

A MOST REMARKABLE TRANSFORMATION

City's Rally After Having Been In Dire Trouble By Chiltern

LEICESTER CITY 4, LUTON TOWN 1

A REMARKABLE transformation came over this match at Filbert-street on Tuesday when the City staged a tremendous second-half rally to win a match that they had looked certain to lose at half-time.

From a smooth-moving football combination that worked with fine precision, the Town after the interval were worn down by the strength of desperate Leicester which was increased by the tonic effect of an equaliser a minute after the re-start.

Even without such stalwarts as Owen, Brown and Morton the Town began in brilliant style with the half-backs holding a complete grip and the forwards finding gaps in the Leicester defence.

Before GREGORY put them ahead in the 20th minute, McLaren had made a great save from a header by Turner.

Gregory's goal was a well-taken affair and came directly from a big clearance down the middle by Baynham.

King misjudged its flight and Gregory controlled it quickly to go on and coolly place it past the advancing McLaren.

It was after this that we saw the Town at their best and other goals should have been obtained against the beleaguered City defence.

Gregory shot wide from close in and Cummins missed a good chance following an opening made by Cullen. Then came the escape that was probably the turning point of the whole match.

Brilliant work by Cummins split the City and, in the confusion, King tried to pass back to McLaren, sent the ball over the goalkeeper's head and it struck the inside of a post and rolled along the line with everyone too astounded to do anything about it until Milburn cleared.

With City livening up a bit, Baynham made great saves from Rowley and Riley, but it was the Town on top and Gregory, left with a splendid opportunity headed wide.

Right on half-time, Milburn kicked off the goal-line from

Turner and we reached this stage feeling that the Town should have been at least three goals to the good.

However, before the Town had settled down for the second half, Leicester had reached equality when ROWLEY stuck out a long leg to push the ball well wide of Baynham and the Town had to withstand heavy pressure after that.

Baynham brought down the house with an improbable sort of save from Rowley and then prevented Hogg from giving the City the lead which, however, they took after 55 minutes in unlucky circumstances for the Town.

During a scrimmage following a free-kick for a foul by Cummins, HINES shot, Baynham went down to cover it, but the ball struck someone and was deflected to the other corner of the goal, leaving the goalkeeper helpless.

VIRTUALLY THE END

That was virtually the end for the Town and it certainly was when, after 63 minutes, ROWLEY scored with a terrific drive into the roof of the net.

Though the Town fought back, the forwards could not achieve their smoothness of the first half, though Turner went close a couple of times.

Two minutes from the end came the final blow when GARDINER rose high to head a centre from Hogg wide of Baynham's clutching hands.

In the first half, there was a great deal to admire about the Town's football, with McGuffie and Groves in complete command in the middle of the field, breaking up attacks and distributing the ball accurately.

Kelly did a competent job in the middle. Hawkes, despite a couple of severe shakings, coped with the lively Riley and the only chink in the armour seemed to be at right-back, where Dunne was not all that happy against Hogg.

Forward, we had Cummins in form more reminiscent of his brilliant best than he has shown for a long time. Time and again, he had the City defence on the wrong foot and had there been a little more decision in the finishing, the Town could have had this match won.

Turner, who is out of luck with his shooting at the moment, concentrated on trying to open out the game, with marked success before the interval and Gregory, though he could have done with more punch, fitted in well.

Always looking for the ball, Cullen was the better winger because Adam showed his old fault of poor use of the ball and ran into trouble far too often.

However, the second half brought a different story with the half-backs having to concentrate on defence, in which department there was more than a hint of panic at times.

It is at times like these that the guiding influence of Owen is badly missed and the Town certainly could have used his dominance in the air during this period of trial.

As it was, it was left to Baynham to prevent further disasters with a series of great saves which earned him high praise from officials afterwards.

Gregory received a knock soon after half-time and switched with Cullen, but the forwards simply faded out of the picture.

LEICESTER CITY: McLaren; Milburn, Oglivie; Morris, King, Walker; Riley, Hines, Gardiner, Rowley, Hogg.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Hawkes; McGuffie, Kelly, Groves; Cullen, Turner, Gregory, Cummins, Adam.

Referee: J. S. Swain, Cleethorpes. Attendance: 32,480.