

TOWN HAVE PROBLEMS AT HOME GAMES

LUTON TOWN 1, TORQUAY UNITED 1

FOR SOME reason or another, and there are various theories to be advanced, the quality of the Town's play at home does not match that which they are showing on opponents' grounds.

The draw with Torquay this afternoon was their third in four matches at Kenilworth Road, and it is here at the moment that their promotion bid is tending to lose its momentum.

Probably the reason is that various visitors tend to follow the popular trend, and concentrate largely on defence, which means that the Town forwards do not secure the room for manoeuvre

VITAL POINT

At all events, that was probably the reason for the loss of a vital point against the hard-working Torquay team, who were not wholly defensive but were willing to break sharply out of defence, which was probably the integral part of former Town manager Allan Brown's much-vaunted plan.

At the same time, Torquay, when ever danger threatened, were not slow to pack their penalty area, and the result was that few clear-cut openings occurred to the Town.

To aggravate the general position, there was the fact that not for the first time there was a lack of poise and craft in midfield, with the result that the tendency was to lob the ball into the goalmouth and rely on hard chasing to achieve results.

But it is true that the Town's only goal, which came eleven minutes after half-time, was headed by Tees, and that he had another header cleared off the line.

Earlier, the Town had gone into arrears in shock fashion when John Ryan, recalled to the team after a longish absence, inadvertently put through his own goal to send Torquay ahead after 22 minutes.

Not that that ever looked enough to shatter the Town's unbeaten home League record, which now spans 32 matches. At the same time, apart from that second attempt by Tees, and a couple of near misses by Lewis the Town did not look like securing the other point.

For one thing, the Torquay tackling was hard and effective and a considerable brunt of it was borne by Lewis.

In the first half, MacDonald looked the most dangerous forward but for some reason was kept in midfield later, with Allen up front.

Once again, I question the wisdom of playing home matches with only one orthodox winger, especially as on this occasion French was much crowded out, and was only a shadow of his brilliant best.

So far as the defence was concerned, there can be little complaint, with Nicholl and Slough outstanding, but Ryan tended to give Scott too much room early on.

But at the end of the story I still feel that the biggest Town need in a situation like this is for someone with the ability to construct in midfield, and also another winger of the orthodox sort.

On the day I could not grudge Torquay their point, which must make Allan Brown a happy man tonight.

The attendance, 16,087, was the biggest for a Saturday home match this season.