal by Riddick, but McKechnie missed it and it ran on to Walden.

The winger's centre was deflected by a defender and in the end it needed a header by Wright from almost under the

bar to get Shrewsbury out of trouble.

IMPROVEMENT IN THE TOWN

There was improvement from the Town now, and Walden, showing much of his old form, brought Boswell into action with a header which was well enough timed but not well placed.

Walden was still causing the Shrewsbury defence plenty of trouble and from a centre by him, Riddick shot inches wide.

Much of the Shrewsbury tackling in defence was uninhibited indeed, and there was another free kick to the Town, wasted on this occasion by Reid.

A corner to Shrewsbury followed and this threat ended when Ross, taking the ball on the volley, shot yards too high.

A CLOSE CALL

Under pressure, the Town defence was not looking at all happy and there was another close call when Taylor swept the ball across and Caleb dived full-length to head narrowly past the post.

O'Rourke hustled Rowley into making a mistake, but unfortunately was so much unbalanced in the effort that he could not make the most of it and then Rowley set a Shrewsbury attack moving with a long pass to Clarke, whose shot reached Baynham on the first bounce.

Walden, still the Town's danger man, was receiving some rough usage which the referee was largely allowing to pass.

From one of his centres, Lownds had a shot which got through — though not very effectively — to Boswell and then Baynham had to go down at the foot of the near post to save from Taylor.

SNAP RAID SUCCEEDS

With 29 minutes gone, the Town took the lead in a snap raid through last week's hero, O'ROURKE.

The initial movement developed down the left-wing from McKechnie, and the final cross came from Riddick.

Shrewsbury seemed to be anticipating an offside decision, but O'Rourke did not hesitate, controlled the ball quickly and flashed it into the net with another splendid example of opportunism.

There was added liveliness from the Town after this, followed by a revival from Shrewsbury during which brilliant anticipation by Baynham saved the Town when he cut out a centre by Gregson that was tailor-made for the head of the oncoming Taylor.

BAYNHAM'S GREAT SAVE

Shrewsbury showed plenty of fight and the Town were in luck's way when a header by Clarke rebounded off the bar and Baynham cleared by risking injury and throwing himself at the centre-forward's feet.

Play became scrappy and punctuated by petty fouls, following one of which, against McKechnie, Rowley smacked the ball hard for goal, but Pacey's head made a decisive clearance.

Then came a foul at the other end when McKechnie was blatantly pushed over by Hemsley, and at this stage things were giving the impression of beginning to get out of hand through weak control.

In the event, Reid wasted the free kick by placing it far too short, so that it was intercepted.

Towards half-time there was some Shrewsbury pressure during which Pacey conceded a corner which McBain who had had a good first half, cleared to Walden, who then lost it to Clarke to put the Town firmly in the cart until Pacey came to the rescue.

On the stroke of half-time Reid went away in promising style after having had the advantage of a ricochet of the ball off the referee, but his centre went too high. Half-time:

LUTON TOWN 1
SHREWSBURY TOWN .. 0

In the first minute of the second half only a fine diving save by Baynham prevented

Clarke from putting Shrewsbury on level terms.

There was a word from the referee to Middleton and Lownds after which the whole matter was settled amicably by the two players shaking hands.

Shrewsbury were looking the more dangerous at this stage and Ross flashed the ball uncomfortably close to a post with Baynham struggling.

SAVED A CERTAIN GOAL

Pacey, a great worker in defence, saved a certain goal when he got a foot to a shot by Middleton after Lownds had failed in his tackle.

Somewhat sketchily, Baynham pushed out a high centre by Taylor, with Middleton harassing him, and then Caleb stopped a determined effort by Ross to break through.

At this stage the Town were having their work cut out to keep their slender lead, and their own efforts to make progress were falling down on the score of ill-judged passes.

Hands by Caleb brought Shrewsbury a free kick on their right, six yards outside the penalty area, but Bramwell headed away Gregson's shot and Wright, securing the clearance, shot high over.

Bramwell had a painful smack on the right knee which caused him to hobble, and although he carried on for some little time, applying a cold sponge to the spot, eventually play had to be stopped for him to receive some more expert attention.

Just before this happened, the referee earned the anger of the crowd by awarding a free kick against McKechnie who was obviously the offended party in the first place.

