

ONE POINT TAKEN BUT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN BOTH

West shines but chances slip by

TOWN SUPPORTERS who couldn't make the longest trip of the season were probably quite pleased when they heard the result of the Carlisle match. But although a point won away from home is always welcome, this was also a case of a point lost, because the Town did enough to win and should have done so.

They were the better footballing side, but lost a point through not taking chances.

Carlisle were nothing great, but they fought to preserve their unbeaten home record, and in the end they felt that they deserved both points.

They had seen a careful lob from John Smith drop the wrong side of the bar, Keith Barber had made a good save from Bobby Owen, and Owen had produced the miss of the match when he scooped the ball over from eight yards with only Barber to beat.

But in the first half the Town had held the upper hand, with Alan West the most effective man on the pitch. Unfortunately his excellence was in direct contrast to the performances of his midfield colleagues Brian Chambers and Lil Fuccillo.

Neither could get heavily involved in the action. When they did, they looked classy, well capable of tearing Carlisle apart.

By BRIAN SWAIN

Sports Editor

But few Town players were able to sustain their efforts for the whole 90 minutes, with the result that we had spells of smooth excellence interspersed with periods when Carlisle were allowed to get back into the game.

The Town started off looking as though they would end the contest in the first 20 minutes.

Less than two minutes had ticked by when Chambers threaded a perfect pass down the right flank to Ron Futcher, who made ground and fed Jim Husband in the inside right position.

Goalkeeper Alan Ross came out to the edge of his penalty area, and Husband beat him, but by the time he set himself for the shot Carlisle's best defender John Gorman had raced across to cover, and deflected the ball for a corner.

Ron Futcher laid on another opening, this time for Jim Ryan. His low shot was beating Ross, but once

● Carlisle full-back Phil Bonnyman, on the right, grimaces as he sees goalkeeper Ross deceived by Jim Husband's shot which put the Town ahead in the 19th minute.

more Gorman covered to concede a corner when a goal was on the cards.

After 19 minutes the goal the Town deserved arrived. Ron Futcher was causing centre-half Ian MacDonald plenty of trouble, and the defender was forced to foul him to stop him going down the right flank.

Paul Price lofted the free kick beyond the far post where John Faulkner did well to get in a header. The ball flew back across goal and Husband scored with a low shot. Ross had no chance. Husband slightly mis-hit the ball, and on top of that it took a deflection as it zipped into the net.

At that point, Carlisle looked ready to be taken

to the cleaners.

Jim Ryan went off with a hamstring injury, to be replaced by John Aston, and the Town looked the more skilful outfit.

They were working the ball forward, while Carlisle had to rely on longer passes and optimistic running. Bobby Owen got in once, but Steve Buckley blocked his shot.

Ross was forced to work harder than Barber, but was saved by an offside flag when Ron Futcher netted from a cross by Buckley, and Aston fired narrowly wide after a free kick on the edge of the box.

So it came as an unpleasant surprise when Carlisle equalised in the 37th minute. They moun-

ted an attack on the right which seemed to be over when Owen sent over a cross that was much too deep.

It dropped beyond the six-yard line, with Chambers and Lathan underneath it, barely a yard from the goal-line. Chambers got there first, but instead of heading the ball to the comparative safety of a corner, he knocked it further on towards the wing.

Lathan collected, and slipped the ball back to Gorman, who had come up in support. From the edge of the penalty area he knocked the ball back into the goalmouth, and the Town's marking was all at sea as Bill Rafferty headed



● Jim Husband, whose goal at Carlisle was his third in four matches.

in from close range.

The goal took some of the steam out of the Town.

Match Details

CARLISLE 1, LUTON TOWN 1

Half-time: 1-1

76/77

TOWN: Barber; Price, Buckley, Faulkner, Paul Futcher; West, Fuccillo, Chambers; Ryan (Aston, 20 minutes), Husband, Ron Futcher.

CARLISLE: Ross; Bonnyman, Gorman, MacDonald, Parker; Smith, Owen, Barry; Lathan, Rafferty, Martin. Sub: Prudham, not used.

THE GOALS: Jim Husband, close range shot, 19 minutes, after John Faulkner head free-kick from Paul Price into the goal-mouth; Rafferty header, 37 minutes, from centre by Gorman.

ENTERTAINMENT: Reasonable first-half, but fell away with both sides making mistakes and missing chances.

ATTENDANCE: 6,972, lowest in the Second Division.

REFEREE: Don Shaw, Sandbach—made a few mistakes which benefited the Town, including a couple when he over-ruled linesmen.

BOOKINGS: John Smith, Carlisle, for a crude tackle on Alan West; Ron Futcher and Brian Chambers, both for expressing dissent. Both ought to know better.

but West might have made more of a chance made for him by Ron Futcher's knock-down just before the interval.

The standard gradually deteriorated after the interval, with the midfield stalemate cutting down chances for both sides.

Referee Don Shaw didn't help with some dubious decisions. He had booked Carlisle's debut boy Smith in the first half for a nasty tackle on Alan West.

In the second, Chambers and Ron Futcher got involved in pointless arguments. Ron Futcher was booked for showing dissent after being penalised for a foul, and Chambers argued with a linesman who gave a corner to Carlisle.

On the credit side, Chambers had come close to getting involved in a more effective manner, when he hit a 20-yarder which deceived Ross but flew the wrong side of the far post.

Carlisle could have had few complaints if that had counted.