

Town could have salvaged a point

71/72

BURNLEY 2, LUTON TOWN 1

FROM THE shadow of the fear of a spate of wholesale bookings and stoppages and the consequent disruption of the smooth pattern of play, there emerged at sunlit Turf Moor on Saturday an attractive, open game, completely devoid of any vestige of viciousness, or of over-officiousness by the referee.

That they aided the entertainment in no small measure, may be of some consolation to the Town, although I doubt it, since defeat was their portion.

Also there was the uncomfortable thought that both Burnley goals were in the preventable category, and that they themselves missed an outstanding chance of saving a point.

On the credit side, there is the indisputable fact that Burnley looked a smart, bouncy, well-equipped side who may well emerge as a real power in the Second Division this season.

On this evidence, the loss of Ralph Coates to Tottenham, has had a great deal less effect on their confidence and general play than the departure of MacDonald is having on that of the Town.

Again it was underlined that the Town front line, as present constituted, is too lightweight and its members tend to be hustled off the ball too readily, which is something to which there is no ready-made solution at hand at the moment.

NOT RIGHT

Readily, those most concerned with the Town's affairs on the field, Manager Alec Stock and his assistant, Jimmy Andrews, admitted afterwards that things are not "quite right" and that there is a lack of aggression up front that will have to be tackled soon.

At the moment, this is easier said than done, but it is clear that both Busby and Givens are badly missing the way in which MacDonald used to absorb challenges and take the weight off them.

Yet, generally speaking, the Town's display held encouraging features, especially in the soundness at the back which was most marked in the goalless first half.

Unfortunately, the defence faltered twice in the space of three minutes early in the second half, as the result of which eager Burnley snatched the two goals that proved decisive but which, in the light of later events, should not have done so.

There was, in fact, the

opportunity for the Town to take the lead before the first of the Burnley goals because Waiters, for some unaccountable reason, remained anchored on his line when the ball was passed back in his direction.

Busby was in a position to intercept, but was probably taken completely by surprise by the goalkeeper's reaction, or lack of it, and waited too long before making

By ERIC PUGH

ing what could have been the final touch.

Possibly, that incident caused the danger signals to fly for Burnley who began a heavy spell of pressure. With 55 minutes gone, the ball was pushed through past Moore and, with Nicholl failing to intercept as it seemed reasonable to assume that he would, Read was left helpless.

Scorer was CASPER, a livewire in an attack that was full of life and another young star, KINDON, dealt a killing blow three minutes later.

There was no doubt of the spectacular nature of the success because the winger beat Moore to leave himself with a clear run on to a loose ball. In the split second available to him, Read decided that his best course was to go all the way in an attempt to stave off the danger.

Accordingly, he raced out almost to the edge of the area, proved to be fractionally too late and Kindon glided the ball in.

HIT BACK

To the Town's great credit, they were able to fight back in the face of these blows and only a great save by Waiters prevented Keen from putting the Town back into contention with a brilliantly taken free kick.

Then, another free kick did raise the Town's hopes because Keen's lob was headed down by Givens to BUSBY, who made no mistake with a firm drive.

After this, the Town redoubled their efforts, and Givens should have equalised when John Ryan sent

away Jim Ryan whose centre found Givens in an open space well inside the penalty area, but his shot went wide of the far post.

FINE SAVES

Had they reached equality then, I feel, the Town would have divided the points, but the scare sparked off Burnley again and it took some strong defence and some fine saves by Read to prevent them making their position more tenable.

Then, with two minutes left, Kindon nearly produced a replica of his earlier success, again drawing Read well out of his goal, but this time hitting the side netting.

Particularly in the first half, Read had been in top-class form, showing excellent anticipation and bringing



TONY READ, the Town goalkeeper who gained considerable praise for some brave saves in the match at Burnley.

ing off a series of smart saves.

One could probably go so far as to say that the confidence he must have given the men in front of him had had much to do with the Town turning around still on level terms.

Except for that uncertain patch when the goals came, the defence was adequate, with Slough refusing to be drawn into rash tackles by that brilliant prospect, Thomas, except on the occasion when he was booked later in the game.

Possibly, barely recovered from the back injury that nearly caused him to miss the game, John Ryan had some trouble in holding the talented Kindon. Nicholl,

too, found rather more challenge in the air from Fletcher than usually comes his way, but was effective enough to draw praise afterwards from Burnley manager, Jimmy Adamson.

Moore was confronted at times with problems that were worrying, but I thought there was improvement in midfield by both Keen and Court, even if the build-up at times was not all that accurate.

Forward, Anderson began brilliantly, but gradually subsided into the background, Givens rarely found loopholes and, while he did not exactly set things alight, I felt that there were encouraging signs that Busby is beginning to settle down, and the fact that he has broken the ice with a goal may do much for his confidence.

From Jimmy Ryan, there was some hard and willing running, but I still feel that he would be more happily deployed as an orthodox winger.

From Burnley there was

more than a hint of the value of striking down the flanks because they made more use of this spacious park than did the Town.

TEAMS

BURNLEY: Waiters; Angus, Wilson; Bellamy, Waldron, Dobson; Thomas, West, Fletcher, Casper, Kindon. Substitute: James.

LUTON TOWN: Read; John Ryan, Slough; Keen, Nicholl, Moore; Jimmy Ryan, Busby, Givens, Court, Anderson. Substitute: Garner.

Referee: W. J. Gow, Swansea. Attendance: 13,333.