RESPONDED TO TREATMENT

Bramwell, who had looked in a great deal of trouble, responded to treatment and was able to carry on without what had looked fairly certain to be a reshuffle of the team.

A brilliant piece of work by Reid in which he sent away Walden with a 'clear field, brought a centre, well cut out by Boswell, as McKechnie came up to challenge.

There was not much in it and defences largely were holding sway.

Best scoring effort for some time came from McKechnie with a drive from 25 yards that had Boswell going down in a hurry and then Reid again found Walden, who this time, harassed by two opponents, lost possession and the verdict, again controversial, was a goal kick.

UNBELIEVABLE DECISIONS

Then came two absolutely unbelievable decisions by the referee. First was a free kick to the Town when Lownds obviously pushed Middleton and then a goal-kick to Shrewsbury when a centre by McKechnie patently went out of play off a defender's foot.

The crowd roared at both decisions.

A bad clearance by Rowley gave the Town a chance but Pacey, following up, sliced his shot and Walden, to whom it went, ran the ball out of play before he could get it across.

It was pretty much of a scramble now with neither team really looking like a crop of goals, though Walden occasionally threatened trouble to the Shrewsbury defence.

However, Shrewsbury were having quite a lot of the play without showing real punch and the Town defence was putting up a pretty concerted front.

DELICATELY BALANCED

Rather misguidedly, Walden tried a shot at goal when other

colleagues were better placed after Reid had sent him through.

The game was still delicately in the balance, but still with the emphasis on solid defensive work.

A mistake by Caleb, who headed the ball straight to Middleton, gave Shrewsbury a chance of getting on level terms, but the inside-left's cross, made dangerously across the goal, proved fruitless because no-one was on hand to take advantage of it.

After Middleton shot over there was a free kick to the Town which invoked protests from Rowley, against whom it was awarded for obstruction on McKechnie.

It was only a couple of yards or so outside the penalty area, but offside against McKechnie — and this had been a bugbear to the Town for much of the match — ruined any advantage they might have gained.

Now Shrewsbury were making determined efforts for an equaliser and Brodie made one long run that took him deep into the Town defence before he over-ran the ball and the Town

How The Goals Came

O'ROURKE for Luton after 29 minutes.
McKECHNIE for Luton after 80 minutes.

from a through pass by Walden, but, racing up at top speed, the inside-left flicked the ball the wrong side of the post.

With only seconds remaining, the Town swept into the attack and McKechnie brought Boswell full length to make a great save.

Then Lownds brought Boswell into action again, but from too long a range to be dangerous.

There seemed to be no end to the "niggledy" nature of the play which continued with Rowley pushing O'Rourke in the back and the free kick ended with Reid offside.

Result:
LUTON TOWN 2
SHREWSBURY TOWN .. 0

Right	LUTON TOWN				Left
	Baynham				
	McBain		Bramwell		
	Pacey		Caleb		Lownds
Walden	McKechnie	O'Rourke	Reid	Riddick	
Referee:				Mr. R. Aldous (Ipswich)	
Taylor	Middleton	Clarke	Ross	Gregson	
	Brodie	Rowley	Harley		
	Hemsley	Wright			
	Boswell				
Left	SHREWSBURY TOWN				Right

were glad to settle for a goal kick.

SHIRT-TUGGING EXPEDITION

From this there came a break-away by Walden who, at the end of a shirt-tugging expedition, was finally brought down in the penalty area by Harley and there could be no doubt that there had to be a spot kick.

PENALTY—DESPITE PROTESTS

Protests by Rowley brought him a telling off from the referee, and the kick, in the absence of Turner, was entrusted to McKECHNIE, who refused to be put off by some gamesmanship by Boswell, who seemed to find it necessary to attend to a stocking.

McKechnie kept his head and swept the ball low into the net to put the Town two up after 80 minutes.

There had been much threat of name-taking in this match and then Brodie was "booked" after he had booted the ball away when penalised for a foul.

The free kick brought a quick thrust from the Town and a worthy effort by O'Rourke, whose header flashed marginally wide of the post.

ANOTHER CHANCE

Chance of really making sure of these two points fell to Reid



McKechnie scored from the spot to improve the Town's slender lead.