

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

BLUNDERS COST THE TOWN THE POINTS

Bournemouth Had Goals Presented To Them

By CHILTERN

BOURNEMOUTH 4, LUTON TOWN 0

BOURNEMOUTH is famous for the relaxing quality of its air, but the Town, arriving at Dean Court about three-quarters of an hour before kick-off time, could scarcely claim to have been affected by it, nor advance it as an alibi for the blunders that led to them suffering their heaviest defeat of the season.

Yet, there was a general lethargy about their play, particularly in defence, that belied the determination and fighting spirit they have been showing away from home since they began to revive last Easter.

At the start, there was nothing to suggest the final disaster that they were to suffer because the well-ordered brand of football they produced, not allied let it be said, to sufficient punch in front of goal, but yet suggested that Bournemouth would be hard pressed to save a point.

At the finish however, the Town were left reflecting on what might have been, and mulling over the blunders that presented the home team with goals that proved decisive.

First occurred after eight minutes when Baynham came out to a long, high free kick by Farmer following a foul by Whittaker, decided in view of the competition for the ball, that it would be safer to punch than catch, and had the mortification of seeing the ball go straight to COXON.

From the edge of the penalty area, the outside-left wasted no time at all and before the goal-keeper had regained his balance, the ball was past him like a flash.

Eight minutes later, McBain with plenty of time and no one challenging him, went up to a centre from the right by Archer. He had time to do almost anything with the ball, but chose to head in the direction of Baynham who, however, could not reach it and that was goal number two.

LOWNDS HIT THE BAR

Yet, the whole course of the game might have been changed had a shot from Lownds just before that happened been a few inches lower instead of striking the face of the bar.

Two claims for penalties, firmly turned down, did not increase the Town's hopes which plummeted to the depths three minutes from half-time when Fincham added to the string of mistakes.

Delaying his clearance, he drove the ball hard against WOODS who collected the rebound and had the ball in the back of the net before anyone could do anything about it.

Faced with a desperate situation, the Town had much of the second half play without suggesting that they had the goalmouth drive to improve it, though Pleat missed a couple of chances after a switch had taken him to inside-left, with Reid in the other inside position and McKechnie on the wing.

In the main, though, Bournemouth's defence in depth, to which the Town's former player, Groves, contributed not a little, was too much for their forwards.

And the final ignominy came eight minutes from the end, when Baynham failed to reach a header from Reeves that rebounded off the bar to WOODS, who was left with a chance that he could not miss.

This was a match from which the Town badly needed some success in order to repair their image, which had become faded in the preceding games.

EVERYTHING WENT WRONG

Unfortunately their defence had one of those days when just about everything went wrong. Their covering was often awry, and they were inordinately worried in the first half when Bournemouth persisted in pushing the ball through the middle and found gaps as a result.

Experiencing several patchy passages, Fincham was not the dominating figure he has been, and Lownds, even taking into account an ankle injury in the first half, never looked to be in command. Which left Pacey, even though he has still not found

his best form, as the most consistent half-back.

Both McBain and Bramwell had their work cut out against a couple of lively wingers, but they battled away willingly enough. Mistakes in front of him did not make the job any easier for Baynham, who, in any case, did not have one of his best days.

Forward honours went mainly to Pleat, who always looked more likely to score than anyone else, and Reid came next in line. O'Rourke linked up neatly with his front-line colleagues at times, but scarcely looked the thrustful leader he was in the latter part of last season.

McKechnie had a thin time, and Whittaker was less prominent than he has been in most matches this season.

BOURNEMOUTH: Best; Farmer, Compton; Groves, Nelson, Bolton; Crickmore, Woods, Reeves, Archer, Coxon.

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

Referee: J. K. Taylor, Wolverhampton. Attendance: 9,008.

"Luton started like lions and finished like lambs. From the side which in the early minutes looked capable of taking Bournemouth apart they degenerated into a team of misfits." — "Sunday Mirror."

"Bournemouth deflated Luton with three first-half goals. But, although the first came from a typical drive by Billy Coxon, the other two were gifts. First, McBain headed into his own net and then, with three minutes to go to half time, centre-half Fincham presented Bournemouth with another give-away goal.

"With plenty of space to clear, the Luton centre-half hammered the ball straight at the advancing Woods. The Bournemouth forward recovered quickly and guided the ball past surprised Baynham." — "Sunday Express."

"Luton, who have struck a bad patch in their last few matches, showed no sign of staging a revival. They looked lively enough in the opening minutes until a shock goal from Coxon caught them napping.

"Pleat and Reid were the main danger men to the Bournemouth defence but the Luton enthusiasm was damped when McBain, trying to divert a centre from Archer, headed into his own goal in the 16th minute." — "Sunday Telegraph."

"Luton blunders gave Bournemouth their three first half goals. First of these gifts came after seven minutes when Baynham punched out a free kick to Coxon who promptly hammered it into the net from 18 yards." — "News of the World."