

COURAGEOUS EFFORT BY TOWN

HELD BIRMINGHAM AFTER A ROAD CRASH

England Selector Saw A Fine Display By Baynham

By CHILTERN

To take a point from Birmingham would be a good performance in normal circumstances, but to earn it as the Town did, still shaken and bruised from the effects of a road accident in which their coach was involved shortly before noon, put the achievement in the near-wonder class.

It would be the rumours that spread through the Midlands that the City players did not expect to have any opposition at all. When the Town did arrive some 20 minutes before the kick-off after a taxi dash from Warwick, they had not even begun to change.

They had heard that two of the Town players had broken down, and that another had broken down.

Another story that was going round was that Luton were going to make arrangements to play two or three reserves to Birmingham but that was never mentioned, for Manager Dally was in touch with the telephone shortly after the crash.

It was decided then that time was too short to think of sending reinforcements and a snap decision after the accident revealed that there was no damage that would prevent anyone from playing.

Some Were Hardly Fit To Play

At the same time, three or four players were not completely fit but every one was determined that he would play.

Perhaps it was as well that there was a match for them soon after the crash to take their minds off what might have been the danger that they had been in and it was a courageous effort.

That the crowd appreciated it was obvious from the reception given when they ran on to the field at the stadium. Although I only have a description of that secondhand knowledge through a traffic jam, the players with the party, and my own eyes, the first few minutes.

The Players Felt No Reaction Afterwards

HAPPILY, afterwards the manager was able to report that there had been no reaction to the match and, after a lot of negotiation, the team returned by coach from Warwick on Saturday night.

The driver of their own coach, Mr. Sreeder, who was taken to a London hospital, suffering from shock, was also able to return to Luton by car on Saturday night.

When they go to the St. Andrew's ground, the Town seem to have completed the greater part of their journey there when they

were informed that the match was off because the pitch was ice-bound.

Doubt Probably Cut The Crowd

SOME pre-match doubt about whether the Town would be able to turn out a team probably caused the attendance to be lower than would have been the case normally, but there was a large crowd from Luton, numbering several hundreds and they were well pleased with the exhibition given by the battered Town players.

Essentially, this was a match in which defences were on top and I have seldom seen the Town defenders in such determined mood.

Time and time again, the Birmingham attack was thrown back when they had reached the region of the penalty area without being able to bring Baynham into action.

Five Star Display By Baynham

EVEN so, there was a five-star performance from England's new goalkeeper, who has only to turn in an exhibition like this at Copenhagen to carve out for himself a regular place in the national side.

There was an ovation for him at the end and a congratulatory handshake from Merrick, both tributes well deserved for Baynham gave a faultless display in which his handling of the ball was always clean and crisp.

Nearly every time the ball came into the penalty area in the air, Baynham was up for it, catching it cleanly despite often being hustled as he did so and he could have seized no better opportunity of displaying his skill than in this match which was watched by England selector, David Wiseman, man, who is a Director of Birmingham City.

Birmingham Did Not Vary Tactics

LIKE Everton a fortnight previously, Birmingham did not vary their tactics when it was quite plain that they had little to hope for with the ball in the air.

Both wingers continued to centre for the far post—a good ball on most occasions—but not against a goalkeeper of Baynham's calibre.



RON BAYNHAM

Saturday was a memorable day for England's new goalkeeper—a coach crash, an ovation from the Birmingham crowd for a great display and an appearance on "Sports Special" on television.

To know that he is behind them ready to catch everything, gives the defence all the confidence in the world and it is noticeable that Owen is leaving a lot of high stuff which previously he would have headed away, to the goalkeeper.

Owen Played Brown Out Of The Game

LIKE Baynham, Owen celebrated his return to the city of his birth with a top-ranking performance in which he put down completely out of the game which meant that the home team's thrust in front of goal was cut down materially.

In his doourest mood, Owen went wholeheartedly into the tackle timed his clearances well and, altogether, gave Birmingham another painful reminder of a star they allowed to go for a very modest fee.

There was all-round strength in the Town defence, though, with the bruised full-backs, Dunne and Aherne, keeping a firm grip on the nippy home wingers and I thought the former did particularly well against Govan who can be a dangerous number.

Change Of Mind About A Goal

YET, of the rather few clear-cut scoring chances in this match, two went to Govan who once missed his kick when bang in front of goal.

He had a goal disallowed for offside in the closing stages and, after awarding a goal in the first instance, the referee changed his mind after consulting a linesman who had been flagging vigorously for offside.

