

TWO GOALS BY REID

Defence Fights Off Relentless Oldham Pressure

Oldham Athletic 0, Luton Town 2

By CHILTERN

IN my time at least, this was only the Town's third appearance at Oldham, and they could take confidence from the fact that both their previous matches on this spacious Boundary Park ground had seen them on the winning side. Town's biggest confidence builder, however, was that John O'Rourke was pronounced fit enough yesterday to return to lead the attack after having missed the last three matches because of an ankle injury.

This meant relegation to the position of 12th man for Gordon Riddick, who has played in all four matches this season.

Otherwise, the Town were unchanged. In fact, so far they have called upon only 12 players.

On the other hand, Oldham after a disastrous start in which they lost three games, showed better form with a reorganised team by beating Peterborough on Tuesday. They fielded an unchanged combination today, Cameron and McCall having passed fitness yesterday morning.

As a point of interest, it is worth mentioning that Jimmy Hogan, the world famous coach who is now scouting for Aston Villa, was here, holding a watching brief. He would not, however, disclose the object of his interest.

CROWD SMALLER THAN EXPECTED

It was a dull, dry windless afternoon, and the crowd was rather smaller than one would have expected after the mid-week revival of the home team.

The pitch was a lush green, indicating that this part of the country has lived up to its reputation and had more rain than the Luton area.

As they did at Colchester on Monday, the Town wore their change strip of red shirts and white shorts.

Pacey won the toss without gaining any noticeable advantage.

After a hesitant sort of start by both teams, the Town suddenly made a break on the left through Whittaker. He beat Cameron, and his loose centre went just too fast for O'Rourke, who, a second later, was well off the target with a shot from McKechnie's pass.

PLEAT IN THE PICTURE

Then Pleat flashed into the picture, cutting across the field before passing to Whittaker, who changed the point of attack by switching the ball to McKechnie. Finally, it finished with Pleat in possession out on the left wing, but unfortunately his centre went too close to Bolland, and the goalkeeper cleared without difficulty.

A corner came to Oldham on the left to be spectacularly headed for a throw-in by McBain, and the threat was not cleared finally until Baynham went up in style to cut off a high centre from Dearden.

Then came a crisp Oldham move that found Colquhoun unattended in the inside-right position. He let loose a drive from 25 yards, but Baynham saved competently.

From this, there was a thrust by the Town which led to Pleat swinging the ball over, but Whittaker's attempt to connect with his head was frustrated when Cameron headed for a corner. From this, there was a half-chance for Pleat, who swung at the ball but failed to connect squarely.

Back came Oldham to be driven back when Baynham came out almost to the penalty spot to punch away a centre from Ledger.

TOWN TAKE SHOCK LEAD

Then came a shock goal by the Town through REID which counted as only his second since he joined the Town.

It built up from nothing, and there looked no particular danger to Oldham when O'Rourke pushed the ball inside to Reid, who was on his right.

From 25 yards, Reid took what seemed to be optimistic aim, but the ball travelled hard and low. Bolland, perhaps unsighted, started to go the wrong way, and before he could recover, the ball

with plenty of material coming from the extreme wings. Their only shortcoming was indecision in front of goal.

Oldham were fighting, though and there might have been trouble when Harris got a lucky bounce of the ball off Fincham, but his shot was high and wide.

FINGER-TIP SAVE BY BOLLANDS

A late tackle on Whittaker brought a word from the referee, and a free kick to the Town. This was cleared promptly, and then Reid sparked off another Town attack with a pass to McKechnie, who slipped the ball on to Whittaker. The winger was prevented from scoring only by a despairing finger-tip save by Bolland.

Oldham had a great chance of levelling matters when Ledger centred to leave Harris virtually an open goal, but he swept at the ball far too casually and merely flicked it, so that Baynham picked up easily.

This was followed by another brisk Town raid in which Whittaker, who was very much in the picture, made a first-time shot on the volley, only to see the ball flash just wide of the far post with Bolland beaten.

Trouble for the Town built up when Lownds fouled Bowie inches outside the penalty area, but the free kick yielded only a corner.

ROARS FOR A PENALTY

Then came roars for a penalty when a shot by Colquhoun struck Lownds on the hand, but it was purely accidental and the referee waved on play.

For a short spell, Oldham threatened to get on top, but they were getting no change out of the solid Town defence, and here was another excursion to the home end when Reid found Whittaker from a throw-in, but unfortunately the winger's shot was ballooned too high.

Back came Oldham to win two consecutive corners, and from the second, Ledger hit in a deceptive shot with the outside of his foot, and Baynham was glad to push the ball over to safety.

It had been a quiet return for O'Rourke so far, but he came into the picture with a shot that clipped the outside of the angle of the woodwork before going behind.

OLDHAM BEGIN TO LOOK BETTER

Oldham were beginning to look better now without really threatening to score, except in one spasm when the ball crossed and re-crossed the Town goal. In the end Baynham made a remarkable save from Harris.

More pressure on the Town goal followed, with the Oldham forwards hitting the ball across hard and often, but Baynham was in brilliant form, and was cutting out nearly every cross.

For a time, the more persistent pressure came from Oldham, but there was a quick break for the Town in which McKechnie made a solo effort which he finished with a shot that was only inches wide.

Bramwell gave away a corner when he could have slipped the ball back to Baynham, but nothing came of it.

Though the Town were not attacking so frequently now, they were the more dangerous. Oldham, in fact, had not yet found a way past Town's defence and in any case their finishing was poor.

EXCELLENT PLAY BY TOWN

Some excellent football, building up from defence, was coming from the Town, who, however, were not at this stage causing the Oldham defence the trouble they had in the early stages.

