

TOWN ATTACK FOUND SHOOTING BOOTS

Made Hammers' Defence Reel In Second Half

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 4, WEST HAM 1

FIGHTING back grimly, the Town, in a great second-half rally, hit back after being a goal behind to gain their first home victory of the season in decisive fashion and, at the same time cause the Hammers their first setback.

Previously, the Town forwards had averaged only a single goal a match, but they came into their own with a vengeance after half-time and, by the end, had the West Ham defence positively reeling.

Discussion and argument is still going on about the circumstances in which the goal that put the Town ahead for the first time was scored.

There were 19 minutes to go and the Town, put on level terms by a brilliantly-headed goal from ALLAN BROWN 12 minutes earlier, when Morton lobbed a free-kick most accurately, were fighting to take the lead.

Pacey tried to find Turner with a high pass and as the inside-right made ground, a linesman flagged for offside.

Almost in the same instant, Ken Brown put up his hands in an attempt to catch the ball—according to West Ham in order to take the free-kick quickly—but the referee waved play on.

Brown did not take all the pace off the ball and before the defence could recover, TURNER had smacked the ball past Gregory, and protests from the Hammers failed to shake the referee in his decision and he did not consult the linesman concerned.

Supposedly, his view was that by playing the ball, even though it was an infringement, he put Turner inside. Town officials regarded it as a good and brave decision, but the Hammers' players and fans held distinctly the opposite view.

REFEREE INJURED

That was the second incident in which the referee had been involved, because a minute from the interval, he was badly shaken up when a terrific drive from Musgrove, no more than two yards away from him, struck him in the small of the back and he had to be helped off the field.

A linesman took over the whistle, and Fred Hawkes, a well-known former referee, became the emergency linesman. During the interval, the referee

recovered and took control again.

This second goal really put the Town on their mettle and West Ham were given little chance after that. With seven minutes left, TURNER put on another with a fine drive from just inside the penalty area and, four minutes later, PACEY made it four with a well-hit shot that was deflected by Ken Brown's head.

Although the Town might easily have taken the lead earlier, when KEEBLE put the Hammers ahead after 12 minutes, beating Baynham with a powerful drive, the Londoners' hopes of maintaining their unbeaten record looked rosy.

Tall, well-built and fast, they moved well and looked dangerous at times, but in the second half, the Town's movements were the more cleverly organised.

WINGERS' SPEED

Both Bond and Cantwell were worried by the speed and directness of Bingham and Adam, with the former confirming his previous good form and the latter having easily his best game of the season.

Both Allan Brown and Turner clicked into their best form in the second half after things had not gone quite right for them in front of goal earlier, but Groves was below his best and did not use the ball crisply enough.

From wing-halves, Morton and Pacey, came excellent support for the forwards, and both provided the sort of through-pass of which something could be made.

Very much the master of the situation in the middle was Owen, who never relaxed the grip he gained on Keeble after the opening phase.

There were times when the speed of the opposing wingers worried Dunne and Hawkes, and the latter, particularly, had his hands full against Grice, but they stuck resolutely to their task and came through successfully.

Baynham made never the slightest semblance of an error of judgment. His handling was always safe and he cut out high crosses and through-passes in a way that made it look easy.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Hawkes; Morton, Owen, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, Brown (A), Groves, Adam.

WEST HAM: Gregory; Bond, Cantwell; Malcolm, Brown (K), Lansdowne; Grice, Smith, Keeble, Dick, Musgrove.

Referee: N. C. Taylor, Westbury. Attendance: 25,715.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

While most of the national newspaper critics used much of their space discussing the rights and wrongs of the decision that led to the Town's second goal, they did have praise for the Town and the power of their forward line in the second half.

There was a fairly general consensus of opinion that justice was served in the end.

"There was a lot of extremely good football, and it is generally conceded that West Ham's first defeat will do this brilliant crew no harm."—"Sunday Dispatch."

"Luton started the second half with a tremendous onslaught, and it came as no surprise when they equalised. . . . From then on it was all Luton. West Ham's defence became panicky and disorganised. . . ."—"Sunday Express."

" . . . it was his (the referee's) controversial—but to my mind perfectly correct—decision that really knocked all the class and confidence out of West Ham."—"The People."

"However, justice was reasonably done. Luton were the better footballers, with soccer culture proving more profitable than vim and vigour."—"News of the World."

"It had to come some time—and a side like Luton, playing crisp, scientific soccer, were just the boys to do it. But don't worry, West Ham . . . maybe you did look short of craft at inside-forward, but this isn't the first time Luton have smashed a reputation."—"News-Chronicle."

"Luton will still be a tough proposition for any visiting team . . . centre-half Sid Owen looks as good as ever. . . . Brown and Turner are as dangerous as any forward combination in the First Division."—"Daily Express."

"Yet it was no disgrace in the end to lose. Luton, in this vein, are a swift-moving, alert side, full of attacking ideas, stemming from an aggressive half-back line, where Morton and Owen continue to put their best feet forward. The arrival of Binham, too, as Turner's partner on the right flank, has sharpened up the whole forward line."—"The Times."