After their experience at Burnley where they failed to notice a linesman's flag upraised when a goal was scored against them, the Town were quick to appeal in this instance and, after their great fight, it was only poetic justice that they should hold on to the point that they fought for so gallantly.

Kept Track Of Inside Men's Switching

TURNER also had a goal disallowed for offside in the first half, and I was not at all sure that he did not beat the trap with his quick dash, but the linesman thought otherwise.

To keep track of the wanderings of Kinsey and Murphy, Morton and Shanks had to cover a lot of ground themselves, and, wisely, they followed their own man, even though Murphy quite often popped up on the right wing.

Both worked tremendously hard and the big feature of the whole defence was the covering which was immaculate and, of course, the great determination that Birmingham would not be allowed to force their way through.

Home Wing Halves Often Broke Through

FORWARD the story was not one of complete success for in this tough, hard-fought match, the Town forwards found that they did not have the room in which to manoeuvre that they have received in some matches this season.

The inside-forwards had to watch too, for the break through by Boyd and Warhurst, two strong wing halves with a liking for pressing home the attack and Boyd's sallies upfield were as dangerous as anything with which the Town defence had to cope.

There was all-round strength in the Birmingham rearguard, too, with Newman a most effective stopper in the middle and hard though MacEwan, with a strip of plaster on his gashed head, battled, he found clear-cut openings few and far between.

CRICKET IN BRIEF

BARNET 201 for 9 dec. (I. Fraser 58, G. O'Connor 36; R. D. Gardiner 5 for 57) LUTON TOWN 56 (A. Phelan 6 for 24, N. Tant 3 for 19).

VAUXHALL MOTORS 119 (H. Hayhurst not out 58, S. Ruffett 26; A. Pontin 5 for 39). WOLVERTON 105 (R. Gregory 26; J. G. Owen 6 for 47, H. Hayhurst 3 for 28).

OLD LUTONIANS 83 (W. Inskip 31; F. Stapleton 3 for 7). HEXTON 72 (R. Cole 26, J. Wood 25; E. Roberts 5 for 35; R. Cadeer 4 for 23).

Were Dangerous In Their Breaks-away

MACEWAN was a wholehearted trier and gave Merrick one or two warm shots with which to cope, but it was Turner who looked the most likely to be a Town scorer and, taking the game through, the Town seemed more dangerous in their quick breaks-away than did Birmingham in their more persistent pressure.

Like Birmingham, they often found their final pass going astray and quite a number of raids broke down for this reason.

Cummins, foraging hard, did not achieve his customary accuracy in distribution and, with Adam much over-shadowed by Hall, the left wing was rather out of joint for much of the game.

Yet, Cummins was always in the thick of things striving desperately to begin raids.

Cullen Did Much Wandering

ONE of those most shaken in the accident was Cullen, who had an arm and a knee damaged, but he did not allow this handicap to play upon his mind and he fought as hard as anyone and, in the process did a considerable amount of wandering in search for the ball.

Sometimes he tried to do a bit too much and then found that the Birmingham tackling was not only hard, but accurate.

All in all, this game will go down as one of the Town's most gallant efforts ever and certainly none of the players will forget this eventful day which ended with an appearance by Ron Baynham on television from the Birmingham studio, and of course, with the partial laying of the long-standing Birmingham bogey.

Reserves Fell In Surprising Style

AFTER their good win at Northampton the previous Thursday the town reserves gave a very disappointing display when they were beaten 5-1 on their own ground by Southend Reserves.

There was no excuse for their defeat, either. After a bright start they faded right out of the picture. Their forwards fiddled and the defence was anything but steady.

At centre-half young Keith Underwood had a worrying 90 minutes, but he did not receive the best of cover and was left on his own too often.

None of the team played up to form—with the possible exception of Alan Thompson—and they were beaten by a side which adopted more direct tactics.

Burns gave Southend the lead in the tenth minute and Anderson added a second before Groves replied for Luton.

FOR THE RECORDS

BIRMINGHAM CITY .. 0

LUTON TOWN 0

BIRMINGHAM CITY: Merrick; Hall, Radham; Boyd, Newman, Warhurst; Astall, Kinsey, Brown, Murphy, Govan.

LUTON TOWN. — Baynham; Dunne, Aherne; Morton, Owen, Shanks; Cullen, Turner, MacEwan, Cummins, Adam.

Referee: J. Powell, Macclesfield. Attendance: 31,000.

