

TOWN LOST GRIP AND THE POINTS

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 1,
EXETER CITY 2

THIS was one of those indefinable results that went beyond the calculations of anyone. In the first half, the Town were so much on top and Exeter looked such a shoddy combination that Luton should have had the points safely in the bag at half-time.

Exeter were scarcely ever in it, yet the Town failed to build up the commanding lead that seemed to be theirs for the taking.

Certainly, they had every opportunity of doing so, including the benefit of an early goal after nine minutes from O'ROURKE, but, after that, the goalmouth snap that would have brought further reward was not forthcoming, and although Shearing made several smart saves, there were times when he should have been left helpless.

Even though the lead was so slender, there were no danger signals flying at half-time because it seemed absolutely impossible that Exeter could become a menace to the Town's hopes of victory.

Just how wrong we were was amply demonstrated in the second half when there was a complete reversal of form and fortune.

Exeter, driven on by two strong wing-halves and particularly by Mitchell, who made the most of the gaps left by the Town in the middle of the field, suddenly took unbelievable control.

Conversely, the Town lost their grip on a situation which they had seemed to have well in hand and the warning lights were flashing when CARTER equalised after 54 minutes.

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TOWN LOST THEIR RHYTHM

That seemed to shake to the core the Town, who were seldom in the picture as an attacking force and who lost all the rhythm, speed and precision that had enabled them to be so much on top in the first 45 minutes.

On the other hand, Exeter began to exude confidence, and it was not altogether a surprise when Carter supplied a low cross for CURTIS to stab in the winner 14 minutes from the end.

To say that this was a shock to the Town is to under-estimate the effect it had on them, but the hard fact is that they had no one to blame but themselves for not being able to make the most of their early superiority.

More than that, it was hard to understand their second-half tactics, with both inside-forwards falling back, with the result that there was little support for O'Rourke, who, in any case, was a long way below his best.

So, too, was McKechnie, which left Reid as the most effective member of the inside trio, though he could have been used in a more attacking role. There were some bright patches from both wingers, but, generally speaking, the requisite punch was missing.

Lack of power at wing-half where Pacey was out of touch and Lownds had no more than a moderate match, was probably a contributory factor to this disaster, because it was nothing less.

Fincham was the strong man of the defence, with McBain next in line and Bramwell fighting gamely enough against a speedy winger.

Baynham made some smart saves in the second half and was helpless when the goals came.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; McBain. Bramwell; Pacey. Fincham, Lownds; Platt. McKechnie, O'Rourke, Reid. Whittaker.

EXETER CITY: Shearing; Fulton, McDonald; Mitchell. Harvey, Anderson; Welsh, Curtis, Carter, Hancock, Rees.

Referee: N. C. Burtendaw.
Great Yarmouth.
Attendance: 10,461.