

TOWN ATTACK FAILED IN DISMAL FASHION

By CHILTERN

WREXHAM 2, LUTON TOWN 0

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

AFTER the promise held out by the display on Saturday, it came as a sharp disappointment that the Town should surrender the points at Wrexham on Monday in the way they did.

In the event, two defensive mistakes sank them, but this defeat could not be pinned on the defence because this was mainly a forward failure and the rearguard did as good a job, those two errors apart, as was possible in the circumstances.

After the first minute when O'Rourke made a spectacular, diving header following crisp work by Fry and McKechnie, the Town never seemed a goal-scoring combination.

A goal could have come from that move because Fleet had difficulty in holding on to the ball and regained possession only at the last split second before Whittaker arrived on the scene.

Following that, it was mainly a case of the Town defence battling away and the forwards largely ineffective in the face of some strong tackling and intelligent, but over-much use of offside tactics.

When Wrexham took the lead in the 13th minute, there was an object lesson to the Town on the danger in this grade of football of being too dainty in the region of their own penalty area.

First Woods tried to make a lobbed clearance which was intercepted, and then Moore tried to dribble the ball out, was dispossessed, and it was put over the head of the centre-half to McMILLAN who easily beat Tinsley from close range.

COULD NOT MAKE USE OF THE SPACE

Then King had a goal disallowed for offside and also missed a reasonable chance and the main difference between the teams was that Wrexham were coming in to meet the ball and were using the long pass to advantage whereas the Town were keeping the ball much too close.

Not until the 41st minute did the Town secure their first corner and, shortly afterwards, McKechnie had his name taken, unnecessarily I thought, for a tackle from behind which, however, was a carbon copy of one he had made earlier.

This Racecourse pitch is as big as any in the whole League, but the Town could not make use of the open space presented to them and there was, particularly in the second half, an ominous gap between half-backs and forwards which spoke volumes for the absence of an effective link-up.

TINSLEY'S ONE MISTAKE COST A GOAL

Wrexham continued to be the more dangerous after the interval and things could have gone badly for the Town but for some brilliant saves by Tinsley, particularly from King and Webber.

During persistent pressure,

Gibson was booked for retaliation on Harding, against whom a free kick was given, as having committed the first offence, and such was the fervent way in which some home players went into the tackle at times, I should have thought that the referee might have made use of his notebook in their direction.

Rarely did the Town look like potential scorers because they could not exert persistent pressure and when they did, O'Rourke headed tamely into Fleet's hands.

The second goal which came 14 minutes from the end was a tragedy for Tinsley, who was easily the Town's outstanding player.

A long, high ball went down the middle and the goalkeeper came well out of his goal to catch it. Whether he was affected by the floodlights or whether he jarred himself and lost balance as he came down, was not clear, but he dropped the ball and McMILLAN was on hand to score.

That finally settled the fate of the Town who, however, did make a late show during which O'Rourke missed a possible chance through slowness and then had a header kicked off the line by Holland.

However, there was no doubt that justice was served and that Wrexham would have had an even more convincing win but for the brilliance of Tinsley.

HARASSING MATCH FOR THE DEFENCE

This was a harassing match for the defence which, in the main came through most creditably, with Thomson, with a hard early tackle setting the tempo for him, looking most assured and Jardine was competent, too.

There were signs that Woods is beginning to settle down to be the dominant figure the Town are expecting him to be and there was a tremendously hard-working display from Moore who, however, must guard against his tendency to run with the ball.

The marking of Gibson was not always close enough and I thought that he allowed McMillan too much scope.

Forward, it was difficult to hand out bouquets, though Whittaker qualified for one for his industry and general willingness to have a go, but there was a weakness on the other wing where Fry had a thin time.

Reid began well, but then seemed to lose touch and his use of the ball became most inaccurate, while McKechnie, despite a lot of running about, had an unproductive game.

O'Rourke was not in the sort of form that is going to induce any club to make a big bid for him and, even allowing for the lack of material that came his way, he badly needs to sharpen up his game.

WREXHAM. — Fleet; Holland, Lucas; Powell, Mielczarek, Jones; Webber, Harding, King, McMillan, Campbell.

LUTON TOWN. — Tinsley; Thomson, Jardine; Gibson, Woods, Moore; Fry, McKechnie, O'Rourke, Reid, Whittaker.

Referee. — K. H. Burns. Dudley. Attendance. — 5,273.

"Happy Luton manager George Martin named a same-again line-up for tomorrow's game at Wrexham after his side's useful Division IV start. Top-form Luton goalkeeper Colin Tinsley made two fine saves when the game was still in the balance.

"With four newcomers on show, Luton took time to get into their stride. Centre-half Matt Woods, back in English football after two years in Australia, did enough to suggest Luton can build a strong defence around him. In attack left-winger Ray Whittaker, troubled by injury last season, returned to his best." — "Sunday Mirror."

"If this is a sample of Fourth Division football then the Luton fans may be in for a better season than many of them expected. Manager George Martin was delighted with the tonic victory and at once named an unchanged team for Monday's visit to Wrexham.

"Luton's left-wing pair were impressive and Reid tipped the scales back in Luton's favour after Ham had equalised an earlier goal by McKechnie." — "The People."

"Are better things in store for the long-suffering Luton fans? Could be, on the evidence of this display against one of the better teams in the unfashionable Fourth Division. While the crowd did not go into raptures, they saw enough to suggest that the new-look Luton can be moulded into a useful team capable of playing good constructive soccer." — "Sunday Express."

"Luton made a bright start to their Fourth Division career with a convincing win over Bradford in a lively and interesting game. If they can maintain this sort of form then they should be among the promotion challengers.

"Certainly they showed more method than Bradford after a somewhat indifferent start. But once they settled down, Luton always looked a shade superior." — "Sunday Telegraph."

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"Luton beat themselves with too involved approach work that gave the Wrexham defence ample time to cover up. Wrexham's opening goal after 13 minutes was an example of direct play—the ball was whipped smartly from Keith Webber to Dave Harding to Martin King and to scorer Sammy McMillan before Luton could blink." — "Daily Mirror."

"Luton in a dismal performance had inside-right Tommy McKechnie and right-half Jimmy Gibson booked by referee Ken Burns." — "Daily Express."

"Luton were lucky to escape so lightly against the young Wrexham side. For long spells they were played out of the game, and the defence showed panic when the Welshmen turned on the heat.

"Goalkeeper Colin Tinsley made several brilliant saves. But he was at fault with McMillan's second decisive goal." — "Daily Sketch."