

OWEN OUT OF LUCK

Man. Utd. 2, Luton 1: By DON McWHINNIE



LUTON obviously decided to dole out their Christmas presents early this year. They gave United a first-minute goal and then presented them with four more golden chances, none of which was accepted.

Syd Owen, that normally dependable centre half and the man who is due to take over Dally Duncan's old managerial chair, had a bad match.

United didn't need to engineer openings. Luton just made them a gift of them.

But United are still struggling to re-find their feet. Dennis Viollet headed the opening goal after Owen's sliced clearance gave him the right of way.

But he twice drove straight at the brilliant Ron Baynham, when to score looked a simple matter.

Quixall tried desperately hard to keep his line functioning smoothly, while Bobby Charlton brought down the house with a glorious right-footer for goal No. 2 in the twelfth minute.

But both Quixall and Charlton have not yet solved the secret of efficiency without the ball.

It was George Cummins who started and finished off the movement which yielded Luton's goal in nineteen minutes.

From Adams's cross, Cummins forced the ball home. I thought Harry Gregg was at fault here.

Gregg was in the picture again in the fifty-third minute, when he foolishly conceded a penalty by "legging" Bingham.

But Turner drove the spot kick straight at the grateful Gregg.

Allan Brown came off second best in a challenge with Billy Foulkes—he had four stitches in a wound in the mouth—just before the interval, and spent the second half at outside right.

Left half Dave Pacey strained a leg ligament and was hobbling up and down the left wing for the last twenty minutes.