

WONDER RALLY ROBS LUTON

Allan Brown goal—then Norwich strike back

Norwich City 1 Luton Town 1: by ALAN HOBY

AT 4.40 p.m. yesterday—25 minutes from the end—the stands and terraces at Tottenham exploded in an ear-blasting racket. Rattles rasped by the thousands. Hats and scarves soared skywards in a great yellow-and-green cloud. Total strangers danced and jigged in a fever of joy.

For at that moment, with Luton leading rightfully by a first-half Allan Brown header, Norwich City struck back with sudden and devastating swiftness. Just when it seemed as if the Canaries' glorious Cup song had died to a gallant but thin c-h-e-e-p, Jimmy Hill, their grafting inside-left, forced a throw-in on the right.

Right-winger Errol Crossan took the throw. There was a wild flurry of lunging legs before—to the horror of every Luton supporter—left-back Ken Hawkes mis-kicked across goal.

Arching through the air, the ball dipped to the feet of six-footer Roy McCrohan. The rangy Norwich right-half flashed it out to left-winger Bobby Brennan and the Norwich miracle happened. . . .

Almost casual

Coolly, almost with casual impertinence, Brennan—whose 34th birthday it was—swung his right foot at the one tiny space before him. Like a penny in the slot the ball shot through the tiny gap and a titanic yell of triumph rose above Tottenham. Archie Macaulay's famous Canaries—the original 2,000—"no-hoppers" from Norwich—had saved the day.

When all seemed lost, they staged one of their incredible second-half rallies to fight again. This will be their fourth Cup replay. Norwich in fact were so seldom in the Wembley hunt during that one-sided first half that I was convinced it would need a Soccer miracle to save them.

In those first surging, dramatic 45 minutes the favourites from the First Division swept on the Norwich goal in an almost effortless succession of smooth, streamlined attacks.

At inside-left Irish international George Cummins—before he faded—was the master juggler. Time and again he sent Luton's slick, menacing wingers, Billy Bingham and Tony Gregory, away.

Behind the scheming Cummins and his co-star in artistry, centre-forward Bob Morton, the 36-year-old Luton centre-half and skipper Syd Owen dominated the middle.

Indeed, Norwich's celebrated centre-forward goal-snatcher Terry Bly could scarcely get a boot to the ball.

Snapping tigers

Alongside the majestic Owen, the young Luton wing halves, John Groves and David Pacey, were like snapping tigers in the tackle.

Why then were elegant Luton

curbed to one goal? Because Norwich had four heroic defenders: McCrohan, raking Barry Butler at centre half, but, above all, their left back Ron Ashman, a skipper supreme, and new boy Sandy Kennon in goal.

I had been told that the handsome South African from Durban would be sick with nerves. Instead he pulled out a string of superlative saves. Two from Gregory were in world class, while, two minutes from the finish, with the best forward afield, Billy Bingham, dribbling clean through, he flung himself like an aerial trapeze artist to the right as Bingham cunningly chipped the ball to the far corner. A fantastic save—and all Norwich breathed again.

But if I pile on the praise for 24-year-old Kennon it is only fair that I should sympathise with unlucky Allan Brown.

Twice before the injury jinx has robbed this tall, sporting Scot of Cup Final medals, and when,

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10 minutes before half-time, he soared above the Norwich defenders to head Luton's goal after a Groves-Bingham right-wing move, it seemed that his hour had come.

But, even on a hard top surface where they seldom shine, Norwich would not quit.

Ice-calm in temperament and spurred on by the magnificent Ashman, and 25,000 fervent followers, they snatched yet another replay.

In a stirring struggle there were only two incidents which aroused the anger of the crowd.

Scene No. 1 occurred in the first half when the referee, W. Hickson, spoke to Luton left-back Ken Hawkes after he had sent Canada's Crossan crashing to the ground twice in succession.

Scene No. 2 came in the second half when Norwich left-half Matt Crowe Rugby tackled the irrepressible Bingham when the dancing Irishman had beaten