

# Cummins Wins His Way Back

## TOWN ARE AWAITING NEWS OF MITCHELL'S PROGRESS

Mid-week floodlit matches such as the Town had with Watford, mean delayed team selection for the following Saturday, but there was a clue to the Town's line-up at Blackburn by the recall last night of George Cummins after being left out of the team for the last five League games.

In the meantime, Cummins earned himself another Eire International cap and has really come back the hard way by playing himself into his best form with the Reserves.

Main doubt about the Town's line-up at Ewood Park is whether Bert Mitchell will have recovered sufficiently from the pulled muscle that kept him out last Saturday to return to outside-left against one of his former clubs, for it was to join the Rovers that he left Stoke City.

Other than that, and barring injuries that have to be budgeted for in these extra matches the team is likely to differ little from that which played against Watford.

As a precautionary measure, Wally Shanks, who is still feeling some trouble from a muscle at the top of the groin, was rested last night.

### Watkins Is Still Not Available

WITH Charlie Watkins still not available because of a muscle injury, and due to see a specialist yesterday morning, choice as a deputy for Shanks alighted on Alwyn McGuffie, who must be one of the youngest players ever to gain a place in Luton's senior team.

Manager Dally Duncan has been toying for some time with the idea of giving McGuffie, who is not 17 until next month, a chance to show what he can do in top-class company.

Although he came on as a substitute for Sid Owen when he was injured against the Brazilians recently, this was the first time he had been chosen for the team.

### Kelly Is Recovering From Injury

ALTHOUGH they are not expecting anything in the nature of drastic changes following their narrow defeat at Leeds, Blackburn are delaying final choice of their team until to-morrow.

Chief doubt concerns the fitness of Bill Kelly, their centre-half, who bruised a thigh muscle at Ewood Park, but it was stated yesterday that he is making satisfactory progress and is regarded as a likely starter.

Otherwise, the team that has shown few alterations, during the past few seasons will show little change from that which did duty last Saturday.

### Alex Glover Is Being Kept Out Of Team

THIS was: Elvy, Stuart, Eckersley, Campbell, Kelly, Bell, Mooney, Cressan, Briggs, Quigley, Langton.

One comparative newcomer to the side is Mooney, who was secured from Manchester United, and who is keeping former Town player Alex Glover out of the team.

To keep their promotion hopes alive, Blackburn need both points from their meeting with the Town, who will have to be at their best to avoid defeat.

For the Town Reserves, still hopeful of pressing home their championship claims, there is a home match with Cardiff City which should prove an attraction.

### Emphasis On Town's Promotion Ambitions

NONE of the discussion that was provoked when the election of directors came to be considered at the meeting that followed was produced when the Town's F.C. shareholders considered the accounts for the year ended July 31.

These showed a loss on the season's working of £2,926, but the result was regarded as satisfactory and the chairman, Mr. Charles Jeyes, described the balance sheet as fairly good.

In reviewing the year, he emphasised again the promotion ambitions of the Board and laid the blame for the apparent failure to secure the prize this season at the door of injuries.

### Club-Mindedness Of The Players

"WE have to remember that we are up against the human element and that is something we cannot avoid," he said.

To the players, he paid tribute for the football they have played during the past few seasons and added that he did not think that any club had a better set of men for club-mindedness than they had at the present time.

The future he described as being in the lap of the gods because circumstances could alter prospects so considerably.

They had injuries and also weaknesses that they wanted to remedy, but, very often, they were up against the financial angle.

### Are Not In "Clover"

At the moment

A CURSORY glance at the balance sheet might suggest that they were in "clover," and so they were when the accounts were made up, but things had changed considerably since then.

During the close season they spent fairly heavily on new players and, although this had not brought the success hoped for, he thought it might in the future.

There were 18 shareholders at the meeting, the largest attendance since before the war, and several paid tribute to the way in which the Directors had run the club and

## Bedfordshire Boys In A Semi-Final

WHILE Luton are meeting what is expected to be stiff opposition, Bedfordshire boys will be taking on Nottinghamshire on Bedford Town's ground in the semi-final of the Cobbin Cup.

Seven members of the Luton team that did so well in the Schools' Shield competition are included. Team:

Kershaw (Luton); Rowe (Bedford); Dillon (Luton); Davey (Luton); Chambers (Bedford); Heithering (Luton); Bridgeman (Bedford); Newberry (S.E. Beds); Hills, Whitby, Mardle (Luton).

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## PENALTY COST YET ANOTHER POINT

## Latest Forward Line-up Did Not Produce Goods

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN ..... 1 BRISTOL ROVERS ... 1

In their last four home League matches the Town have dropped four points—points that would have kept them among the promotion-seeking clubs—and, in each case lack of scoring power has been at the root of the trouble.

