

ALL DUE TO CUP-TIE SHADOW 58/59

Luton Tn . . . 4 Leicester . . . 3

WHAT a shock the Town gave their supporters, or 15,786 of them, at Kenilworth-road this afternoon when they lost a three-goals lead against struggling Leicester and in the end snatched victory with only four minutes to spare.

Such a transformation did the second half bring that it was scarcely believable. Before half-time the Town were the complete masters, after having scored twice in nine minutes, and there was scarcely any danger from a Leicester side that showed not only a lack of fight but of imagination too.

At half-time, three goals up, the Town were sitting pretty and the impression they gave in the second half was that they had merely to keep going to retain that lead.

Maybe there was justification for their point of view because of that important date next Saturday, but it nearly cost them their winning bonus. Two goals in two minutes caused the Leicester tails to go very much up and when they equalised with seven minutes remaining it looked as if the Town's casual approach after the interval had been fatal.

However, they showed the power to hit back, chiefly through the genius of Bingham, and Gregory scrambled a late winner.

Had that Cup-tie not been looming ahead I feel quite certain that the Town would have crushed this very moderate, struggling Leicester team. But the visitors' rally was not only dramatic but effective and they probably considered themselves a bit unlucky not to take a valuable point.

Yet on their first-half display they deserved absolutely nothing. In the first half the Town forwards were a high-powered, hard-shooting combination who always worried this rather cumbersome defence. The line moved smoothly and quickly and their work brought visions of another big score.

In the second half the defence had rather a thin time, especially McNally and Hawkes, and there will need to be improvement from this pair next Saturday if Matthews and Perry are not to cause considerable havoc. Hawkes particularly was prone to mistakes. Most consistent defender was Owen who always had the tabs on Lornie, and Groves came back to form with a strong display.

Probably too much importance should not be attached to the shortcomings that were visible in this match because that Blackpool match cast a shadow over this one during nearly the whole of the second half.