Pacey saved a typical situation that developed when Ledger left Bramwell sprawling on the dead

impression though McCall was not far off the mark with a splendid drive.

Town's mid-field work was still clever, but they had lost their early thrust at close quarters.

There was a threat to Town when Pacey missed his tackle on Colquhoun out near the right touch line, but Reid, helping the defence, staved off the danger.

Clever work by Fincham broke off another raid. Half-time:

OLDHAM 0
LUTON 1

McBain was shaken up in making a tackle in Oldham's first attack of the second half, but carried on without needing attention.

When the Town attacked, Pleat was prominent with a centre that went off Cameron for a corner kick. O'Rourke could not reach the ball with his head when it came over and Pleat also missed.

Oldham pressed hard again, and a header by Harris was deflected over the bar.

This time, Baynham could not hold on to the corner kick, so that the ball went for another, and for a few seconds things looked ominous.

With the pressure continuing, McBain was hurt, and this time needed the assistance of the trainer before he could resume.

BAYNHAM BROUGHT TO HIS KNEES

The Town made ground without worrying Oldham, and this was followed by a firm thrust by the home team who came back strongly for Colquhoun to bring Baynham to his knees after McBain had been unable to intercept a pass.

O'Rourke made one characteristic dash, but could get no power behind his shot as Williams crashed into him.

To try to improve the situation, Oldham had switched their left-wing pair.

Pleat placed a free kick high into the goalmouth, but Bolland whipped the ball off O'Rourke's head.

Lownds went up into attack to chase a long through pass by Reid caught it and placed the ball to Whittaker, whose centre was pulled down by Bolland.

Oldham were still having more of the play and it took a fantastic point-blank save by Baynham from Dearden to keep the Town's slender lead intact.

A piece of too delicate work by O'Rourke and Whittaker, which was broken up by Williams, put Oldham firmly back on to the attack again, and brought fresh tremblings in the hearts of Town supporters.

Twice the ball flew across the face of the goal without anyone making contact. The defence was having all its work cut out at this stage.

TERRIFIC SCRAMBLE

Reid was back helping and he conceded a free-kick when he pulled down Colquhoun 10 yards outside the penalty area. This produced a terrific scramble in front of goal until some infringement was committed to bring the Town the relief of a free-kick.

As an attacking force, the Town had been in it only fleetingly this half, but they did come away promisingly through Whittaker and O'Rourke before the ball was finally worked across to Pleat, whose dropping shot deceived Bolland but went just too high.

MAINLY REARGUARD ACTION FOR TOWN

Mainly, though, it was a rearguard action the Town were fighting now, and both Pacey and Fincham got up high to head clear in a further heavy Oldham raid which produced yet another corner. Fincham, judging his effort to a nicety, headed away powerfully.

Dearden and Colquhoun had resumed their original positions, and the next incident was a long shot from Harris that Baynham saved with ease.

O'Rourke limped out of a tackle by Williams, though whether because of his trouble-

Right	64/65	OLDHAM	Left	
		Bollands		
	Cameron		Martin	
Frizzel		Williams	McCall	
Ledger	Bowie	Harris	Colquhoun	Dearde
Referee: W. M. Holian, Chesterfield				
Whittaker	Reid	O'Rourke	McKechnie	Plea
Lownds		Fincham		Pacey
	Bramwell		McBain	
		Baynham		
Left		LUTON TOWN		Right



JOHN REID, gave Town the lead with a spectacular goal shot from 25 yards after only seven minutes' play. Nine minutes from the end, Reid scored a simple second goal for the Town to put the points safely in the Town's keeping.

some ankle could not be said with certainty.

Twice Baynham got the Town defence out of trouble by his fine anticipation, and although one or two smooth midfield attacks by the Town were set up, they were breaking down now against a defence that was playing with much more confidence.

Twice in quick succession, McKechnie was pulled up for late tackles, the second of which earned him a word from the referee.

Then Reid tried to burst through the defence, only to get an unkind bounce of the ball.

After this the almost inevitable of pressure was on again at the Town's end, until the efficient Baynham went up for the umpteenth time to pluck the ball out of the air.

BAYNHAM AGAIN SAVES THE DAY

Again Baynham saved the situation with a magnificent save from Harris, reaching the ball just as it was threatening to go under the bar.

A foul by Pacey brought Oldham a free-kick some six yards outside the penalty area, and Bowie pushed the ball sideways to Harris, whose shot cannoned against the defensive wall.

Reid and Whittaker combined neatly for the inside man to centre, but the ball was too close to Bolland, who was able to catch it without being really challenged.

The Town defence was still taking a hammering but was standing up to it in the bravest possible fashion.

Another free kick, this time

How The Goals Came

REID for LUTON after 7 mins.

REID for Luton after 81 minutes

against Lownds, was placed too far by Ledger, but the ball was returned by Colquhoun, and there was quite an amazing deflection in front of the Town goal until they were given a free kick.

A tackle by Fincham in which he was shaken up probably saved the Town, because it had the effect of putting Harris off balance. A corner kick followed, and this time, Reid coolly punted to safety.

Best effort for the Town for some time came from Pleat, who ran in from the left wing and forced Bolland to make a cat-like leap to push the ball to safety.

This was a forerunner of a spell of attacking by the Town. It did not last for long however, because Whittaker headed behind from a centre by Reid.

SECOND GOAL FOR REID

Then came the relief of a second goal to the Town after 81 minutes and again the scorer was REID.

He was on hand to run the ball into the net when left with a simple chance after Bolland had failed to cut out a centre by Pleat.

This was the signal for the start of a mass exodus from the terraces.

Result:

OLDHAM 0
LUTON TOWN 2