

SECOND-HALF FADE-OUT BY THE TOWN

New-Style Forward Line Failed To Click BY CHILTERN

WEST HAM 3, LUTON TOWN 1

OUT of form, out of luck and not holding a lot of promise of immediate improvement. That is the depressing state of affairs so far as the Town are concerned at the moment.

They disappointed their followers again at West Ham on Saturday by falling away badly in the second half after having kept on level terms until half-time, despite an injury to Baynham.

There was a shock after only five minutes, when Baynham stayed down writhing in pain after a collision with Woodley and was carried off on a stretcher.

At that stage the Town looked likely to have to face the rest of the game with only ten men, and things became worse when the referee penalised Brown for bringing down Dick inside the penalty area.

General opinion was that this was a rather harsh decision, and justice was served in that Bond shot against the foot of a post from the spot.

By then, to the Town's considerable relief, Baynham had limped back into action, and his first job after returning was to face the penalty kick. He quickly showed that he was going to be no passenger by smartly saving Woosnam's drive from the rebound.

With West Ham failing to click in attack, the Town had quite a good first half, although there was no material sign of greater punch in front of goal.

All the same, there were times

when they moved more confidently in midfield, and it began to look as if the winning of an invaluable point was not an impossibility.

QUICK GOAL CHANGED SITUATION

The early stages after the interval changed all that because, with only four minutes gone, the Town were a goal down, and that was the start of their decline.

Although the gallant Baynham came right out to the penalty spot to try to stop the breakthrough by WOODLEY, he was a fraction late, and the 17-years-old debutant was able to drive the ball firmly into the net.

Eleven minutes later WOODLEY did it again in somewhat similar circumstances, though on this occasion luck was with him in that the ball rebounded kindly for him off Baynham.

In addition, there was some suspicion of handling which the referee did not share, despite appeals by the Town.

KEEBLE capped the Hammers' improved second-half showing by fastening on to a mistake by Kelly 18 minutes from the end, and when the Town reduced their arrears with only three minutes left, it came as a distinct surprise.

Cummins, the Town's most constructive forward, began a fine movement in midfield and it was carried on by Dunne, racing through the outside-right position before laying on a perfect chance for TURNER to score his first League goal of the season.

WHAT THE OTHER CRITICS SAID

"But oh! The problems facing Luton manager, Sid Owen. True, the Luton attack moved quite smoothly until the injury to Baynham. But after the temporary destruction, the line utterly failed to regain any rhythm."—"The People."



"But Luton are just not a team."—"Sunday Dispatch."



"Bingham, Luton's outside-right had a good first half, but I am afraid he is going to have to forage a great deal for himself, such is the mediocrity of the other forwards."—"Sunday Express."



"Will the Cup Finalists be relegated? Early days yet, but on their second half display they are in danger. Their defence was chasing all the time when West Ham got on top after the interval and their forwards were woeful."—"Sunday Pictorial."



"Sid Owen badly needs some punch in attack, where only Billy Bingham was at all effective."—"Empire News."



"Luton seemed thoroughly demoralised. Occasionally Billy Bingham did dash along the right wing and once or twice cut into the centre, but the moment the Luton forwards got near the West Ham goal, they seemed to get into a tangle."—"News of the World."



"Until Luton can introduce more method into their play they will go nowhere—except down."—"News Chronicle."