

OVERCAME MUD AND A STRONG DEFENCE

Leeds' Second-Half Rally Was Beaten Off

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN.....2, LEEDS UNITED.....0

The thick, cloying Kenilworth-road mud just about beat both teams yesterday, but not before they had served up some thoroughly entertaining football to the big holiday crowd of 19,580.

Right until the very last kick of the match the result was in doubt for Leeds put up a tremendous fight to maintain their unbeaten run which had lasted since October 11. It was touch and go for the Town in the last 20 minutes when Leeds rallied hard, but the defence put up a tremendous show.

The goal that finally ensured the Town of two points was obtained by Pye in the 89th minute and was allowed to stand despite the furious protests of the Leeds players that the centre-forward was offside.

There certainly seemed some grounds for their appeal since the ball went to Pye standing a few yards from goal off the inside of the post.

Mitchell had made a raking cross shot that beat Scott and, from the rebound, PYE had the simple task of tapping the ball into the net.

But a goal it was, and it took a lot of tension out of a game that developed on Cup-tie lines during the second-half when there was much over-robust play and Nightingale had his name taken by the referee.

Until that last minute goal, the Town had been leading deservedly by a goal obtained in the seventh minute in tragic circumstances for Leeds.

A quick-fire right wing movement by Davies and Moore placed the Leeds goal in jeopardy and Davies pulled the ball hard across the face of the goal.

McCABE in a desperate effort to clear, and to prevent the ball running on to Pye, who was well positioned, hooked the ball past the helpless Scott into his own net.

TOWN IN TOP GEAR

After that we saw the Town in top gear playing quick football in attack, though with a tendency

at times to try to attempt a little too much in the terrible conditions.

However, one cannot but admire a team that tries to play constructive football in even the worst conditions and there were some brilliant spells of football which would have brought more goals to the Town on better going.

Often they were held up, too, by the steady Leeds defence in which McCabe was a giant figure and who had to pull out everything they knew to keep the Town forwards from adding to their narrow lead.

They had a certain amount of good luck, especially when a shot from Mitchell spun out of Scott's hands and would probably have rolled into the net had it not been for the thick texture of the goal-mouth mud.

Leeds were mostly dangerous when the ball was put down the middle in front of Charles who was always working and worrying and Baynham made a couple of great saves from him when things looked really sticky.

Still, in the main, it was the Town who were doing the pressing and showing the better understanding.

They kept it up at the start of the second-half when they were desperately unlucky not to score when Morton came driving through and struck the inside of the post. The ball came back into play and was scrambled away

to safety before any Town forward could react to the situation.

PITCH BECAME WORSE AND WORSE

There were appeals for a goal, promptly turned down by the referee and there was also a big shout from the crowd when Scott scooped out a cross shot from Pye.

Pye it was who missed the chance of the match when he was put through by Mitchell and, in trying to place the ball wide of Scott, pulled it wide of the post from a few yards out.

It could have been a most unfortunate error in view of what followed, but one could not expect accuracy on such a mud-heap and it was a feat of some strength to make a shot of any sort long before the end.

As time wore on, the pitch became more and more of a "gluepot" which defeated even the good point of starting the match with a white ball.

It was about 20 minutes from the end when the Town's lead looked to be in danger for the first time. Previously, the most likely happening seemed to be a decisive increase of it, but lead by Charles, tremendously strong in the mud, Leeds caused a lot of uneasiness at the Town end.

Then, Baynham came into his own with several first-class saves, including some near suicidal dives at the feet of the onrushing Charles.

In one brave clearance, he was injured, but was able to carry on and thoroughly earned the ovation he received at the end.

JONES AND BAYNHAM DID WELL

Baynham had more to do than came his way against Plymouth and he showed in this match that he will be most difficult to displace.

It is something of a feat to come back into the team and assist in keeping a blank sheet in two successive matches. Both he and Jones have done their share in doing so and Jones was again cool and consistent against a quite dangerous winger in Tyrer.

After holding Mark in the first-half Aherne found difficulty in keeping a grip on him in the second, but he played a valiant part with the rest of the defenders in the trying last 20 minutes.

During that time, the Town concentrated rather more on defence than their narrow lead justified, but the plan worked out all right in the end.

In the middle line there was great strength with Owen having the better of a battle royal with Charles, who has been scoring a lot of goals recently.

When things were going wrong, Owen was always in the thick of things and he made some huge

How The Goals Came

McCABE (own goal) for Luton after 7 minutes.

PYE for Luton after 89 minutes.

clearances and some most courageous tackles.

Once again, Morton showed what a great asset he is to the Town. He seemed to be able to plough through the mud a little more strongly than anyone else and, with a bit of luck would have had a couple of goals. In fact, he did quite a lot of shooting.

There was no hint from Shanks that he was a doubtful starter until the middle of the week for he gave a great-hearted display and never knew what it was to be beaten.

From Davies, there was a sparkling first-half showing in which he linked up most dangerously with Moore and it was from this wing that most of the danger emanated in the first-half.

Davies had the beating of Hair and made good use of the ball. However, he with the other forwards gradually became more and more bogged down as conditions worsened.

He still came into the picture and there was a solid contribution from Moore, who was direct and strong in his work.

These grounds are enabling centre-halves to get a firmer grip on Pye than is usually the case. It is a terrific task to have to plough through the mud in the middle at Kenilworth-road and Pye is not able to use his speed as he does on better going.

MITCHELL UNLUCKY NOT TO SCORE

McCabe, too, kept a very close watch on him but whenever he had the ball, Pye tried to use it to advantage and there was always more than a hint of danger when he was sent through.

Because he had more of the ball then, Mitchell did best in the first-half and he was a bit unlucky that at least one of his shots failed to count as a goal.

Not always was there the best of service for him from Watkins, who although doing a lot of hard work, tended to hold the ball too long and to be caught in possession. This style of play is not suited to these conditions but, still Watkins did a lot that was useful, as well as making good use of the ball at times.

Altogether, it was a triumph for the teamwork of the Town for this Leeds team were great fighters. Though they did not produce the brand of football played by the Town, they kept

Nor was there any lack of fighting spirit from the Town who showed the qualities that make for a successful team when Leeds made their greatest effort to keep up their fine run of nine matches without defeat.

LUTON TOWN : Baynham ; Jones, Aherne ; Morton, Owen, Shanks ; Davies, Moore, Pye, Watkins, Mitchell.

LEEDS UNITED : Scott ; Dunn, Hair ; Kerfoot, McCabe, Burden ; Meek, Nightingale, Charles, Iggleden, Tyrer.

Referee : B. A. E. Buckle, Peterborough.

(Continued in Next Column)