

SCRAPED THROUGH AFTER SHOCK GOAL

Took A Long Time To Beat Moderate Villa

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 2, ASTON VILLA 1

FOR a first half of clever midfield work that produced devious intricacies, the Town had exactly nothing to show in this match at Kenilworth-road on Saturday.

In fact, they reached the interval a goal in arrears when they could very well have put themselves into a comfortable position. However, if shots are not made, goals cannot be expected and that is what it boiled down to in this case.

During this period, Sims had very little of a serious nature with which to contend and his main job was in cutting out centres, chiefly from Bingham.

Rugged tactics of the Villa defence seemed to throw the Town right out of their stride when they reached the penalty area and attack after attack simply fizzled out.

Villa had little to offer in their forward line and it was a complete surprise when HITCHENS gave them the lead with a very simple goal nine minutes from half-time.

Taking a through pass from Sewell, he appeared to mis-hit the ball and Baynham, apparently taken by surprise, could only watch the ball roll inside the post.

It was a very determined Town team that began the second half task and they went on to the attack from the start, causing Villa to defend desperately.

With a quarter of an hour gone, TURNER snapped up a pass from Cummins to crash the ball past Sims from the edge of the penalty area for a spectacular equaliser.

Play was almost entirely one-way traffic with Villa continually on the defensive, but holding out grimly until 15 minutes from the end. Then, during one of the many scrambles in front of goal, TURNER got a foot to the ball and it curled wide of Sims to put the Town in the lead for the first time.

A couple of minutes later, he missed a simple chance of completing a hat-trick by shooting too hurriedly when the ball reached him from Adam.

While things panned out all right in the end, the Town certainly gave their fans some anxiety before they finally made certain of the points.

However, their second half display holds out promise for the future, with Turner regaining his goal touch after a not very fruitful first half.

Most consistently dangerous of the forwards was Bingham, who



Gordon Turner

might have been brought more into the game in the second half and who, might, too, have varied the length of his centres with value.

CUMMINS THE SCHEMER

Schemer of the line was Cummins, who was always prominent in midfield and he it was who started the Town on the road to revival.

Brown was pretty well subdued by Dugdale and Adam's promise in approach was not carried out to the full when it came to making use of the ball.

It was at half-back that the Town held the real pull because they simply put the Villa inside forward trio out of the game.

Apart from his fortunate goal, Hitchens was scarcely in the game against the dominating Owen, and Morton and Pacey, apart from their supremacy in defence, gave a good service to the men in front of them.

Only Villa danger man was McParland, who switched to outside-right after the opening stages. If this were calculated to upset the less experienced Hawkes, it failed because the left-back held the Irish International very well indeed, not did McParland find any more scope on his excursions into the middle.

With Barrett mostly as his immediate opponent, Dunne was seldom in trouble, and Baynham had quite a comfortable afternoon against this colourless forward line.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Dunne, Hawkes; Morton, Owen, Pacey; Bingham, Turner, Brown, Cummins, Adam.

ASTON BILLA: Sims; Lynn, Sharples; Lee, Dugdale, Crowe; Barrett, Sewell, Hitchens, Myerscough, McParland.

Referee: F. H. Gerrard, Preston. Attendance: 18,714.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

From the many thousands of words written about the Town-Villa match comes a message from national newspaper critics to the Town forwards. Simply, it is . . . SHOOT! All were agreed that if the Luton attackers had accepted chances Villa would have gone home smarting under a far heavier defeat.

"After a maudlin, meandering somnolent first half, this game sparked into life without ever achieving the slightest distinction. Luton were at times astonishingly slow and casual, and obviously have not regained that vital punch in attack that made them look one of the country's finest sides earlier in the season." — "The People."

"If ever a team made heavy weather of beating a vastly-inferior side, Luton did in this match. Villa had little to commend them — except a lot of fight and pluck in defence. . . ." — "Sunday Express."

". . . Luton should have won by a packet of goals. This was another 90-minute example of how Luton fizzle and fiddle away chances when they have the opposition groggy." — "Sunday Dispatch."

"Don't let the score line mislead you. Luton won the game by the odd goal in three, but they could have so easily have finished the winners by a five- or six-goal margin. They didn't because their finicky forwards wasted numerous golden goal chances." — "News of the World."

"This is the second week running I have seen Luton come from behind. But how long can it continue? If their goal-punch equalled their midfield skill they'd be topping the League." — "Daily Herald."

"They (Luton) were so far ahead of this fumbling Villa in all the skills they should have been collecting the bonus at half-time. Instead, Villa were a goal up." — "Daily Express."

"At half-time it was sheer exasperation. Luton, playing with Continental perfection, were ruling every inch of the pitch up to Villa's penalty box. Yet in those 45 minutes precisely one shot — from Billy Bingham — was fired directly at goal." — "News Chronicle."