After the interval Southend were more dangerous and scored three goals through Anderson and Lockhart (2).

Town 'A' Were Beaten By Experience

BECAUSE Hastings have been finding difficulty in achieving a settled team in the Southern League, the Town "A" found themselves up against more experienced opposition than they usually meet when they met them in the Metropolitan League Cup.

Hastings included the former Irish international, Paddy Sloan, who had a spell with Arsenal, Leather, the former Portsmouth goalkeeper, Gilling, ex-Crystal Palace, and Hillman, previously with Colchester United.

In addition, Stan Northover, who spent some time as an amateur with the Town, was playing, and, in the circumstances, defeat by only 2-0 was a good performance.

The Town, with only three players over 20 years of age, played some neat, constructive football, and it was only experience that beat them.

Town C.C. Skittled In Last Match

IN their last match of the season, the Town C.C. caught a tartar at Barnet on Saturday and suffered a crushing defeat.

Despite a five for 57 spell by Ron Gardiner, Barnet reached 201 for nine and then skittled out the Town for a meagre 56, with only Doug Randall reaching double figures.

On the other hand, Vauxhall Motors wound up with a victory over Wolverton by 14 runs.

For their total of 119, they were largely indebted to Harold Hayhurst, who had two sixes and eight fours in his unbeaten 58, and to the bowling of Glynn Owen, who took six for 47, while Hayhurst claimed three for 28.

CHILTERN'S FORECASTS

DIVISION I

Aston Villa v Bolton Wanderers
Burnley v Manchester U
Cardiff City v Huddersfield T
Charlton Ath v Birmingham City
Luton T v West Bromwich
Manchester City v Blackpool
Preston North End v Sheffield U
Sunderland v Arsenal
Tottenham Hotspur v Newcastle
Wolves v Chelsea

DIVISION II

Barnsley v Bristol City
Bristol Rov v Blackburn Rov
Bury v West Ham
Doncaster Rov v Hull City
Fulham v Port Vale
Leeds U v Rotherham U
Liverpool v Middlesbrough
Notts County v Swansea T
Plymouth Argyle v Leicester City
Sheffield Wed v Nottingham Frst
Stoke City v Lincoln City

DIVISION III (SOUTH)

Aldershot v Ipswich T

Bournemouth v Gillingham

Brighton v Southampton
Colchester U v Reading
Crystal Palace v Shrewsbury T
Exeter City v Brentford
Leyton Orient v Watford
Northampton T v Walsall
Norwich City v Millwall
Q.P.R. v Torquay U
Southend U v Coventry City
Swindon T v Newport County

DIVISION III (NORTH)

Accrington Stanley v Carlisle U
Barrow v Chester
Bradford City v Hartlepool U
Darlington v Grimsby T
Gateshead v Bradford
Hullfax T v Stockport County
Oldham Ath v Derby County
Scunthorpe U v Crewe Alexandra
Southport v Rochdale
Tranmere Rov v Chesterfield
Workington v York City
Wrexham v Mansfield T

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

DIVISION "A"

Aberdeen v Dundee
Clyde v Partick Thistle
Dunfermline v Queen of South
Falkirk v Stirling Albion
Hearts v Hibernian
Kilmarnock v St Mirren
Motherwell v Airdrieonians
Raith Rov v East Fife
Rangers v Celtic

DIVISION "B"

Albion Rov v Hamilton
Alloa v Stenhousemuir
Berwick Rov v Cowdenbeath
Dumfries v East Stirling
Dundee U v St Johnstone
Forfar Ath v Arbroath
Montrose v Brechin City
Morton v Ayr U
Third Lanark v Queen's Park

SELECTIONS

TEN HOME. — Portsmouth, Preston, Wolves, Fulham, Sheffield Wednesday, Stoke, Leyton Orient, Northampton, Bradford City, Scunthorpe.

FOUR AWAY. — Blackpool

Leicester, Gillingham, Derby.

THREE DRAWS.—Burnley v

Manchester City; Barnsley v Bristol City; Tranmere v Chesterfield.

METROPOLITAN LEAGUE

LUTON TOWN "A"

versus

WEST HAM "A"

TO-MORROW,

WEDNESDAY, 21st SEPT.

Kick-off 5.45 p.m.

Prices of Admission:

Centre Stand 2/-; Wing Stand and Enclosure 1/6, Boys 1d.; Bobbers' Stand 1/3, Boys 10d.; Terrace 1/-, Boys 9d.



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