

O'ROURKE'S LAST SHOT GETS TIGERS

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Points Nearly Lost By Slack Work In Finishing

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 2, HULL CITY 1

HEAVY rain this morning which continued almost until kick-off time ruined any prospect the Town might have had of a bigger-than-average game at Kenilworth-road for the visit of Hull City, their old rivals of Second Division days.

As a result of the weather, the pitch was heavily waterlogged, with pools standing on the top in some parts, particularly on the main stand side, and it looked certain that this would be a muddy affair.

After their defeat at Bourne-mouth, the Town more or less expressed confidence in the team by making changes only on the wings. These brought back Gordon Turner at outside-right and caused the switching of Harry Walden to the left.

On the other hand, Hull, who are in a particularly sticky spell, made five changes from the team that lost at home to Bristol Rovers on Wednesday. Two of these were positional, sending Chilton, their much-sought-after leader, to outside-right, and bringing Rafferty, who was on the transfer list at his own request, from the left wing to centre-forward.

This made a vacancy for McSevency, and the other alterations were in the half-back line, where Milner and Simpkin found places.

Hull, traditionally the Tigers, have now reverted to their former colours of yellow and black stripes.

Teams:

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

HULL CITY: Swan; Davidson, Butler; Sharpe, Milner, Simpkin; Chilton, Wilkinson, Rafferty, Henderson, McSevency.

Referee: J. Lowry, Neath.

Pacey lost the toss, so that the Town were set to defend the Kenilworth-road end.

McKECHNIE TRIES

A LONG SHOT

First incident was a long-range shot by McKechnie, from some 25 yards, that skidded dangerously off the wet pitch and was only just wide.

The more threat was coming from the Town and O'Rourke, battling as hard as ever, moved out to the left to make a long centre. It was intended for Turner, but Davidson closed in to head the ball for a corner kick. When it came over, he failed to make contact, and the ball crossed the Hull goal without anyone being able to do anything about it.

BODY-CHECKING

BY HULL

Play was still favouring the Town, who were being held up by some effective body-checking by the Hull defenders, which was escaping the notice of the referee. Hull came away when Rafferty beat Caleb in a tussle for the ball and switched it out to Chilton. From the winger's centre Rafferty was again in first with his header, but the ball slipped well wide.

It was nearly 10 minutes before Baynham was brought into action, and then it was from a long, swinging shot by Davidson which the goalkeeper caught in the face of opposition.

Not that Swan had been active either because the Town, promising though they looked in midfield, were not showing thrust at close quarters.

There came a thrill when McKechnie squeezed the ball through to O'Rourke, whose shot was deflected by Milner, so that the ball struck the bar and went over. But the result was not a corner, but a free kick to the Town inches outside the penalty area, presumably because the referee had penalised Hull for a foul on McKechnie seconds before O'Rourke gained possession.

From the free kick, Pacey, who had joined the attack, headed just wide.

TOWN PILE ON

THE PRESSURE

Again there was a free kick to the Town when Simpkin barged McKechnie in the back and from this O'Rourke had the cruellest of luck. With a well-timed jump, he went up higher than any of the taller Hull defenders, and met Bramwell's kick firmly with his head. It looked a goal, but the ball struck the inside of the post and came back into play.

Pressure from the Town continued and Reid, shooting through a crowd of players, was only marginally wide with Swan obviously unsighted and beaten.

It was pretty nearly all one-way traffic, with the Town forcing Hull back on to defence, but the trouble was that the goals which seemed imminent were not coming, and this, of course, was

area was brought down by Davidson.

McKechnie's free kick, hard-hit, went through the crowd of defenders, but struck O'Rourke, so that the ball fell not only loose, but dead, and Hull were able to clear at their leisure.

Immediately after this, McBain returned, but went to outside-right, which meant that the Town were facing a handicap which they could ill-afford in the circumstances.

McBain appeared to have recovered because he went back to his original position just before half-time.

It continued to be much the same story of the Town having more of the play, but not reaching close quarters with the same consistency as before, and finding, it increasingly difficult to break down this closely packed Hull defence. Half-time.

LUTON TOWN 0

HULL CITY 1

During half-time I learned that McBain has a gash of about two and a half inches on the shin bone, which cannot be stitched at this stage, and also another one less severe just underneath it. To enable him to carry on, he was bandaged tightly, but he bravely resumed at right-back, though I noticed him feeling his leg gingerly when the second half opened with Hull on the attack.

In a couple of raids the Town defence was at full stretch, and finally Wilkinson flashed the ball wide.

Play was more even than it had been in the first half, with Hull not now quite so much concerned with defence.

Town came away, and O'Rourke made an acrobatic attempt to contact with a pass from the right, but sent the ball well over as he fell.

GREAT SAVE

BY BAYNHAM

Hull were looking more dangerous than in the first half, and McSevency made a shot which Baynham was able to watch pass harmlessly by.

