

# DRAMATIC HAT-TRICK SUNK THE TOWN

## Courageous Fight After A Dreadful Start

By Chiltern

**BOLTON WANDERERS 4, LUTON TOWN 2**

**A** DRAMATIC hat trick by Lofthouse in 12 minutes put the Town in a very unhappy situation with only 18 minutes of this match at Burnden Park gone.

When a fourth goal came, it seemed that they were in for a terrible drubbing but, to their credit, they fought back pluckily and, in the end, made the result look respectable and, in fact, might so easily have made a complete recovery.

That Lofthouse burst of scoring was completely unexpected because the Town had begun in impressive style and might very easily have secured a shock early goal.

Instead, they found themselves on the receiving end of the LOFTHOUSE opportunism and his first two goals were gained with his famous headers.

His first, after seven minutes, was so well placed that Baynham could not even move towards the ball, and his second, five minutes later, also found the corner of the net with Baynham groping vainly.

Both these goals stemmed from crosses from the left wing and another was the forerunner of the third after 18 minutes, but there was considerable doubt about its legitimacy.

As I saw it, Baynham was badly obstructed by Hill as he went to collect the cross, and was still on the ground with Hill on top of him when LOFTHOUSE first-timed the ball through.

Lofthouse also had a considerable hand in the fourth goal after 34 minutes when he swept out the ball to HOLDEN.

McNally tried to intercept, failed to do so, and Holden was left with a clear run in to goal before he beat Baynham with a shot into the far corner of the net.

### STUCK IN THE MUD

Certainly, on the way play had gone, the Town did not deserve to be so badly in arrears, and had the luck been running with them they would have improved their situation when Brown made a chance for Morton.

The centre-forward beat Hopkinson, but the ball stuck in the mud a bare foot from the line and was booted clear.

However, the Town gained some reward for a lot of good football two minutes from half-time, when the ball went to BINGHAM after a scramble, and he beat Hopkinson with a rousing shot into the top corner of the net.

The first half presented a contrast in styles, with Bolton relying on strength and speed in their direct methods and keeping the ball moving forward all the time.

On the other hand, the Town's brand of football was more polished, but less effective in the very heavy going on a pitch which cut up badly as the game wore on.

In the second half the Town defence had a much firmer grip on the Bolton attack than had been the case in the first half.

The forwards continued to play cleverly in midfield, but mostly broke down as they neared the penalty area.

### BROWN BROUGHT FAINT HOPE

However, in the closing stages, they began to get on top, and BROWN scored 12 minutes from the end from close in after Cummins had swept a centre from Bingham goalwards.

That gave the Town a faint hope, and Pacey went within inches of getting the goal that would have set the stage for a grandstand finish, and Brown hit the side-net.

After that shocking start, this was no bad performance by the Town, who must have sighed for a match-winner of the calibre of Lofthouse, whose first two goals were models of opportunism.

Mistake the Town made was to try to keep the ball too close in the mud instead of using the more open game. Even so, they did carve out scoring chances, but there was not sufficient punch down the middle.

Here, Morton is playing his own brand of good football in

approach and is linking up neatly, but what is badly needed is more driving power, and Morton has not yet shown that he can produce it.

With benefit, more use could have been made of the speed and cleverness of Bingham, who was always a potential danger. Most support for him came from Brown, who is moving more confidently now that he has settled in at inside-right.

There was some clever work in midfield from Cummins who, however, did not completely adjust his methods to the needs of the day and Gregory improved after a very shaky first-half during which little went right for him.

### DEFENCE'S NIGHTMARE

For the defence, that first-half was much of a nightmare against this fast, progressive forward line, so ably led by the hard-working Lofthouse.

Right through it, Owen had his hands full and hard though he fought, he could not plug all the holes, and many developed.

The wing-halves did not gain the grip they have been taking in recent matches and Groves, hard in the tackle, was the more successful.

McNally could not cope with Holden and although he did better in the second-half, the left winger was always a danger.

With the lively Birch, Hawkes had quite a lot of trouble, too, but these were conditions that were all in favour of forwards because of the difficulty of turning quickly on the greasy surface.

Only when the second goal came could any blame attach to Baynham and his lateness in going down could probably be attributed to the treacherous state of the goalmouth.

Other than that, he was very confident and made some very fine saves.

**BOLTON WANDERERS:** Hopkinson; Hartle, Banks; Hennin, Higgins, Edwards; Birch, Hill, Lofthouse, Parry, Holden.

**LUTON TOWN:** Baynham; McNally, Hawkes; Groves, Owen, Pacey; Bingham, Brown, Morton, Cummins, Gregory.

Referee: A. Holland, Barnsley. Attendance: 27,787.

## WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

Three quick goals from England leader Nat Lofthouse sank Luton's victory hopes in the thick Burnden Park mud. But the Luton men refused to accept defeat right until the final whistle. Bolton had lots of luck; Luton had little. One shot from Bob Morton bogged down in the cloying goalmouth mud just as the ball was about to cross the Bolton goal-line.

"Nat Lofthouse shook a by-no-means untalented Luton side with a hat-trick. . . . But give Luton credit for a magnificent fight back. Their forwards, led by Bob Morton, had plenty of ideas and skill—but, on the soft Burnden pitch, less than their fair share of luck."—"Sunday Express."

"The adverse balance of four goals certainly did not reflect Luton's part in the game. With a minute of the first half to go



they had their first bit of luck when Hopkinson, doubled up with pain, was unable to jump to Bingham's high shot, which went in."—"Sunday Dispatch."

"Luton, in fact, were unfortunate to score only once before the interval, for on one occasion a Luton shot which had beaten Hopkinson stuck in the goal-line mud."—"Reynolds News."

"With a little more luck they (Luton) might easily have turned that Bolton joy sour."—"News of the World."

"Luton had been pulverised in the mud by the Bolton Bombers, but they still came back fighting."—"The People."

"The mud proved a real menace to the Luton lads, for in the first half, centre-forward Bob Morton beat goalkeeper Hopkinson, only to see the mud bog down the ball."—"Sunday Pictorial."