So it was at Kenilworth-road on Saturday when the Town had sufficient of the first-half play to have ensured adequately revenge for that Cup defeat unexpectedly inflicted on them by Bristol Rovers in 1951.

As has been pointed out before, one goal can never be regarded as a winning margin in any match, for there is always the possibility of accidents in defence.

Whether what happened immediately before the Rovers' equaliser in this match can rightly be regarded as in this category is a moot point and the home fans stood agape 20 minutes from the end when Owen blatantly handled the ball in front of goal and there was never any doubt of what the referee's decision would be.

The official immediately pointed to the spot to give the Rovers the chance to save a point which they had not looked like doing previously.

Pitt made no mistake, despite a frantic dive to his left by Stretton, who was beaten by the pace of the ball.

Before this, the Town had been going along holding the lead that DOWDIE had given them in the 32nd minute with a shot that went in off Bamford after Turner had made the opening for him.

There had been signs of goals before this arrived, including near misses by Turner and Downie and, afterwards, Turner was unlucky to be the victim of a trip from behind by Warren after he had beaten the centre-half and was steering a clear course for goal.

More activity by the Town forwards followed after the interval, but, after the opening stages, goals did not look probable and the match looked like fizzling out into a narrow win for the Town until Owen conceded the penalty.

INSTINCTIVE ACTION

Explanation of the incident by the manager afterwards was on the lines that it was an instinctive action by Owen after the flight of the ball from a corner by McIlvenny had been changed by Watling's head.

Whatever the reason, it was a costly affair to the Town, even though Hale would have been a possible scorer had the ball been allowed to go through.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the forwards are still not giving the defence any margin for mistakes and too much reliance is being placed on the strength of this department.

And strong it was in this match, as was discovered by the Rovers' forwards, who relied mainly on dash and bustle in their means of making ground.

This did not cause the Town a great deal of concern, even when Hale tried to steam-roller his way through, for Owen was in dour mood and had full command of the middle of the field.

Strong tackling and quick covering by Morton and Shanks meant that there was not the slightest suggestion of weakness in the middle line and the water-tight look of the defence as a whole was added to by the soundness of Jones and Aherne.

On this occasion Jones cut out the frills in favour of more straightforward tactics and Aherne gave another first-class display.

Seldom did the Rovers produce anything in the nature of shots calculated to trouble Stretton who dealt safely and speedily with everything that came his way.

Forward, there was a different story, for although there was some neat and accurate approach work during the first half that looked as if the goal-starved fans might be given a long-awaited treat, goals did not appear as a result.

Choice of Pemberton for inside-right was not a success, hard

But for muddy conditions underfoot the game between these two evenly matched teams could have produced football of the highest calibre. As it was, the game was played at a fast rate throughout, but forward play predominated.

The advantage territorially during the first half went to the Old Lutonians, but despite this, they were penned inside their own "25" for long periods. It was surprising, indeed, that the visitors did not make more use of their back division.

The Old Lutonians had gone ahead earlier when, during an attack by the back division, Thorpe kicked ahead, followed up inside the visitors' "25," and then dribbled diagonally across the pitch. Within feet of the goal line he lost control, but Culp was well up in support and he picked up and dived over to score. The kick failed.

The second half definitely went the way of Barking Park Modern Old Boys. They succeeded in slowing the pace rather better than their hosts and were perhaps unlucky not to draw level.

### Rugby

### FAST PACE DESPITE MUD

Old Lutonians 3, Barking Park Modern O.B. 0

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### A CLOSE GAME

J. Evans's XV 16, M. Blamire's XV 16

This match, between two teams from within the Luton club, was a close struggle.

Each side was strengthened by the inclusion of two first team players and this added further zest to a game which was above last and owing the pace rather better than their hosts and were perhaps unlucky not to draw level.

Fortunes swung first one way and then the other and at half-time, and a few minutes from the end, the lead was held by Evans's team.

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## "You're Throwing It Away, Luton!"

Luton Town, strong contenders for promotion at the beginning of the season, are just throwing away their chances! Last Saturday they could only draw at home, this week they face an even sterner test at Blackburn.

What is wrong with Luton Town? Don't miss the full and frank analysis of the team's performance in the

EMPIRE NEWS LUTON SOCCER SPECIAL this week-end

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### FOOTBALL

LUTON TOWN F.C. Football Combination - Div. I SATURDAY, 27th MARCH

LUTON TOWN RESERVES

versus

CARDIFF CITY RESERVES

Kick-off 3 p.m.

Admission: Wing Stand and Enclosure 1/6, Boys 1/-; Bobbers' Stand 1/3, Boys 10d. (separate entrance); Ground (not covered) 1/-, Boys 9d.