The Hull pressure continued, and only a great save by Baynham, as he fell, prevented Wilkinson from adding to the Hull lead. The ball went for a corner. In this raid, Lownds damaged his right ankle, and there was a hold up while he received attention.

He resumed with something of a limp, and from the corner kick Hull went very near to increasing their lead, for Wilkinson, going into an open space, could only have been inches off-side as he smacked the ball into the net off the diving Baynham's fist.

The Town were having a mounting casualty list, the next on it being O'Rourke, who, however, resumed without needing attention.

A free-kick took the Town on the attack again, but when the ball came right across Turner was a little out of position so that Butler was able to clear.

BAYNHAM AGAIN

SAVES WELL

A bad header by Lownds went straight to Rafferty and put the Town goal in jeopardy, and it took another good save by Baynham—sticking out a foot on this occasion—to keep out a drive by Wilkinson.

Much of the Town's first-half confidence in approach seemed to have deserted them until sud-

denly they broke away, and Turner came within inches of an equaliser when he just missed the near post from a shrewd pass by Reid.

Panic developed in the Hull defence when O'Rourke pushed the ball into an open space, and Simpkin, passing back, very nearly put into his own goal. The ball went well wide of Swan, and missed the post by inches.

For a time, the Town regained the supremacy they held in the first half, but it still was not amounting to much in terms of finishing power.

TOWN DO A

FORWARD SWITCH

Then, after an hour's play, came the switch that I thought might have been made at half-time. Walden, who had been patently unhappy at outside-left, switched to the other wing. Turner moved to his old position of inside-right, and McKechnie went on to the left wing.

The switch paid off because after 65 minutes the Town drew level through McKECHNIE.

He received a deflection from a defender after Pacey had had a shot, and without any ado however, flashed the ball first time past the helpless Swan.

Certainly, the changes had brought a marked improvement to the Town attack, because Walden was now in the game, which he had not been previously.

ALL LUTON

AGAIN NOW

There was more life in the Town after this goal, and Reid put the Hull defence in real trouble, so that in the end Sharpe was glad to put behind for a corner. From this, Pacey, shooting through a crowd of players, forced Swan to save at full-length at the foot of the post.

It was all Luton again now, and Milner just managed to prevent a centre by Waiger going on to Turner, who was admirably placed for the kill.

Hull's defensive tactics, tight enough in the first half, were now reaching something approaching desperation, and they were giving away corners with almost gay abandon.

One on the right to stop Walden brought a header by Pacey, who was playing an increasing part in attack, but unfortunately for Town it went too high.

RUGBY TACKLE

BY PACEY

Back came the Town, and after Turner had had a shot beaten down, O'Rourke shot behind from an acute angle.

A rugby tackle by Pacey on McSevency gave Hull a free kick 15 yards outside the penalty area, but Caleb firmly headed away Simpkin's lob.

Then a well thought out move by Turner and Walden very nearly laid on a chance for Reid, who was thwarted at the last moment by Swan.

The ball ran loose to McKechnie, who was upended — and I cannot put it at less than that — well inside the penalty area, but the Town's appeals went unheeded.

The Town did get a free kick when McKechnie again was brought down but nothing developed from it.

There was a let off at the Town end when Caleb failed to reach a centre from McSevency and the ball dropped between Wilkin-

How The Goals Came

HENDERSON for Hull after 22 minutes.
McKECHNIE for Luton after 65 minutes.
O'ROURKE for Luton after 89 minutes.

son and Rafferty. A goal looked certain until Bramwell got in the way.

A chance to Hull fell to Wilkinson from a free kick on the right wing, but, swinging away first time, he missed the ball completely.

We had another variation in the Town attack with Reid at outside-right and Walden going inside-left. This was obviously frowned upon officially, because there was an urgent signal from the trainer's bench for Walden to go back.

HULL KEEP

PEGGING AWAY

Hull kept pegging away in the hope of snatching a winner, and Baynham had to go full stretch to keep out a shot by Chilton that seemed likely to creep in at the foot of the post.

For a short time, it was urgent defence for the Town, when they broke away, McKechnie pushed the ball through to O'Rourke. The centre-forward just beat the Hull offside trap, but his shot went straight to Swan, off whose chest the ball rebounded, and was scrambled away for a corner.

At this stage, with about five minutes left, there should have been all-out attack by the Town in an effort to snatch the all-important goal, but Hull were



It was McKechnie who snapped up a chance to put the Town level after 65 minutes.

cleverly keeping possession of the ball in midfield, and the winner to the Town did not look all that imminent.

O'ROURKE SNATCHED

THE WINNER

Just when we were resigned to the Town losing another valuable home point, they suddenly produced one out of the bag and O'ROURKE snatched the winner after a shot by Pacey had struck a defender and the ball had dropped loose.

O'Rourke was the man on the spot, and from a quite narrow angle he squeezed the ball in before Swan could do anything about it.

This was almost on the stroke of time and my watch said it was 89 minutes. Result:

LUTON TOWN 2
HULL CITY 1