

The Birmingham Bogey Cropped Up Again

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 2 BIRMINGHAM CITY 4

Things have a habit of going wrong for the Town when they meet Birmingham and there was scarcely any other sort of bad luck that could have come their way than that they experienced in this match at Kenilworth-road on Saturday.

Deprived of the services of Owen for the whole of the second half, they also had two well-founded penalty claims turned down and, to complete the picture, fortune smiled more than once on Merrick when facing shots that might easily have altered the course of the game.

Biggest blow was the injury to Owen, who suffered bad concussion in a heading duel with Briggs and, although he returned for a spell at outside-right just before the interval, was forbidden to come back for the second half.

In the circumstances the Town put up a magnificent show, for they struck back pluckily despite their handicap and the fact that they found themselves facing arrears of 3—1 just after the interval.

PURDON had given Birmingham an early lead with a goal headed from Wardle's corner, but although Owen was off the field, STOBART put the Town on equal terms eight minutes before half-time.

They enjoyed equality for only three minutes before WARHURST restored the Birmingham advantage with a shot that went in off the inside of the post.

Down 2—1 at half-time, things became blacker when STEWART put on a third goal with the second half only two minutes old.

TREMENDOUS RALLY

It was after that that the Town's fighting spirit was seen at its height, for they rallied in tremendous fashion, and Davies, Mitchell and Stobart all came close to getting the goal that would have given even more power to the Town's revival.

Unfortunately, Birmingham were the next to score, through a SMITH header from Briggs's centre.

This came seven minutes from the end, and almost imme-

diately afterwards TAYLOR obtained the goal for which Luton hearts had been yearning all through the second half.

Birmingham impressed as a workmanlike, solid team, but their defence was often troubled by the Town's depleted forward line.

Taylor, who took over at right-half after Morton switched to Owen's place, went back to inside-right early in the second half, and along with Mitchell, Stobart and Davie, kept the City defence occupied.

At inside-right, Davies, too, had been dangerous, and he played splendidly at right-half.

As an emergency centre-half, Morton filled the bill as if he had never played anywhere else, and Briggs, who had by no means a happy match, made very little of him.

Although Watkins did quite well, the more danger came from the Birmingham right wing, and Aherne found that he had his hands full in trying to keep a grip on Stewart, a task that he never quite accomplished, hard and pluckily though he played.

Cooke had his own problems in facing Wardle, but surmounted them more successfully, and in the second half was frequently seen backing up the attack.

There were brilliant saves by Streten and, but for the competence of the two England goal-keepers, there would have been more goals.

LUTON TOWN: Streten; Cooke Aherne; Morton, Owen, Watkins; Davies, Taylor (J), Stobart, Davie, Mitchell.

BIRMINGHAM CITY: Merrick; Green. Badham; Boyd, Atkins, Warhurst; Stewart, Purdon, Briggs, Smith, Wardle.

Referee: W. J. Edwards, Yeovil.
Attendance: 15,937.