

MANAGER'S DREAM NEARLY CAME TRUE

Brilliant Tinsley aided Town to vital points

By CHILTERN

SHREWSBURY TOWN 0, LUTON TOWN 2

BEFORE the match began, manager George Martin told me that he had dreamt that the Town had won 1-0. Having some belief in dreams, apart from the forgotten one which fell at some unspecified fence in the Grand National, I backed it in the Press box sweep.

After making the forecast, I was regarded with a look that contained a pretty strong mixture of pity and disbelief, because no-one else seemed to be prepared to give Shrewsbury fewer than four goals.

In the event, I was the unexpected favourite for 71 minutes, but no-one could have regretted less than I the loss of the first prize of ten shillings when H A R B E R cracked in the second goal 15 minutes from the end.

After that, the Town just strolled through it, giving the opposition the sort of run around that went a long way towards healing the wounds that were still raw after that 7-2 defeat at Kenilworth-road.

With their target in sight, the Town concentrated on keeping possession of the ball and passing to each other within their own half, so that Shrewsbury scarcely got a kick at it in the closing stages.

Earlier, it had been something of a different story because after a tearaway start by the Town, Shrewsbury exerted considerable pressure for long periods during which there was again some heavy work for the defence.

Yet, strangely enough, these two points could have been secured without any doubt at all in the first five minutes. Twice, McKechnie went racing through the defence and twice Boswell went down in a rather untidy heap to keep out the ball with some difficulty.

PHILLIPS LEFT BOSWELL HELPLESS

That was before PHILLIPS succeeded in the fourth minute during a scramble that followed a corner by Pleat and he left Boswell helpless with a well-placed shot from close range.

Slowly, Shrewsbury began to take a grip, with Brodie posing some trouble in a somewhat unorthodox style, but although they were in trouble at times, the Town defence coped well and there was always Tinsley, playing in brilliant style, to rescue them when things looked at their blackest.

The Town never really regained their sparkle of the opening minutes but, for all that, they gave a workmanlike display and the home team never found progress easy to make.

There was a shock just after half-time when Broadbent forced the ball into the net only to have the goal disallowed for some infringement, but the Town came back and Boswell had to save from McKechnie and Phillips, who let go two or three of his power drives during the second half.

However, Shrewsbury again exerted considerable pressure and certainly had their chances, but the way in which they frittered them away had their manager, Arthur Rowley, wearing a glum look afterwards.

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HARBER'S GOAL SETTLED IT

There was certainly nothing cut and dried about the result, and I imagine that the small band of Luton loyalists present had some nail-biting periods before the end, until Harber put a different complexion on things when he flashed the ball through a narrow gap, following a pass by Riddick.

Basically, this was a triumph for team spirit and the new-found determination that has been absent from so many away matches this season.

Without any doubt, Tinsley was the hero, as he was in the two previous away games, and some of the saves he made came in the almost unbelievable category.

While they could never be said to be in full command, Barton and Jardine both did useful jobs, though the former sometimes carried his desire to be constructive to lengths that bordered on the dangerous.

Fincham found the dashing Brodie a considerable handful and the best of the chances fell to the centre-forward. However, he did not score, and on the basis that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, the hard-fighting centre-half could be said to have done his job very well.

STRENGTH AT WING-HALF

There was considerable strength at wing-half, from the hard tackling of Gibson and the shrewd positional play of Reid, and the present set-up has conceded only one goal, and that from the penalty spot, in the last three matches.

Forward, it was obviously a good move to switch Phillips into the middle, where he looked much more effective than in any previous match. Not only did he look a potential scorer, but he distributed the ball accurately and generally linked up well.

From Riddick and McKechnie there was plenty of hard work and determination was again the hallmark of the display of Harber, from whom Whittaker will find it difficult to regain his place.

Unfortunately, Pleat's finishing was below the standard of his approach work, and he must strive for more accuracy in his final use of the ball.

SHREWSBURY TOWN: Boswell; Wright, Wall; Hemsley, Dolby, Harris; Stephenson, Broadbent, Brodie, Ross, Taylor.

LUTON TOWN: Tinsley; Barton, Jardine; Gibson, Fincham, Reid; Pleat, Riddick, Phillips, McKechnie, Harber.

Referee: H. Richards, Oldham. Attendance 4,800.